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May 6, 2011

The Honourable Gordie Gosse
Speaker of the House of Assembly
Province of Nova Scotia
1726 Hollis Street, Province House
Halifax, NS
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Dear Mr. Speaker,

In response to Resolution No. 645 of the House of Assembly, together with the Elections Nova Scotia senior management team, I have reviewed the current *Elections Act* and other relevant legislation to identify areas in which the current legislation is deficient, requires modernization, or calls for simplification.

Following is my report on our findings and my recommendations for changes to the *Elections Act* as well as draft legislation for the consideration of the Members of the House of Assembly.

I acknowledge with thanks and sincere appreciation the participation and valuable input of representatives of the recognized parties and members of the Elections Commission, returning officers, other election officials, representatives of the disability community, as well as other individuals and groups with whom we consulted during the review.

We at Elections Nova Scotia look forward to a continuing dialogue as we move Nova Scotia's election legislation forward.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine McCulloch, Q.C.
Chief Electoral Officer

1. Introduction

In response to Resolution No. 645 of the House of Assembly (Appendix A), Elections Nova Scotia has reviewed the *Elections Act*, the *Members and Public Employees Disclosure Act (MPEDA)* and the *Political Contributions Regulations* in light of the experience of recent electoral events in Nova Scotia and examined the modernized election and election financing legislation of jurisdictions across Canada, including the *Canada Elections Act*. The team approached the review with an eye to modern election management in a Nova Scotia context and looked for lessons in organization as well as for approaches to specific areas identified for improvement. Elections Nova Scotia sought ways of piloting new technologies and processes in a controlled way including adoption by the House of Assembly as they are proven effective.

Elections Nova Scotia then identified and engaged three Nova Scotia political scientists with experience in public policy research related to elections and election financing. The researchers conducted literature searches, prepared discussion papers and delivered reports and recommendations that provided context and background useful in the consultation phase of the project.

The Chief Electoral Officer consulted representatives of the recognized parties¹, the Election Commission (as representative of recognized parties with members elected to the House of Assembly), senior executives of election management bodies in Canada regarding various aspects of the new Act and representative groups of returning officers in Nova Scotia on poll procedures, training, and returning office and poll signage. While not limiting the areas of consultation, discussions regarding improved access and enhanced voting opportunities, election expenses, political contributions, improved accountability and the regulation of third party participation in election campaigns were among the topics on the agenda. A number of irritants and needs identified by candidates, recognized parties, and electoral district associations such as nomination requirements, the “200 foot rule” for campaign signs near polling places, and deputy returning officer (DRO) depositing ballots for voters, were also included in the review.

The Election Commission was asked to provide advice to the Chief Electoral Officer in two important areas in particular. Firstly, while the current *Elections Act*, *MPEDA* and the *Political Contributions Regulations* define offences and prescribe

¹ Consultation with representatives of the recognized parties included the Green Party of Nova Scotia and The Atlantica Party Association of Nova Scotia

penalties for contraventions under those Acts, there are no effective provisions for investigation and prosecution or other methods of enforcing the law. Secondly, the new electoral finance regime required a thorough review to address deficiencies and difficulties found in practice. The Election Commission reviewed the contributions aspects of electoral finance. Consultation on election expenses is ongoing with an aim to report on recommendations in that area in the near future.

Elections Nova Scotia staff met with groups and individuals representing and advocates for specific groups of electors who have faced challenges in voting because of limited mobility, literacy challenges, or vision or hearing impairments to receive comment on current election practices and suggestions for improvement.

Elections Nova Scotia hosted a Conference on Elections and Electoral Finance at Saint Mary's University in Halifax at which commissioned papers were presented for review and discussion by invited delegates including advocates for seniors and persons with disabilities, young and new voters, political scientists and other public policy researchers, registered parties, Members of the Legislative Assembly, and Canadian election management bodies.

Many of the proposed changes to election law in Nova Scotia are fashioned to enable the Chief Electoral Officer to streamline operations, improve access and simplify the voting process for electors today and in the future, as technology evolves and best practices demand. As well, the draft *Elections Act* consolidates election law with electoral finance law currently in *MPEDA* and other regulations and statutes of Nova Scotia.

This report is designed to be read in conjunction with the draft Act appended and draws attention to many of the significant improvements and identifies areas where future consultation would be beneficial.

2. Independence

Proposed changes to the *Elections Act* include the recognition of the Chief Electoral Officer as an Officer of the Legislature, appointed by resolution of the House of Assembly, responsible for the administration of provincial elections, the electoral finance regime and the registration of electors.

As an Officer of the Legislature, the Chief Electoral Officer supplements and complements the efforts of the House of Assembly to maintain the integrity of democratic elections, electoral financing including contributions to and public

funding of political entities. This is done by setting standards, consulting individuals and public organizations, conducting studies, recommending changes where needed, issuing public reports and appearing before committees of the Legislature to present findings and recommendations.

The Chief Electoral Officer serves the House of Assembly and is directed by and accountable to that body, which is the ultimate watchdog under our system of responsible government. To command public trust and confidence, the Chief Electoral Officer, as an Officer of the Legislature, must be, however, conspicuously and robustly independent of ministers, the public service and even to some extent, the House itself. In performing the statutory functions of office, the Chief Electoral Officer will have authority, budget and undoubted influence and must be transparently and meaningfully accountable to the house in an appropriate manner. The Chief Electoral Officer will be accountable to the House of Assembly to present proposed strategic initiatives in an annual plan and budget for review.

To help assure the independent but accountable status of the Office, the draft Act provides that the Chief Electoral Officer be appointed by the Governor in Council on the resolution of the House of Assembly carried by a majority of the members voting. The proposed term of office is ten years with provision for reappointment.

The increasing requirements of returning officers calls for a rigorous selection process coupled with ongoing professional development.

The recommended changes to the *Elections Act* also reflect the need for accountability and effective management of other election officers.

A Returning officer (RO) is instrumental in delivering the election in an electoral district. In light of this important role, concerns have been raised in the past that control over the appointment process by the governing party gives rise to perceptions of bias. While responsibility for the administration of elections has been the longstanding primary mandate of the Chief Electoral Officer, effective management and reporting relationships are difficult without responsibility and control of the appointment and dismissal process.

The proposed changes to the *Elections Act* allow the Chief Electoral Officer to appoint returning officers with provisions that ensure the merit principle is applied.

The principle and perception of political impartiality and neutrality are fundamental in the administration of elections and central to the performance of the returning officer's duties. In this regard, the Chief Electoral Officer will require returning officers and other election officers trained in professional election service delivery to abide by a code of conduct supported by an oath of office.

The returning office must be made fully operational within a couple of days of the election call. The returning officer in each electoral district is responsible for leasing one or more offices; hiring and training staff; organizing supplies received from Elections Nova Scotia; setting up and connecting telephones, computers and other equipment; and, leasing voting facilities. Returning officers also oversee the mailing of voter information cards; revising the various lists of electors used during the election and are responsible for receiving candidate nomination papers, the training of hundreds of election officials, advance voting, continuous voting at the returning office, voting by write-in ballot by mail or write-in ballot coordinator team and, of course, election day and wrap-up activities. Completing all of these tasks involves managing, on average, 120-135 employees in each district. All of these tasks are conducted under the general direction of and to the standards set by Elections Nova Scotia.

Returning officers must be very versatile. Their extensive duties call for the use of a wide range of modern management techniques, including financial planning, contract negotiation, public relations, office automation, and material, human and financial resources management. ROs must be both skilled and efficient to complete their tasks within the short periods of time allowed by the election calendar.

The work of returning officers calls for a rigorous selection process coupled with ongoing training, professional development and performance management. Elections Nova Scotia is actively considering a professional development program leading to certification of returning officers, possibly in partnership with one or more electoral management bodies in Canada.

3. Consolidation of Electoral Finance Provisions

*"Good stewardship of public funds is enhanced when regulations, policies and guidelines are clear and comprehensive."*²

Among the areas that required updating and modernization are the electoral finance provisions in *MPEDA*. The first steps involved consolidating and reorganizing the electoral finance provisions of *MPEDA* under the *Elections Act* and clarifying and prescribing consequences when candidates or electoral district associations and parties fail to meet their responsibilities under the Act. The political contributions rules in Nova Scotia are relatively new and moved political entities rapidly into an environment of reporting requirements. It is important to remain vigilant to opportunities to simplify the regime without sacrificing the minimum standards of the regime.

3.1 Tax Receipts

Currently, an annual general meeting of a recognized party is viewed as a fundraising event and therefore the cost of attending the event is deemed to be not eligible for a tax receipt.

During consultation we discussed whether the benefit that accrues to participants was tangible. As no meal or other tangible benefit accrues to the participant as a function of paying a registration fee, it was agreed that an annual general meeting should be treated differently from other fundraising events where the primary motive is to generate a profit.

The proposed legislation provides for the issuance of a tax receipt for 100% of the registration fee for an annual general meeting paid by an individual. A key benefit is that the change may encourage participation in the political process.

The proposed legislation clarifies that contributions in the form of participation in a lottery or raffle are not eligible for tax receipts.

3.2 Official Agent and Their Agents

During the consultation it was noted that it is unrealistic to require that all contributions be made directly from the contributor only to the official agent. Those consulted felt that it is neither reasonable to expect that an official agent be in attendance to accept contributions at all times that they are offered nor is it reasonable to expect that the individual at the

² Jacques Lapointe, Auditor General of Nova Scotia, Report of the Auditor General, February, 2010

campaign office would refuse to accept a contribution from a contributor. Conversely, it was understood that one official agent ultimately must be responsible for receiving, recording, and verifying the eligibility of a contribution.

The draft Act requires that certain information be recorded at the time a contribution is made and that a record of transmittal from a person authorized by the official agent to accept contributions be forwarded to the official agent with the contribution. The recording of this information is fundamental to the integrity of the contributions regime and is necessary to protect the official agent and the individual receiving the contribution. The draft Act requires the recording of the name and address of the contributor, the amount of the contributions on a cumulative basis, and the dates they were made.

This provision strikes a reasonable balance between the need for political entities to receive contributions as they are made and the requirement that the official agent record, report, and disclose contributions in accordance with the Act.

4. Third Party Regulation

Electoral finance regimes in a number of Canadian jurisdictions have evolved beyond basic rules governing election spending and contribution disclosure requirements. Although the pace at which electoral reform has advanced differs by jurisdiction, the trend has been towards the introduction of contribution limits, contributor eligibility rules and the public funding of political entities. In Nova Scotia the establishment of a true electoral finance regime resulted from amendments to *MPEDA* proclaimed in force on March 2, 2007. The electoral finance provisions of *MPEDA*, as well as the Political Contribution Regulations made under *MPEDA*, have been incorporated into the draft *Elections Act*.

The recommendation on the regulation of third party participation in elections is a moderate model that seeks to provide a balance between the objective of fairness for the electoral competitors and the rights of third parties to participate in election campaigns, through disclosure, registration and reporting.

There is increasing recognition by both legislators and the public that organizations, apart from parties and candidates, undertake activities – particularly with respect to advertising – that have the potential to influence how electors vote

during an election. Additionally, these third parties may solicit contributions to fund those activities in a manner similar to the solicitation of political contributions by parties and candidates.

Recognized parties and candidates are subject to certain rules regarding their funding and the expenses they may incur to promote their candidacy or challenge that of their opponents, while third parties are not. The underlying principles of disclosure and spending limits are about the importance of a level playing field for all who intervene in the electoral process. Third party legislation establishes laws respecting the “political” activities of third parties and may include registration, spending limits and disclosure of these third parties and their contributors.

In 2004, the Supreme Court of Canada issued its decision in *Harper v. Canada (Attorney General)*³. The nine-member court ruled unanimously that the limits on third party election advertising as well as registration and reporting requirements adopted in 2000, were constitutional.

The Chief Electoral Officer recommends the inclusion in the *Elections Act* of a moderate model of regulation of third party participation in election campaigns. This model would provide fairness for the electoral competitors, and a balance between the right of electors to know the source of political advertising and the rights of third parties to participate in election campaigns. It would include requirements for registration, disclosure and reporting by third parties.

A third party is defined as a person or group other than a candidate, a recognized party or an electoral district association of a recognized party. Under this moderate model, all third-parties conducting election advertising during an election would provide basic identifying information as part of that advertising.

The reason for the disclosure requirement is to let electors know the interest behind a public position. Elections are not meant to be challenging investigative research projects for electors. The purpose of requiring third parties to register is to ensure that the particulars regarding their identity are clear.

³ *Harper v. Canada (Attorney General)*, [2004] 1 S.C.R. 827, 2004 SCC 33,

The registration provisions of this model would require third parties to register with Elections Nova Scotia once they incur election advertising expenses of set amount. They would produce a financial report within a reasonable time after election day itemizing their election advertising expenses and the sources of these advertising funds.

The final feature of the model would impose limits on the amount a third party could incur in election advertising expenses in either absolute terms or relative to the spending limits imposed on recognized parties.

In our consultation with the recognized parties and the Election Commission, there was no consensus regarding the regulation of third party participation in election campaigns. As third party regulation had been the subject of two previous bills introduced in the House of Assembly (Bill 63, November 2009 and Bill No. 48, April 2010), the Chief Electoral Officer will welcome the discussion of the practical elements with a view to incorporating the results in the new *Elections Act*.

5. Access to Voting Opportunities

Resolution No. 645 spoke directly to improving access and enhancing voting options when modernizing the *Elections Act*. The draft Act seeks to satisfy the objectives contemplated by the resolution in a number of ways.

5.1 Election Day Polls

The aim of the proposed changes is to reduce the wait time it takes for the average elector to vote at peak voting times and to reduce the potential for human error when poll officials process electors.

The existing legislation is explicit about which poll official positions are to be used and who is to do which tasks in the polls. Rather than describing operational directives in such minute detail, the draft Act details the tasks that must be completed and leaves the operational details that may change over time, to be prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer. To electors, the manner in which they vote will be the same as they have experienced in the past.

5.2 Returning Officers' Continuous Poll

In the draft *Elections Act*, the Chief Electoral Officer has recommended changes to improve access throughout most of the election period to address the challenges facing electors with disabilities, seniors, and those in various special residential facilities.

The current *Elections Act* limits early voting opportunities to six days for the Special poll at the returning office and to two days of Advance polling at specially designated polls set up for the purpose. With the use of current technology and live access to a centralized list of electors, election officers at each returning office are able to maintain records of voting in real time and enable voters to vote at any time during office hours at the returning office up to the start of the Advance poll.

5.3 Mobile Polls

With respect to the conduct of mobile polls, there are two changes of note. The first is with regard to where a returning officer may place a mobile poll. The current Act is unnecessarily restrictive. It permits mobile polls only in long term care facilities. Many seniors and electors with mobility issues live in other types of facilities. The draft *Elections Act* recognizes this fact and broadens the types of eligible residential centres.

The second change reduces the minimum time a mobile poll must remain at any location from three to two hours. In the 2009 General Election, the 99 mobile polls averaged 65 electors per poll. A two-hour minimum is sufficient time for 65 electors to vote. Larger centres could be given more time as necessary however, the change in the minimum time will increase the opportunity for returning officers to schedule a given mobile poll team to more locations on election day.

The result is more electors will have an opportunity to vote at a potentially lower cost per elector served.

5.4 Improved Access for Voters with Special Needs

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*⁴ guarantees citizens the right to vote and run for office and provides a guarantee of equality rights to persons with disabilities. The *Elections Act* currently requires that returning officers, in establishing the polling locations for a general election, ensure that the polling location has level access to accommodate voters with physical disabilities.

⁴ Harper v. Canada (Attorney General), [2004] 1 S.C.R. 827, 2004 SCC 33,

Many types of disabilities exist. These may include physical, sensory, cognitive, psychiatric, health-related, age related as well as others that may not be apparent. Moreover, increasingly, advocates of persons with disabilities look to election management bodies to progress beyond assisting voters to ensuring that they can vote independently in the future.

Elections Nova Scotia and election management bodies throughout Canada are endeavoring to ensure barrier free access as a first step towards voting independently.

During the review, Elections Nova Scotia consulted representatives and advocates of persons with disabilities including those with vision impairments, hearing loss, learning disabilities, physical handicaps and limited mobility and persons with reading difficulties from dyslexia to low literacy and numeracy skills. To advance the goal of voting independently, the draft legislation authorizes the Chief Electoral Officer to appoint advisory committees to work with Elections Nova Scotia in finding solutions.

Elections Nova Scotia has already started this process by establishing relationships with advocacy groups and a number of individuals to identify obstacles and determine how to remove them.

5.5 Write-in ballot Coordinators and Agents

Under the current Act, an elector who needs assistance to apply for and vote by write-in ballot must find another elector who lives in the same polling division who is willing to act as an agent or have a relative of voting age and resident in the province act as an agent. That agent must appear in person at the returning office to complete an application, obtain a ballot for the elector for whom they are acting and return it to the returning office once it is marked by the voter. This complexity is necessary to ensure the integrity of the vote.

The draft Act increases the categories of persons permitted to act as an agent and provides for a team of election officers – write-in ballot coordinators – to provide the services of an agent where friends or family are not available to the elector.

These new provisions significantly reduce the number of people who are unable to vote because of mobility issues and temporary hospitalization.

In the draft Act, a write-in ballot coordinator team may, in one trip, assist with completing the application process, deliver a ballot to an elector, assist in casting a vote if necessary, help to prepare the envelope to hold the ballot, assist with inserting the ballot in the temporary ballot box if necessary; and return the completed application in the ballot envelopes to the presiding officer. Write-in ballot coordinator teams will also be used to assist electors who have mobility issues in residential centres where fewer than 10 electors may reside and to assist electors temporarily in hospitals both in and out of their electoral district.

These new provisions significantly reduce the number of people who are unable to vote because of mobility issues and temporary hospitalization. However, electors who are hospitalized in the few days before election day will not be able to apply to vote by write-in ballot and will only be able to vote at the polling station to which they have been assigned for the election day poll. This remains a problem to be solved.

5.6 Voting Out-of-District

Under the current Act, an elector may vote when out of their electoral district only by using the write-in ballot process. The elector must apply for a ballot through their home returning officer, complete the application process by mail or courier, wait for the ballot kit to be mailed or couriered to them and return the completed ballot envelopes by mail or courier before close of polls on election day.

This approach will remain an option for electors out of district who cannot get to a returning office during the writ period. However, a proposed change will permit an elector who is out of his or her district, but in the province, to visit any returning office to vote at the write-in ballot poll on any day the returning office is open to the public up to the start of the Advance poll.

Since each returning office will have access to a live list of electors for the province as a whole, the elector will be struck off the list as voted and this will be visible immediately in all returning offices.

The unopened envelopes containing the ballots cast, along with the original copy of the application to vote by write-in ballot, will be couriered to the respective home electoral district returning office and will be included as part of the count on election night in the presence of candidates' representatives.

6. Piloting

Maintaining a healthy democracy requires an electoral process that is responsive to change while continuing to foster accessibility, integrity and public confidence.

After each electoral event, the Chief Electoral Officer directs a review of operations, looks for ways to improve election procedures, and reports to the House of Assembly. Progress made in recent years includes improvements in the registration of electors and the management of the lists of electors; improved training of election workers, new training seminars for official agents of candidates and broadened communications to electors and future voters through the Internet.

While these improvements will make a difference, more could be achieved.

The draft *Elections Act* gives authority to the Chief Electoral Officer to run pilot projects to test a process, procedure, equipment, or technology that is different from that required by the Act. Pilots could include minor and

major adjustments to the legislation in specific areas identified in the draft Act. The Chief Electoral Officer will outline plans for any significant pilot project that Elections Nova Scotia intends to undertake in the Chief Electoral Officer's annual plan and budget presented to the House of Assembly. Any such pilot would be limited in time and scope and require a report and recommendations to the House of Assembly after conducting the pilot project.

For example, a pilot during a by-election could involve testing a new approach to serving student electors on campus with a view to improving services, enhancing outreach and increasing access.

Increasingly, Nova Scotians expect to be able to carry out their business with government electronically. When proven technology is available, the piloting provision would facilitate the testing of e-voting to supplement traditional balloting methods.

When proven technology is available, the piloting provision would facilitate the testing of e-voting to supplement traditional balloting methods.

6.1 Public Education Programs and Research Studies

In 2009, the *Select Committee on Participation in the Democratic Process*⁵ made a number of recommendations regarding information and education programs that, over time, could contribute to increased participation in elections.

The draft *Elections Act* provides that the Chief Electoral Officer may seek the advice of the Election Commission regarding public communication, education and information programs to make the electoral process better known to the public, including information and curriculum materials for new electors and those persons and groups most likely to experience difficulties in exercising their democratic rights.

An important aspect of the introduction of the position of Commissioner of Elections is that it would remove the dual role of regulator and investigator/enforcer which has been carried by the Chief Electoral Officer to date.

As well, it provides the authority for the Chief Electoral Officer to implement such programs and to carry out studies, consult experts, conduct surveys, or other means to provide the public with information relating to Nova Scotia's electoral process, the democratic right to vote and how to be a candidate. The Chief Electoral Officer will outline plans for studies, surveys and information programs in the Chief Electoral Officer's annual plan and budget presented to the House of Assembly and report on the results on their completion and assessment.

7. Commissioner of Elections

Modeled in part on the Commissioner of Canada Elections and the Commissioner of Elections in Manitoba, Elections Nova Scotia recommends the establishment of an independent official whose duty is to ensure that the *Elections Act* is complied with and enforced.

⁵ Draft Report - http://nslegislature.ca/index.php/committees/select_committees/participation_in_the_democratic_process/

With the adoption of this recommendation, anyone with a complaint or allegation of wrongdoing would refer it to the Commissioner. Each complaint would be reviewed to determine whether there is a basis for the allegation. When satisfied that there is substance to the complaint, the Commissioner could order an investigation.

As well, should the Chief Electoral Officer have reasonable grounds to believe that an election officer may have committed an offence, the Chief Electoral Officer would direct the Commissioner to make the inquiries required in the circumstances and avoid a potential conflict of interest were the Chief Electoral Officer to investigate an election officer responsible to the Chief Electoral Officer or the Chief Electoral Officer personally.

The Commissioner could also conclude a compliance agreement with anyone the Commissioner has reasonable grounds to believe has committed, is about to commit or is likely to commit an offence. This is a voluntary agreement between the Commissioner and the person, in which the person agrees to terms and conditions necessary to ensure compliance with the Act. The Commissioner would make a summary of the compliance agreement public on the Elections Nova Scotia website.

No prosecution for an offence could be instituted by a person other than the Director of Public Prosecutions without the Director's prior consent.

The draft *Elections Act* provides that a prosecution for an offence may be instituted at any time, but not later than 2 years after the day on which the Commissioner became aware of the facts giving rise to the prosecution, and not later than 5 years after the day on which the offence was committed. This change in limitation periods brings Nova Scotia's Act into line with other elections acts in Canada.

An important aspect of the introduction of the position of Commissioner of Elections is that it would remove the dual role of regulator and investigator/enforcer which has been carried by the Chief Electoral Officer to date. Placing responsibility for enforcement and compliance with a person other than the Chief Electoral Officer would remove a significant impediment to ongoing healthy working relationships with recognized parties, electoral district associations, and candidates.

During consultation, the view was expressed that the Commissioner of Elections in Nova Scotia should be appointed by the House of Assembly on the recommendation of a committee of the House of Assembly rather than the Chief Electoral Officer as in other jurisdictions.

It is envisaged that the role of the Commissioner would be a part-time appointment with the weight of activity concentrated around an election period. A preliminary projection of the financial costs associated with the position and administrative support would not be more than were the Chief Electoral Officer responsible for these activities.

7.1 Register of Electors

Under the draft *Elections Act*, the Chief Electoral Officer is required to establish a Register of Electors. This replaces what was called the “permanent list of electors” and captures Elections Nova Scotia’s existing practice of registering eligible electors in Nova Scotia.

Elections Nova Scotia uses the Register of Electors to keep the information required to carry out its legislated mandate only.

The Register of Electors includes the name, date of birth, sex, residential address and mailing information of electors. It also includes the geographic description that accurately identifies the elector’s residential address. Both information types contribute to the creation of the list of electors for an election which is synchronized with the geographic boundaries of electoral districts and polling divisions.

The draft *Elections Act* also calls for the continuous update of the Register to ensure the accuracy and currency of the electors’ information. It allows the Register to contain information that uniquely identifies electors and assists in distinguishing one person from another when creating, revising or updating the elector’s information in the Register. The draft Act enables the Chief Electoral Officer to enter into data sharing agreements with Elections Canada, municipalities, school boards, other provincial public bodies and non-government sources to receive updated personal information of electors. The Chief Electoral Officer may also carry out focused enumeration activities both between elections to update the Register of Electors and during an election to update the lists of electors. Another feature of the draft Act is that it provides authority to hold in the Register, with their consent or that of their parent or guardian if needed, information about persons who may become eligible to vote in the near future to streamline registration when they become eligible.

The draft Act specifies that every registered elector may be a resident of only one place at a time. This provision now also applies to university and college students who have the choice to register as either residing at their family home or at a residence while attending an educational institution. This change avoids duplicate information of electors in the Register and ensures an accurate list of electors.

Candidates in provincial elections must destroy all lists of electors... within ten days of the close of polls on election day.

The draft *Elections Act* requires the Chief Electoral Officer to take all steps necessary to ensure that the electoral boundaries and other electoral geographic descriptions are accurate and to enter into agreements with any person for the purpose of obtaining or providing mapping, geographic or demographic information. This captures Elections Nova Scotia's current practices of employing best practices and state-of-the-art geographic information systems (GIS) technology to benefit from the digital geographical data obtained through geographic data sharing agreements with relevant provincial bodies and municipalities. Nova Scotia geographic information is exemplary in the country and, when used for electoral purposes, contributes to the integrity and accuracy of the lists of electors and electoral maps that Elections Nova Scotia makes available to recognized parties and candidates and publicly on the Elections Nova Scotia website.

The draft Act has removed obstacles to the use of evolving technology and enables its current and future use in the election processes and in the electronic systems that support election processes.

8. Security and Privacy

Provisions for safeguarding the privacy of information in the Register of Electors have been strengthened in the proposed legislation. The draft Act specifies the information that may be disclosed by the Chief Electoral Officer to municipalities and school boards for their electoral purposes and that it may be shared with Elections Canada. It also limits the information that may be disclosed to recognized parties, independent members of the House of Assembly between elections and candidates and recognized parties during an election to the names, residential and mailing addresses of registered electors. All such information provided by Elections Nova Scotia must be used only for electoral purposes and it is an offence to use that information for other purposes. Neither the date of birth nor the sex of the elector is disclosed at any time.

The draft Act requires candidates in provincial elections to destroy all lists of electors received during an election and any copies of the list of electors provided to others by or on behalf of the candidate and inform the Chief Electoral Officer of the destruction within ten days of the close of polls on election day.

The Chief Electoral Officer may also include fictitious elector information within the provided lists of electors for the purpose of tracing any unauthorized use of elector information.

To protect the personal information of electors, the draft Act obliges school boards and candidates to destroy all lists of electors received for purposes of a municipal or school board election and any copies of a list of electors provided to others within ten days of the close of the polls on election day. Similarly, municipalities must confirm to the Chief Electoral Officer that all the elector information provided by the municipality to others, including a candidate nominated at a municipal election, has been used only for election administration purposes.

These provisions in themselves may not provide the security required under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and it is recommended that the *Municipal Elections Act* be amended with the aim of strengthening that security.

8.1 Specific Issues

8.1.1 Recount

The current *Elections Act* details a procedure that contemplates a judge personally conducting a recount of each ballot. A recount conducted under these rules could take several weeks to complete.

Elections Nova Scotia took the opportunity of the judicial recount in the 2009 by-election in the electoral district of Inverness to improve the recount process. The Chief Electoral Officer designed a procedure whereby a group of handpicked knowledgeable election officers (returning officers from other provincial electoral districts) would conduct the poll by poll recount of ballots cast under the scrutiny of the judge and representatives of each candidate. The proposed process was explained to the candidates and their representatives as it was being developed. They agreed with the final model. The model was subsequently reviewed and, with minor adjustments, agreed to by Mr. Justice Simon J. MacDonald and used in the actual recount.

Under the proposed legislation, the rules, timing to apply for and the granting of a recount would mirror the current requirements. However, the Chief Electoral Officer, not the judge, is responsible for establishing the procedures to be followed during the recount and choosing the appropriate election officers. The judge would continue to preside over the proceedings at a recount, rule on all disputes about ballots and poll records, verify the final count, declare the elected candidate and decide on any allocation of costs.

The proposed changes will bring consistency and professionalism to the administration of recounts and a measure of predictability and clarity for the candidates and parties involved.

8.1.2 Election Day

The current Act states that election day "...shall be a Tuesday, not less than thirty days from the date of the writ." After surveying election management bodies across the country, Elections Nova Scotia consulted the recognized parties and the Election Commission to consider Saturday as a possible election day or, like Quebec, make election day a school holiday.

Returning officers traditionally have turned to public buildings to house their polls. By far the majority of polls throughout the province are located in community centres and halls, fire halls, church halls, schools, legions, and recreation centres. Increasingly, ROs have turned to schools as ideal polling places (in 2009, 10% of the polls were located in schools). Most schools have drop off zones and some parking available, including designated parking for disabled visitors; are well known to the local electorate; are usually in close proximity to the general population; have gymnasiums capable of housing many polls; are accessible to the disabled and have furniture, washroom facilities and telephones.

However, school administrators are reluctant to allow polling in their facilities on school days. The prime concern, understandably, is the security of students. As well, using the gymnasium for a day can disrupt physical education activities, plays, concerts, sports activities and at times, graduation ceremonies that have been planned well in advance.

As well, ROs, particularly in urban areas, are increasingly turning to advertising to find applicants to work in polls. As previously mentioned employing students in some poll positions would engage youth in the electoral process, potentially support future voter engagement, and help alleviate the shortage of election workers.

During consultation we heard reservations regarding a Saturday election day. While the potential benefits were acknowledged, there was concern expressed that electors would be less likely to vote because it would interfere with

weekend activities and that, as Saturdays are days of worship for some faiths, it may be inappropriate as election day. As well, there was concern about making any change in election day because of the uncertainty of the impact.

As mentioned, the Province of Quebec has made election day a holiday to address these concerns as well as to underscore the importance of an election.

The growing challenges of ensuring accessible polling places and availability of election workers across the province will require further attention and wider consultation.

8.1.3 Public Opinion Surveys

It is important that the public is able to make an informed judgment on the value of election surveys. All surveys are not the same. The draft *Elections Act* provides that media publishing survey results will have to provide details about survey methodology.

Under the draft Act, the first person or media outlet to release the results of an election opinion survey must indicate who sponsored the survey, who carried it out and when, the population from which the survey sample was drawn, how many persons were contacted, and the survey's margin of error. If a survey has not been conducted using recognized statistical methods, this must be stated. Print and Internet publishers must also include the wording of the survey questions and instructions on how to obtain the written report, which the survey sponsor must make available to the public. Any other media outlet that broadcasts or publishes survey results during the 24 hours following initial publication must provide the same information. Also, no new opinion survey may be published on election day before polling stations close.

These new provisions mirror rules in place for federal elections and many provincial elections and do not present a more onerous burden for news media.

8.1.4 Time off to Vote

The current *Elections Act* requires an elector who is an employee to have three consecutive hours to vote on election day. If the employee does not have three consecutive hours of his or her own time during polling hours (8 am to 7 pm), the employer must provide the balance of time off with pay before work or after work or provide three consecutive hours with pay during work at the time of day that best suits the employer. There are exemptions to this provision for employees who work in operations or dispatch for firms involved in transporting goods, services or people.

With the increased number of opportunities to vote during the election period – the returning office continuous poll, the advance poll and voting by write-in ballot – the question arose whether this provision remains relevant.

During consultation, it was suggested that the three consecutive hours is considered an established right. It is consistent as well with provisions in the *Canada Elections Act* that governs federal elections. There was no consensus on either removing the provision or amending it in light of the dated exemption limited to transportation workers. No change has been made in the proposed legislation.

While discussing time off to vote, it was noted that a few provinces have introduced provisions for electors to take leave without pay to work on behalf of a party or candidate or as an election official for the election management body. During consultation, it was recognized generally that it was an interesting concept that would require study.

During the consultation with the Election Commission regarding the availability of election workers, it was suggested that the temporary assignment of public servants to election positions be given consideration. While the challenges may make this impracticable, the benefits merit study and further consultation.

8.1.5 Registered Party Suspension or Electoral District Association Suspension

The initiation of the current deregistration process is extreme when the missed deadline was inadvertent and immediately addressed. In this situation initiation of the deregistration process is not the appropriate tool for garnering compliance and the perception of the public as a result may be disproportionate to the actual non-compliance.

The proposed suspension process provides for a 30 day period during which a registered party may comply with the reporting obligations under the Act. In the event that the report is not filed by the end of the 30 day suspension period, the Chief Electoral Officer is required to initiate the deregistration process. During the period of suspension the affected party or electoral district association is prohibited from accepting a contribution, issuing a receipt for income tax purposes, and making a transfer. The suspension is an intermediate process that strikes a balance between inadvertent non-compliance and unwillingness to comply.

The draft Act also provides the Chief Electoral Officer with the authority to extend the time for filing election expense reports by official agents of candidates.

8.1.6 Helping train Campaign Volunteers

Electoral district associations and election campaigns generally are dependent on volunteers. Some record keeping and reporting provisions, while necessary and important, are challenging for participants in campaigns.

During the Provincial General Election in 2009, Elections Nova Scotia created and conducted a series of seminars for the official agents of candidates and consequently, compliance and the quality of reporting was significantly improved over the 2006 Provincial General Election. Elections Nova Scotia will expand this program to prepare materials and training sessions to help volunteers understand and meet the requirements of the Act.

8.1.7 Student Election Workers

Elections Nova Scotia believes that more informed and involved youth will develop a sense of accomplishment and purpose, gain a better understanding of and sensitivity towards community issues, and are more likely to make participation in the electoral process a life-long activity.

Young people who work as election officials at Advance polls and on election day would be applying their theoretical knowledge from the civics classroom and acquiring the practical knowledge within their own community. This is the hallmark of participatory learning and a great example of community service.

Citizenship education, in part, requires learning how democratic and governmental institutions work, our collective responsibility, and commitment to keep them working well, as well as learning about our rights and freedoms. The draft *Elections Act* includes a provision to facilitate Nova Scotian residents 16-18 years old to participate as election workers in selected positions.

8.1.8 Fixed Date Elections

While the federal Parliament and a number of provinces have introduced fixed dates for elections in recent years, we believe it is too soon to gauge the costs and benefits associated with fixed-date elections. There are obvious benefits for the election management body in knowing when an election will be held. Even the limited experience in Canada raises the spectre of long election campaigns when the date of the election is known well in advance. It was not a subject of consultation from an election administration point of view it has obvious benefits but whether it is suitable from a public policy perspective has yet to be determined.

8.1.9 Candidate Eligibility and Disqualification

The current *Elections Act* refers to the *House of Assembly Act*⁶ or “any other Act” as a source for determining whether a potential candidate is eligible or disqualified from running for political office. Unfortunately the *House of Assembly Act* is out of date and it is unclear what these other sources of disqualification or ineligibility are. It makes sense that the rules appear in the *House of Assembly Act* since essentially they are the same for candidates as for members, but no current single source for identifying the rules exists. Further study of this problem is recommended and should involve expertise respecting the *House of Assembly Act*.

8.1.10 Women and Youth Groups Affiliated with Recognized Parties

During consultation, the issue of whether funds held by women and youth groups affiliated with a recognized party could be transferred to the recognized party was raised. The problem identified is that there appears to be no legal method for moving these funds into the party since the changes to the contributions regime. The matter was discussed and no consensus could be reached.

9. Going Forward

While much has been accomplished through this review, there are a number of areas for continued consultation and improvement.

- Electoral Finance Regime: the political contribution rules are relatively new and continued effort should be made to simplify the rules, address deficiencies and resolve issues such as in the area of loans made to finance political campaigns.
- Advisory committees: the proposed legislation enables the establishment of advisory committees to seek solutions to identified issues. As an example, the consultation with organizations representing the disabled community indicated that a major problem confronting the community is the inability to find transportation to the polls. Elections Nova Scotia will take a leading role in establishing a multi-stakeholder committee to look for a solution.

⁶ SNS 2007, c.1

Resolution No. 645

"... be it resolved that:

"(a) the Chief Electoral Officer, Christine McCulloch, Q.C. be asked to conduct a comprehensive review of the Elections Act, Members and Public Employees Disclosure Act, and Political Contributions Disclosure Regulations, and relevant Sections of other Statutes and regulations of Nova Scotia and prepare a report to the House of Assembly including a modernized Elections Act and an Electoral Finance Act for the House to consider;

"(b) the modernized Elections Act reflect the Select Committee's recommendation that the law be as "voter-friendly" as possible, while maintaining the integrity of confidentiality and impartiality that it currently embodies;

"(c) the Electoral Finance Act consolidate electoral finance provisions contained in other Statutes of Nova Scotia and address the anomalies and deficiencies for administrating, and enforcing the electoral finance provisions of the Members and Public Employees Disclosure Act and the Elections Act;

"(d) the Chief Electoral Officer consult with appropriate experts, the members of the Election Commission and representatives of the province's recognized Parties on the content of the modernized Elections Act and electoral finances;

"(e) the Chief Electoral Officer make her best efforts to report to the House of Assembly with draft legislation for consideration of the House during the 2010 Fall sitting of the House."

*An Act Respecting the
Election of Members to the
House of Assembly and
Electoral Finance*

(Draft Elections Act)



May 6, 2011

**An Act Respecting the Election
of Members to the House of Assembly and Electoral Finance**

Be it enacted by the Governor and Assembly as follows:

- 1 This Act may be cited as the *Elections Act*.
- 2 In this Act,
 - (a) "ballot" means a prescribed form used by an elector to vote;
 - (b) "by-election" means an election other than one conducted as part of a general election;
 - (c) "candidate" means a person who has been officially nominated as a candidate pursuant to Section 67 and for the purposes of Part II includes a person registered pursuant to Section 203;
 - (d) "Commission" means the Election Commission pursuant to Section 344;
 - (e) "Commissioner of Elections" means the Commissioner of Elections appointed pursuant to Section 271;
 - (f) "during an election" or "at an election" includes the period between the dissolution of the House of Assembly, or the occurrence of a vacancy in consequence of which a writ for an election is eventually issued, and when a candidate is declared elected;
 - (g) "elector" means a person who is qualified under this Act to vote at an election for the House of Assembly, whether or not the person's name is on a list of electors;
 - (h) "election" means an election of a person to serve as a member of the House of Assembly;
 - (i) "election day" means the day fixed under Section 29 for holding the poll at an election;
 - (j) "election officer" means the Chief Electoral Officer, assistant chief electoral officer, returning officer, assistant returning officer, election clerk, assistant election clerk, supervising deputy returning officer, deputy returning officer, poll clerk, presiding officer, deputy presiding officer, enumerator, revision assistant, information officer, write-in ballot coordinator, assistant write-in ballot coordinator, ballot box courier and a constable appointed under this Act, and such other officials appointed to other election officer positions designated by the Chief Electoral Officer from time to time;
 - (k) "electoral district" means a geographic area that is entitled to elect a member to serve in the House of Assembly;
 - (l) "electoral district association" means an electoral district association that is
 - (i) endorsed by the leader of a registered party and includes a trust or a fund established to further the goals of such an association, and

(ii) registered by the Chief Electoral Officer pursuant to Section 195 of this Act;

(m) "endorsed" means declared by the leader of a registered party as the official candidate of the party or in the case of an electoral district association means designated as an electoral district association by the leader of the registered party;

(n) "final list of electors" means the revised list of electors prepared by the Chief Electoral Officer following an election and includes the information of all electors whose names have been on or added to the official list of electors by the close of polls on election day as described in Section 59;

(o) "form" includes the content and signature if any is required, instructions for completion and the manner in which the form is to be provided;

(p) "former Act" means Chapter 140 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the *Elections Act*;

(q) "general election" means the simultaneous holding of elections in all electoral districts;

(r) "hours" and all other references to time relate to local time generally used throughout the Province;

(s) "list of electors" is a list prepared from the Register of Electors containing information of all registered electors in the Province pursuant to Section 52;

(t) "nomination candidate" or "nomination contestant" means a person who is campaigning to become a registered party's candidate for election in an electoral district;

(u) "oath" includes affidavit, affirmation and statutory declaration;

(v) "official agent" means an agent appointed by a registered party, an electoral district association, registered candidate or a candidate pursuant to Section 167;

(w) "prospective candidate" means a person who self-declares, or is declared by others with the individual's consent, to be a candidate;

(x) "prescribed" means authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer pursuant to this Act;

(y) "registered party" means a political party that is registered by the Chief Electoral Officer pursuant to Section 181 or was recognized under the former Act;

(z) "recount" means a recount pursuant to Section 149;

(aa) "registered candidate" means a person who has been registered pursuant to Section 203;

(ab) "Register of Electors" means the register established and maintained by the Chief Electoral Officer under Sections 42 and 43;

(ac) "spouse" means a person married to another person and, for the purpose of this Act, includes persons who, not being married to each other, live together as if spouses and have done so for at least one year;

(ad) “voter” means an elector who has voted or to whom a write-in ballot kit has been transmitted during an election;

(ae) “writ” means the writ of election.

3 The Chief Electoral Officer is responsible for the administration of this Act.

4 (1) In addition to any other powers or duties of the Chief Electoral Officer under this Act, the Chief Electoral Officer shall

(a) enforce on the part of election officers fairness, impartiality and compliance with this Act;

(b) exercise general direction and supervision over the administrative conduct of elections;

(c) examine, or cause to be examined, all statements, reports, forms, returns and other information filed with the Chief Electoral Officer;

(d) issue to election officers such instructions as the Chief Electoral Officer may deem necessary to ensure the effective, non-partisan execution of this Act;

(e) establish and maintain registers of

(i) electors;

(ii) registered parties,

(iii) registered electoral district associations,

(iv) registered candidates, and

(v) candidates;

and prescribe information to be kept in the registers;

(f) make all reimbursements and payments to registered parties, electoral district associations, candidates and others in accordance with this Act and the regulations;

(g) prescribe forms and the contents thereof for use under this Act and provide the manner of their use;

(h) provide instructions to election officers for the conduct of the polls and responsibilities of those election officers;

(i) publish on the Elections Nova Scotia website, or in such manner as determined by the Chief Electoral Officer, the reports filed under this Act or the information contained in those reports as prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer; and

(j) exercise such other powers as are required by this Act;

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall not extend the hours within which a returning officer may receive nomination documents or the voting hours at either an advance polling station or subject to subsection 5(2), an election day polling station.

5 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer may

- (a) assist, or cause to be assisted, a registered party, electoral district association or candidate and an official agent of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate in preparing statements and returns required under this Act and otherwise in complying with this Act;
- (b) delegate in writing to any election officer appointed under this Act authority to exercise any power and perform any duty under this Act;
- (c) enter into agreements with municipalities, school boards and the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada providing for the sharing of lists of electors for electoral purposes;
- (d) enter into agreements with persons for the purpose of obtaining information to update the Register of Electors with provisions for reimbursement of reasonable cost associated with preparing the information;
- (e) subject to subsection 4(2) extend the time for doing anything under this Act;
- (f) designate additional election officer positions and increase the number of election officers for an election;
- (g) train individuals and pay them pursuant to the tariff of fees and expenses both during and between elections;
- (h) increase the number of polling stations;
- (i) prescribe forms, the manner of their use and the manner in which information is provided or filed;
- (j) vary any of the forms prescribed under the Act to suit the existing circumstances;
- (k) prescribe an acceptable means of an electronic signature or another means of authentication for circumstances in which the Act requires a signature or a declaration;
- (l) develop and implement public communication, education and information programs;
- (m) obtain information for the purpose of Section 42 and 43;
- (n) prepare and distribute guidelines with respect to any matter in this Act with power to vary such guidelines to suit existing circumstances;
- (o) prepare and distribute policies, guidelines and codes of conduct for election officers and employees of Elections Nova Scotia with respect to any matter in this Act with power to vary such policies, guidelines and codes of conduct to suit existing circumstances;
- (p) receive complaints, carry out preliminary reviews and forward all complaints to the Commissioner of Elections;
- (q) generally adapt the provisions of this Act to meet existing circumstances;

- (r) modify any provision of this Act to permit its use at a by-election;
- (s) seek the advice of
 - (i) the Election Commission, and
 - (ii) advisory committees and panels of experts established from time to time by the Chief Electoral Officer

as required;

(t) provide administrative and technical support to the independent electoral boundaries commission in its review of electoral boundaries pursuant to the *House of Assembly Act*;

(u) enter into agreements with any person for the purpose of obtaining or providing mapping, geographic or demographic information;

(v) make available on the Elections Nova Scotia's website the geographic boundaries of electoral districts and polling divisions, and during an election the polling locations as Elections Nova Scotia has available;

(w) exercise such other powers as are authorized by this Act.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection 4(2) if voting at a polling station is interrupted on election day by an emergency and the Chief Electoral Officer is satisfied that, if the voting hours at the polling station are not extended, a substantial number of electors will not be able to vote, the Chief Electoral Officer shall

(a) extend the voting hours at the polling station for the period the Chief Electoral Officer considers necessary to give those electors a reasonable opportunity to vote, as long as the polling station does not in any case

(i) close later than midnight on election day, or

(ii) remain open during election day for a total of more than 12 hours;

(b) give notice of extended voting hours in such manner as the Chief Electoral Officer considers appropriate.

PART I

ELECTIONS

6 In this Part,

(a) "cancelled ballot" means a ballot marked "cancelled" under Sections 116 or 118;

(b) "educational institution" means academies, universities, colleges, seminaries, institutes of technology, and certain other collegiate-level institutions, such as vocational schools, trade schools, and career colleges, and such similar institutions that award academic degrees or certifications for post secondary students;

(c) "election petition" means a petition presented pursuant to the *Controverted Elections Act*;

(d) "electoral boundaries" means the geographic boundaries of electoral districts or polling divisions, or both;

(e) "electoral boundaries commission report" means a report prepared by an independent electoral boundaries commission pursuant to the *House of Assembly Act*;

(f) "geographic description" means maps, geographic coordinates and any other geographic information that may describe a specific location or a boundary of any area;

(g) "implementation date" means the date on which legislation that implements an electoral boundaries commission report comes into force;

(h) "legal name" means an individual's family name, first name and middle name, if any;

(i) "municipality" means a municipality within the meaning of the *Municipal Government Act*;

(j) "official list of electors" is a list of electors provided by the returning officer to appropriate poll officials for use at an election day polling station pursuant to subsection 57(3) and 57(4);

(k) "polling division" means a territorial area fixed by the returning officer pursuant to Sections 35 and 36;

(l) "polling station" means a polling station established pursuant to Sections 92 and 93;

(m) "polling location" means the premises within which one or more polling stations have been established;

(n) "poll record" means the prescribed record of information gathered during the conduct of the poll related to

- (i) who has voted,
- (ii) seal numbers on ballot boxes,
- (iii) oaths taken,
- (iv) assistance provided to electors in marking ballots, and
- (v) objections;

(o) "preliminary list of electors" is a list of electors provided by the returning officer to candidates pursuant to subsections 52(2), 52(3) and 52(4);

(p) "rejected ballot" means a ballot that has been rejected under subsection 107(3), Section 130 or subsection 143(6);

(q) "residential centre" means a nursing home, special care home, assisted living facility, residential unit in a public hospital or any other residential facility operated for the purpose of the care and treatment of senior citizens or persons having a physical or mental disability;

(r) "revised list of electors" is a list of electors provided by the returning officer to appropriate poll officials for use at an advance polling station pursuant to subsections 57(1) and 57(2);

(s) "school board" means a school board within the meaning of the *Education Act*;

(t) "write-in ballot" means a prescribed form that is used by an elector to cast the elector's vote pursuant to Sections 101 to 108 and 140 to 142.

CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

7 (1) Subject to the approval of the House of Assembly by majority vote, the Governor in Council shall appoint a person to be the Chief Electoral Officer.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer, by virtue of the Chief Electoral Officer's position, is an officer of the House of Assembly.

(3) Subject to subsection (4), the Chief Electoral Officer holds office for a term not exceeding ten years and may be re-appointed to further terms of office.

(4) The Governor in Council may only remove the Chief Electoral Officer for cause or incapacity on the passing by the House of Assembly of a resolution carried by a vote of two thirds of the members voting thereon.

(5) Upon written advice of the President of the Executive Council and the Leader of the Opposition, the Governor in Council may, at any time the Legislature is not sitting, suspend the Chief Electoral Officer for cause or incapacity, but the suspension does not continue in force beyond the end of the ensuing sitting of the Legislature.

8 (1) Subject to subsection (2), the Chief Electoral Officer shall be paid remuneration within, but at or above the mid-point of, the annual salary rates for deputy ministers set out in the pay plan for deputy ministers together with any other remuneration payable to deputy ministers, which remuneration must be adjusted yearly by a percentage equal to the average increase for the remuneration of the deputy ministers.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the salary of the Chief Electoral Officer must not be reduced except on the passing by the House of Assembly of a resolution carried by a vote of two thirds of the members voting thereon.

(3) The Chief Electoral Officer is entitled to all rights, privileges and benefits, including pension benefits, to which deputy ministers are entitled.

(4) The Chief Electoral Officer is an employee within the meaning of the *Public Service Superannuation Act*.

9 (1) The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer is an office of the House of Assembly.

(2) The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer is to be known as Elections Nova Scotia.

(3) Elections Nova Scotia includes the Chief Electoral Officer, assistant chief electoral officer, employees of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer at the time this Act comes into force and such other employees as the Chief Electoral Officer may appoint pursuant to this Act.

(4) Elections Nova Scotia is a public body for the purpose of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the Chief Electoral Officer is the head of the public body.

10 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall supervise and be responsible for all matters relating to the work, conduct and administration of Elections Nova Scotia and of those employed at that Office.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall direct and supervise the activities of the assistant chief electoral officer.

(3) The Chief Electoral Officer may delegate to any employee of Elections Nova Scotia any duty or power conferred upon the Chief Electoral Officer by this or any other enactment or by the Governor in Council, other than reporting to the House of Assembly.

(4) Charge fees for

(a) services provided by Elections Nova Scotia on a time and materials cost-recovery basis; and

(b) products created and supplied by Elections Nova Scotia pursuant to the tariff of fees and expenses.

(5) Notwithstanding clause (4)(b) products created by Elections Nova Scotia shall be supplied without charge in prescribed quantities

(a) to candidates and registered parties during an election; and

(b) upon request to registered parties between elections on an annual basis.

(6) The Chief Electoral Officer may have a seal.

11 (1) On the advice of the Chief Electoral Officer, the Governor in Council may appoint an assistant chief electoral officer to the staff of Elections Nova Scotia.

(2) The assistant chief electoral officer shall be paid a salary determined by the Chief Electoral Officer in accordance with the annual salary rates for associate deputy ministers set out in the pay plan for associate deputy ministers together with any other remuneration payable to associate deputy ministers.

(3) The assistant chief electoral officer is an employee within the meaning of the *Public Service Superannuation Act* and is entitled to all the benefits and privileges provided to employees of the civil service under the *Civil Service Act* and the *Public Service Superannuation Act*.

(4) The assistant chief electoral officer shall assist the Chief Electoral Officer in the performance of the Chief Electoral Officer's duties.

(5) The assistant chief electoral officer shall, during any vacancy in the position of the Chief Electoral Officer, or during the illness or absence of the Chief Electoral Officer, have and exercise all the powers and duties of the Chief Electoral Officer.

(6) Before entering upon the exercise of the assistant chief electoral officer's duty a person appointed under subsections (1) shall take an oath to well and truly perform the duties of the assistant chief electoral officer.

(7) The Chief Electoral Officer shall administer the oath referred to in subsection (6).

(8) In the absence of the assistant chief electoral officer, the Chief Electoral Officer may temporarily appoint an acting assistant chief electoral officer.

12 In the absence or incapacity of the Chief Electoral Officer, upon written advice of the President of the Executive Council and the Leader of the Opposition, the Governor in Council may temporarily appoint an Acting Chief Electoral Officer who has all the powers and performs all the duties of the Chief Electoral Officer.

13 (1) All employees of Elections Nova Scotia are civil service employees in accordance with the *Civil Service Act* and the *Public Service Superannuation Act* and are entitled to all the benefits and privileges provided for in those Acts.

(2) The individuals holding the positions of Chief Electoral Officer and assistant chief electoral officer at the time this Act comes into force continues in those positions as if those individuals had been appointed under this Act and are subject to this Act.

(3) Each individual holding the position of a returning officer at the time this Act comes into force continues in the position as if the individual had been appointed under this Act and is subject to this Act.

14 (1) Notwithstanding the *Civil Service Act* or the *General Civil Service Regulations*, the Chief Electoral Officer shall

(a) appoint such persons as employees in Elections Nova Scotia as the Chief Electoral Officer considers necessary to perform the Chief Electoral Officer's duties; and

(b) place them in such positions as the Chief Electoral Officer considers appropriate under such classification ratings and at such rates of remuneration within

those classification ratings established by the Public Service Commission as the Chief Electoral Officer considers appropriate;

(c) the Chief Electoral Officer shall establish the qualifications for assistant chief electoral officers and establish a fair process for hiring based on merit and a fair process for removal.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer may appoint on a temporary basis, individuals as are necessary to enable the Chief Electoral Officer to perform the duties and functions of that office.

(3) The *Civil Service Act* does not apply to individuals appointed pursuant to subsection (2) and the Chief Electoral Officer may establish their remuneration and the other terms and conditions of their engagement.

15 (1) Notwithstanding any Government procurement rules or policies, the Chief Electoral Officer may engage the services of such counsel, accountants, auditors or other professionals or experts to advise or assist the Chief Electoral Officer in respect of matters as the Chief Electoral Officer considers necessary to carry out the Chief Electoral Officer's powers and duties under this Act.

(2) Payments made to experts under this Section may be determined by the Chief Electoral Officer and must be within the limits of the appropriations, including any additional appropriations, for Elections Nova Scotia.

16 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer has all the powers, authorities, rights, privileges and immunities vested in the Chief Electoral Officer by this Act, any other enactment, or the Governor in Council.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer has all the powers, authorities, rights, privileges and immunities exercisable by deputy ministers under the *Civil Service Act*, the *Public Service Act* or any other enactment, except for any specific powers, authorities or rights related to the management of particular departments or programs.

(3) Except as otherwise provided in this Act, Elections Nova Scotia shall follow Government policies but any approvals required by those policies are to be read as requiring the approval of the Chief Electoral Officer.

17 (1) Neither the Chief Electoral Officer nor any persons who are or were employees of Elections Nova Scotia or persons under contract to the Office may be sued or be found liable by reason of any action they have done or failed to do, or anything said, in good faith in the performance of their duties.

(2) No civil action may be instituted by reason of the publication of a report of the Chief Electoral Officer under this Act or any other enactment or authority or of the publication in good faith of an extract or summary of such a report or comments made in connection with such a report.

(3) In the case of any legal action against or involving them, related to the performance of their duties in good faith, the Chief Electoral Officer or previous Chief Electoral Officer and current or past employees of Elections Nova Scotia shall be indemnified and provided with legal counsel by Elections Nova Scotia.

18 The Chief Electoral Officer shall present annually to a committee of the House of Assembly, designated for that purpose by the House, estimates of the sums of money that will be required by the Chief Electoral Officer to conduct the activities required under this Act and any other enactment or authority, together with any estimated recoveries, and

(a) the Committee shall review and, except for the estimated expenses designated for payments that are required by virtue of statutory obligations of the Chief Electoral Officer, may alter as it considers proper the estimates presented by the Chief Electoral Officer;

(b) notice of meetings by the Committee to review or alter the estimates presented by the Chief Electoral Officer must be given to the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee and the Chair may attend those meetings; and

(c) the Chair of the Committee shall recommend the estimates as altered by the Committee to the Treasury Board for inclusion in the Government's estimates.

19 (1) At the request of the Public Accounts Committee, the Chief Electoral Officer and any employee of Elections Nova Scotia designated by the Chief Electoral Officer shall attend meetings of the Committee or its subcommittees in order to

(a) assist the Committee in its review of the reports of the Chief Electoral Officer; and

(b) discuss the plans and performance of Elections Nova Scotia.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall provide the Public Accounts Committee with annual business plan and performance reports of Elections Nova Scotia and they are public documents.

(3) The Chief Electoral Officer shall describe in the annual business plan provided pursuant to subsection (2) any studies that Elections Nova Scotia intends to undertake pursuant to subsection 20(4).

20 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer may implement public communication, education and information programs to make the electoral process better known to the public, particularly to those persons and groups most likely to experience difficulties in exercising their democratic rights, including information and curriculum materials for new electors.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer may make materials available to school boards for distribution to students who have reached voting age or will soon do so, including information on

(a) Nova Scotia's electoral process;

(b) the right to vote;

- (c) how to have one's name added to the Register of Electors; and
- (d) any other matter that the Chief Electoral Officer considers useful for electors.

(3) The Chief Electoral Officer may, using any media or other means, provide the public with information relating to Nova Scotia's electoral process, the democratic right to vote and how to be a candidate.

- (4) The Chief Electoral Officer may carry out studies, including studies respecting
- (a) the voting procedure;
 - (b) voting by persons with disabilities; and
 - (c) improvements in electoral finance under Part II of this Act.

(5) The Chief Electoral Officer's studies may be conducted by doing one or more of the following:

- (a) causing surveys and research to be carried out and reports to be written;
- (b) establishing advisory committees; and
- (c) holding conferences.

(6) The results of a study pursuant to subsection (4) must be made public.

21 The Assistant Chief Electoral Officer shall

- (a) assist the Chief Electoral Officer in the performance of the duties of office; and
- (b) possess the powers and perform the duties of the Chief Electoral Officer
 - (i) in the absence or illness of the Chief Electoral Officer,
 - (ii) on the failure of the Chief Electoral Officer to perform the duties of the office, or
 - (iii) in the event of a vacancy in the office of Chief Electoral Officer.

RETURNING OFFICERS, ASSISTANT RETURNING OFFICERS AND ELECTION CLERKS

22 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall appoint a returning officer for each electoral district.

(2) Under the general direction of the Chief Electoral Officer, the returning officer is responsible for the preparation for and conduct of an election in the electoral district.

(3) For each electoral district where the Chief Electoral Officer has determined that one returning office in that district would result in a substantial number of electors not

having convenient access to the returning office, the returning officer shall appoint an assistant returning officer for a single election for an area designated by the Chief Electoral Officer.

- (4) Notwithstanding subsection (3), between elections, the CEO may
 - (a) appoint on a temporary basis individuals and designate them as assistant returning officers to perform duties under the direction of the returning officer, and
 - (b) pay such individuals pursuant to the tariff of fees and expenses.

(5) The Chief Electoral Officer shall establish the qualifications for returning officers and assistant returning officers and establish a fair process for hiring based on merit and a fair process for removal.

- (6) The returning officer and the assistant returning officer of an electoral district must be
- (a) eligible to vote in the Province; and
 - (b) resident of the electoral district for which the returning officer was appointed.

(7) Notwithstanding subsection (5) and clause (6)(b), where it is not possible to conduct an election without an immediate appointment, the Chief Electoral Officer may appoint a returning officer on a temporary basis without following the process established pursuant to subsection (5), but the appointee's term ends when the vacancy is filled pursuant to that subsection.

- 23** (1) The office of a returning officer is not vacant until the returning officer
- (a) dies;
 - (b) resigns; or
 - (c) is removed from office pursuant to subsection (3), (5) and (6).

(2) The appointment as assistant returning officer terminates on the completion of duties and responsibilities for the election for which the assistant returning officer was appointed or earlier if dismissed by the returning officer.

(3) The office of a returning officer becomes vacant on the implementation date of an electoral boundaries commission report.

(4) A returning officer or assistant returning officer may be re-appointed.

(5) The Chief Electoral Officer may remove or temporarily suspend from office a returning officer and the returning officer may remove or temporarily suspend from office an assistant returning officer

- (a) who is incapable, by reason of illness, physical or mental disability or otherwise, of satisfactorily performing the returning officer's or the assistant returning officer's duties;

(b) who fails to discharge competently a duty of a returning officer or assistant returning officer or to comply with an instruction of the Chief Electoral Officer;

(c) who contravenes subsection (7), whether or not the contravention occurs in the exercise of the returning officer's or assistant returning officer's duties;

(d) who ceases to reside in the electoral district;

(e) otherwise for cause.

(6) Within a year from the date of suspension and upon review, the Chief Electoral Officer shall end the suspension or permanently remove from office a returning officer or the returning officer may end the suspension or permanently remove from office an assistant returning officer.

(7) No returning officer or assistant returning officer shall, while in office, knowingly engage in politically partisan conduct.

(8) An assistant returning officer

(a) acts under the direction of and is responsible to the returning officer; and

(b) shall carry out any other responsibilities assigned by the returning officer except

(i) the establishment of polling divisions,

(ii) the receipt of nominations,

(iii) the granting of a poll, and

(iv) the official count.

(9) Upon appointment, a returning officer and assistant returning officer shall complete an oath of office in prescribed form and transmit it to the Chief Electoral Officer.

(10) A returning officer and an assistant returning officer shall immediately notify the Chief Electoral Officer if unable to act or he or she has moved out of the electoral district.

(11) A returning officer must where possible give three months notice of resignation in writing to the Chief Electoral Officer.

24 (1) At the direction of the Chief Electoral Officer, a returning officer or, where the office of the returning officer is vacant, the Chief Electoral Officer, shall appoint an election clerk and an assistant returning officer shall appoint an assistant election clerk.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall establish the qualifications for election clerks and assistant election clerks.

(3) In subsection (4), "immediate family" of a person means

(a) a spouse, child, mother, father, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, niece or nephew, grandmother or grandfather or the child, mother, father, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, niece or nephew, grandmother or grandfather of the spouse; or

(b) a person who lives with the person.

(4) Notwithstanding subsection (2),

(a) a returning officer shall not appoint a member of the returning officer's immediate family as an election clerk; and

(b) an assistant returning officer shall not appoint a member of the assistant returning officer's immediate family as an assistant election clerk.

(5) The appointment as an election clerk or an assistant election clerk shall be made in the prescribed form.

(6) Where an election clerk or assistant election clerk is unable or unwilling to act, neglects his or her duties or the office of election clerk or assistant election clerk becomes vacant, the returning officer or assistant returning officer, as the case may be, may appoint another election clerk, or assistant election clerk in his or her place respectively.

(7) The appointment as an election clerk or an assistant election clerk terminates on the completion of duties and responsibilities for the election for which he or she was appointed or earlier if dismissed by the returning officer or assistant returning officer, as the case may be.

(8) An election clerk or assistant election clerk may be re-appointed.

25 Upon appointment, an election clerk and an assistant election clerk shall complete an oath of office in prescribed form, and the returning officer or the assistant returning officer, as the case may be, shall transmit the oath to the Chief Electoral Officer.

26 (1) During an election, an election clerk and assistant election clerk shall perform the duties assigned by the returning officer or assistant returning officer, as the case may be.

(2) At the request of the Chief Electoral Officer, the election clerk may act in place of the returning officer for a time determined by the Chief Electoral Officer and, while so acting, the election clerk has the powers and shall perform the duties of the returning officer and, where a writ has already been issued, act under the writ as if it had been already addressed to the election clerk without taking the returning officer's oath of office and with power to appoint an election clerk.

(3) At the request of the Chief Electoral Officer, the assistant election clerk may act in place of the assistant returning officer for a time determined by the Chief Electoral Officer and, while so acting, the assistant election clerk has the powers and shall perform the duties of the assistant returning officer without taking the assistant returning officer's oath of office.

(4) An election clerk shall immediately notify the Chief Electoral Officer if the returning officer is unable to act.

(5) An assistant election clerk shall immediately notify the returning officer if the assistant returning officer is unable to act.

27 (1) At a time determined by the Chief Electoral Officer, a returning officer or an assistant returning officer shall open and maintain a returning office at some convenient place in the electoral district that is accessible to physically disabled persons.

(2) In addition to the posting of the notice of election required under clause 30(1)(b), the returning officer shall give public notice of the location of the returning office in the manner determined by the Chief Electoral Officer.

(3) Where a place allowing convenient access cannot be found in the electoral district, the returning officer shall open and maintain a returning office in a neighbouring electoral district with the approval of the Chief Electoral Officer.

28 (1) Either the returning officer or the election clerk shall remain on duty in the returning officer's returning office during times prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer.

(2) Either the assistant returning officer or the assistant election clerk shall remain on duty in the assistant returning officer's returning office during times prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer.

WRIT AND NOTICE OF ELECTION

29 An election must be instituted when the Governor in Council passes an order fixing

(a) the date of the writ, which must be the same for all writs issued for a general election; and

(b) the date of election day, which must be a Tuesday, not less than thirty days from the date of the writ.

30 (1) Upon receipt of a certified copy of the order in council, the Chief Electoral Officer shall

(a) issue in prescribed form, a writ in accordance with the order and a notice of election;

(b) cause a notice of election in prescribed form including the time and date of election day, close of nominations, returning office continuous poll, application to vote by write-in ballot, advance poll and any other information the Chief Electoral Officer considers necessary to be published in every newspaper circulating in the Province in the case of a general election, and in each local newspaper circulating in the electoral district in the case of a by-election; and

(c) cause the writ and the notice of election to be published on the Elections Nova Scotia website; and

(d) cause the writ and the notice of election to be transmitted to each returning officer of an electoral district in which an election is to be held.

(2) When the Chief Electoral Officer considers it appropriate, or immediately after the issue of the writ, the Chief Electoral Officer shall cause to be delivered to a returning officer and an assistant returning officer a sufficient number of copies of this Act including amendments, election forms, ballot paper, ballots and other election materials and supplies required for the conduct of the election.

31 Not later than five days from the date of the writ, a returning officer shall

(a) sign the notice of election for the electoral district in prescribed form; and

(b) cause this notice of election to be posted in the office of the returning officer and in the office of the assistant returning officer, if any, where it must be kept available for public inspection at all reasonable times.

(c) transmit one copy of the notice of election to each registered party and to any candidate in the electoral district.

32 Where a returning officer

(a) refuses or neglects, or is unable because of death or other cause, to act;

(b) resigns; or

(c) is removed,

the Chief Electoral Officer may appoint another person to act under a writ already issued as if it had been so addressed.

33 Where the Chief Electoral Officer certifies it is impossible to hold an election in an electoral district on the day specified in a writ, the Governor in Council may make an order

(a) withdrawing the writ;

(b) specifying a new date for the writ and election day; and

(c) requiring the Chief Electoral Officer to issue a new writ.

34 (1) Where the Legislature is dissolved after the issue of a writ for a by-election, the writ is thereupon deemed to have been superseded and withdrawn and the Chief Electoral Officer shall publish a notice in the Royal Gazette and on the Elections Nova Scotia website of the withdrawal of the writ and the cancellation of the by-election.

(2) The list of electors used for the general election following the dissolution of the Legislature, pursuant to clause 52(1)(a) shall be the list of electors prepared after the issue of

the writ for the by-election including all corrections, and deletions applied as of the date of the withdrawal of the writ.

POLLING DIVISIONS

35 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall, with the assistance of the returning officers, subdivide each electoral district into as many polling divisions as the Chief Electoral Officer considers necessary giving due consideration to:

(a) factors such as geography, population density and distribution, and other factors which may affect the convenience of electors;

(b) the incorporation, where practicable, of approximately four hundred and fifty electors in a polling division.

(2) In respect of each electoral district, as directed by the Chief Electoral Officer the returning officer shall

(a) review the population distribution and consider any changes to the polling division boundaries.

(b) assist in the preparation of a geographic description of each polling division and identify each with a consecutive number.

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the Chief Electoral Officer may establish a separate polling division for a residential centre in which ten or more electors may reside.

36 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer may amalgamate two or more polling divisions or subdivide a polling division if the amalgamation or subdivision will improve the conduct of an election.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer may at any time before an election direct a returning officer to correct an error or omission or redefine a boundary of a polling division.

37 The Chief Electoral Officer shall, before the grant of a poll, deliver a printed copy and a copy in electronic form of the geographic description of the polling divisions for an electoral district in respect of which a writ has been issued to each registered party.

ELECTORS

38 (1) Subject to Section 39, a person may vote in an election if the person

(a) is eighteen years of age or older on election day;

(b) is a Canadian citizen on or before election day;

(c) has resided in the Province for six months immediately preceding the date of the writ; and

(d) resides in the electoral district in which the election is being held.

(2) A candidate at a general election who was a member on the day before the dissolution of the House of Assembly immediately preceding the election, and any spouse or dependant of the candidate who lives with the candidate and is qualified as an elector, may have their names entered on the list of electors for either

(a) the polling division in which the candidate resides; or

(b) any polling division in the electoral district in which the former member is a candidate.

(3) A member of the Parliament of Canada representing an electoral district in the Province who resides outside the Province, and the spouse or any dependant of the member who lives with the member and is otherwise qualified as an elector, may have their names entered on the list of electors in the polling division of the electoral district in which the member last resided in the Province.

(4) A senator in the Parliament of Canada representing the Province who resides outside the Province, and the spouse or any dependant of the senator who lives with the senator and is otherwise qualified as an elector, may have their names entered on the list of electors in the polling division of the electoral district in which the senator last resided in the Province.

39 The Chief Electoral Officer and the Assistant Chief Electoral Officer are not entitled to be registered as electors.

40 (1) A person is resident of the place where the person lives and to which, whenever absent, the person intends to return.

(2) A person may be resident of only one place at a time.

(3) A person does not cease being a resident of a place by leaving the place for temporary purposes only.

(4) Where a person usually sleeps in one place and has meals or is employed in another place, the person is resident in the place where the person sleeps.

(5) Where a person has temporary residential quarters, those quarters are considered to be the place in which the person is resident only if the person has no other place the person considers as that person's residence.

(6) Where a person is

(a) incarcerated; or

(b) detained in a provincial correctional facility or psychiatric facility by reason of that person being found by a court to be not criminally responsible or unfit to stand trial or who is undergoing a psychiatric assessment as a result of being

charged with a criminal offence, the person is deemed to be a resident of the electoral district in which the person resided immediately before being incarcerated or detained unless the person was not resident in the Province before being detained, in which case the person is deemed to reside in the electoral district in which the person's correctional facility or psychiatric facility is located.

(7) Where a person is being provided with food, lodging and other social services by a shelter, hostel or similar institution, the person is resident in the shelter, hostel or institution.

(8) Where the rules set out in subsections (1) to (7) are not sufficient to determine the place where a person is resident, the place where a person is resident must be determined by the appropriate election officer with reference to all the facts of the case.

(9) A person who, on the date of the writ,

(a) is registered and in attendance at an educational institution;

(b) resides in an electoral district or polling division other than that of the person's family home; and

(c) is qualified as an elector,

may be included on the list of electors in one or other of the polling divisions, but not both.

(10) A residence that is generally occupied by a person only between May and October but that is generally unoccupied between November and April is not the person's residence unless the person does not have another residence in the Province where the person resides between November and April.

41 (1) In this Section, "member of the Canadian Forces" means

(a) a member of the regular force or a special force of the Canadian Forces;

(b) a member of the reserve force of the Canadian Forces who is on full-time training or service or on active service; or

(c) a person who is employed outside Canada by the Canadian Forces as a teacher in, or as a member of the administrative support staff for, a Canadian Forces school.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection 38(1), a person who has left the Province and intends to return and reside in the Province is eligible to vote in an election if the person is a Canadian citizen who

(a) will be eighteen years of age or older on election day;

(b) is absent from the Province on election day

(i) while serving as a member of the Canadian Forces,

(ii) while engaged in the service of the Government of Canada or the Government of the Province,

(iii) while attending an educational institution,

(iv) while engaged as an employee of an international organization of which Canada is a member, or

(v) because the person has also left the Province and intends to return and is living with a person referred to in any of subclauses (i) to (iv); and

(c) immediately before leaving the Province in any of the circumstances described in clause (b),

(i) had resided in the Province for at least six months, and

(ii) resided in the electoral district in which the election is being held.

42 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall establish and maintain a Register of Electors for the Province.

(2) The Register of Electors must include for each elector

(a) the residential address;

(b) the mailing address;

(c) the legal name;

(d) the sex;

(e) the contact information;

(f) the day, month and year of birth;

(g) a unique identification number assigned by the Chief Electoral Officer;

(h) any other identification number assigned by other persons who provide information under Section 43 to the Chief Electoral Officer to assist in distinguishing one person from another, or verifying the information about a person; and

(i) other information required to be included in an application for registration as prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer.

(3) The information referred to in subsection (2) may only be used to verify the identification of an elector when creating, revising or updating information in the Register of Electors.

(4) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the Register of Electors may contain information about persons resident in the Province who may become eligible to vote.

43 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer may amend information in the Register of Electors and shall take all steps the Chief Electoral Officer considers necessary to ensure the elector information described in subsection 42(2) and the related geographic descriptions are accurate.

(2) The Register of Electors must be updated between elections as determined by the Chief Electoral Officer and as soon as possible after an election.

(3) The Register of Electors must be updated

(a) from information that electors have given the Chief Electoral Officer in the prescribed manner;

(b) subject to subsection 42(3), from information held in the National Register of Electors or any other information provided to the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada for the purpose of updating the National Register of Electors and the lists of electors for use at a general election, by-election, plebiscite or referendum conducted by the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada;

(c) from information gathering activities carried out under the direction of the Chief Electoral Officer including mailings and distribution of information, telephone calls, e-mail, and personal visits to the homes of persons who may be electors;

(d) from information gathered by returning officers and assistant returning officers according to the instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer; and

(e) from information obtained from any source the Chief Electoral Officer considers advisable.

(4) The Chief Electoral Officer may engage and pay the personnel necessary to carry out the updating referred to in subsection(3) .

(5) Notwithstanding any enactment, a public body as defined in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, at the request of the Chief Electoral Officer, shall provide the personal information held by that body that is required to create, revise or update the Register of Electors.

(6) The information provided to the Chief Electoral Officer under subsection (5) may only be used for the purpose of updating the Register of Electors.

(7) A public body providing information under subsection (5) may charge a reasonable amount for providing the information, but the amount charged may not exceed the actual cost of producing the information.

(8) The Chief Electoral Officer may retain information collected under subsections (3) and (5) for the purpose of matching information subsequently collected from time to time with information already contained in the Register of Electors.

(9) Notwithstanding the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, returning officers and assistant returning officers may be granted access to the Register of Electors by the Chief Electoral Officer between elections for the purpose of updating the information contained in the Register of Electors according to the instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer.

44 (1) Notwithstanding the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the Chief Electoral Officer shall disclose

(a) to each registered party the information described in clauses 42(2)(a), (b), (c) and (g) for the province;

(b) to each independent member of the House of Assembly the information described in clauses 42(2)(a), (b), (c) and (g) for the member's electoral district;

at the time and in the manner determined by the Chief Electoral Officer.

(2) The information provided pursuant to subsection (1) to a registered party and to an independent member must be used only for electoral purposes.

45 (1) Persons are entitled to confirm or update information in the Register of Electors about themselves and verify the information is correct.

(2) Any person requesting access to information for the purpose set out in subsection (1) shall complete an oath in prescribed form.

ENUMERATION

46 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer

(a) shall request advice respecting the areas of the province where enumeration should be conducted

(i) between elections from the registered parties and members of the Legislative Assembly,

(ii) during an election from the registered parties and registered electoral district associations who shall provide any such advice no later than five days from the issuance of the writ;

(b) may cause an enumeration to be conducted under this Section for the purpose of updating the Register of Electors pursuant to Section 43 between elections or the list of electors during an election; and

(c) if an enumeration is to be conducted, shall designate the period of the enumeration.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall obtain the consent of the House of Assembly if an enumeration between elections is estimated to involve more than one third of the total number of electoral districts in the Province.

(3) An enumeration may be conducted for

(a) an entire electoral district; or

(b) any part of the electoral district, including a building with multiple dwelling units.

47 (1) Subject to subsection (3), when requested by the Chief Electoral Officer, a returning officer shall give written notice of enumeration to the two opposed registered parties that, at the preceding election in the electoral district, sponsored the candidates who received the highest number of votes and the next highest number of votes, respectively, requesting each registered party

(a) within twenty days from the receipt of the notice of enumeration to be conducted between elections; and

(b) no later than five days from the issuance of a writ during an election, to provide the returning officer with a list of persons from which one or more enumerators may be selected.

(2) Where, in an electoral district,

(a) a candidate was elected by acclamation at the preceding election;

(b) the boundaries have been altered since the preceding election; or

(c) a registered party mentioned in subsection (1) is not available to provide a list of persons to act as enumerators,

the returning officer shall, in consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer determine which two opposed registered parties are to provide the list of persons pursuant to subsection (1).

(3) The returning officer shall endeavour to appoint two persons who represent different registered parties as a team of enumerators for each assigned area where enumeration is to be conducted.

(4) The returning officer shall notify each registered party that supplied a list of persons of the names of the enumerators chosen and the assigned area for which each is to act.

48 (1) Where the lists requested pursuant to subsection 47(1) do not contain a sufficient number of qualified persons, a returning officer shall proceed to appoint enumerators without the lists.

(2) A returning officer may, on reasonable grounds, refuse to appoint an enumerator from lists supplied pursuant to subsection 47(1), and shall advise the registered parties of those grounds.

(3) Upon appointment and before commencing their duties, the enumerators shall take the prescribed oath and the returning officer shall supply each team of enumerators with appropriate materials for the conduct of the enumeration.

49 (1) The team of two enumerators appointed for an assigned area shall

(a) act jointly and not individually in the collection of information for the Register of Electors or the list of electors; and

(b) report the details of a disagreement between them to the returning officer.

(2) The returning officer shall settle a disagreement reported to the returning officer and communicate the returning officer's decision to the enumerators who are bound by it.

50 An enumerator shall conduct the enumeration in the manner prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer and record the information in the forms prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer.

51 An enumerator must be given access to the entrance door of each residence in an apartment building, condominium complex, other residential complexes with controlled access and residential centres.

LIST OF ELECTORS USED AT AN ELECTION

52 (1) As soon as possible after a writ of election is issued, the Chief Electoral Officer shall

(a) provide the returning officer with the list of electors prepared from the Register of Electors; and

(b) advise the returning officer of the date on which the Register of Electors was most recently updated.

(2) As soon as possible after the receipt of the list of electors under subsection (1) but no later than the fifteenth day before election day, each returning officer shall

(a) review the list of electors of their electoral district for accuracy;

(b) prepare a preliminary list of electors for each polling division in the electoral district and include a statement indicating the number of names the list contains;

(c) certify the preliminary list of electors in the prescribed form; and

(3) As soon as the preliminary list is certified and not later than the end of day on the fourteenth day before election day, distribute to each candidate in the electoral district the preliminary list of electors for the electoral district.

(4) The preliminary list of electors under subsection (2) must include the information described in clauses 42(2)(a), (b), (c) and (g) and voting status of the elector.

53 Each returning officer shall send a notice of registration and voting information, in the prescribed form, not later than Monday, the fifteenth day before election day, to each elector whose name appears on the list of electors for the electoral district.

REVISION OF THE LIST OF ELECTORS

54 (1) Following the certification of the preliminary list of electors under clause 52(2)(c), the returning officer and the assistant returning officer shall revise the list of electors to ensure, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate list from which electors may be crossed off as they present themselves to vote.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall advise the public how and when the list of electors is to be revised and provide any other information the Chief Electoral Officer considers appropriate.

(3) The returning officer and the assistant returning officer may appoint a revision assistant and other election officers qualified to assist with revising the list of electors, including, with the approval of the Chief Electoral Officer, enumerators for the purpose of revising the list of electors for a particular area or building containing multiple residential units.

(4) The returning officer and the assistant returning officer may delegate their authority under Sections 55 to 56 to an election officer appointed under subsection (3).

55 (1) The returning officer and the assistant returning officer shall receive applications in the prescribed form for an addition or correction to or a deletion from the list of electors.

(2) An elector or a person acting on the elector's behalf may apply in person or in writing for the elector to be added to the list of electors and the application must include

- (a) legal name;
- (b) date of birth;
- (c) proof of identity and residence;
- (d) sex;
- (e) mailing address; and
- (f) current residential address.

(3) An elector or a person acting on the elector's behalf may apply in person, orally or in writing for the elector to be removed from the list of electors and the application must include

- (a) satisfactory proof of the elector's identity; and
- (b) satisfactory proof that the elector is deceased; or
- (c) satisfactory proof that the elector no longer resides in the Province; or
- (d) satisfactory proof that the information in respect of the elector is otherwise not valid.

(4) An elector or a person acting on the elector's behalf may make an application in person, orally or in writing for a correction to the elector's name and particulars and the application must include satisfactory proof of the elector's identity and residence.

(5) The person acting on an elector's behalf under subsections (2), (3) and (4) may do so for the person's child, grandchild, brother, sister, parent, grandparent or spouse.

(6) A caregiver or a friend acting on an elector's behalf under subsections (2), (3), and (4) may only apply in person and shall take an oath in prescribed form that the information he or she is providing is correct.

56 (1) Before accepting an application under subsections 55(2), (3) or (4), the returning officer or the assistant returning officer must be satisfied that the applicant has provided sufficient grounds, in accordance with guidelines established by the Chief Electoral Officer and, where the returning officer or the assistant returning officer is so satisfied, he or she shall revise the list of electors in accordance with procedures determined by the Chief Electoral Officer.

(2) A returning officer or an assistant returning officer who discovers incorrect information on the list of electors shall revise the list to correct the error.

(3) A returning officer or an assistant returning officer may remove the name of a person from the list of electors if the person applies in person on the prescribed form to have the person's own name removed from the list of electors and the returning officer or an assistant returning officer is satisfied of the person's identity.

(4) Where the list of electors is updated by adding an elector's name to the list, the name must also be added to the Register of Electors unless the elector requests otherwise on the prescribed form.

(5) Where an elector is removed from the list of electors under subsection 55(3), the elector must also be marked as removed on the Register of Electors.

(6) Where an elector is removed from the list of electors under subsection (3), the elector must also be marked as removed on the Register of Electors if the elector so requests on the prescribed form.

(7) An elector who does not have proof of identity or residence the elector shall swear an oath in the prescribed form.

(8) An irregularity in the preparation or revision of the list of electors is not a ground for questioning the validity of an election.

57 (1) Before an advance poll, the returning officer shall

(a) prepare and certify the revised list of electors for each polling division in the electoral district for use at the advance poll,

(b) deliver to the appropriate poll officials the revised list of electors that is required to conduct the election in their advance polling station, and

(c) deliver to each candidate for that electoral district the revised list of electors for the electoral district.

(2) The revised list of electors prepared pursuant to subsection (1) must include the information described in clauses 42(2)(a), (b), (c) and (g) and voting status of the elector.

(3) Before election day, the returning officer shall

(a) prepare and certify the official list of electors for each polling division in the electoral district for use on election day,

(b) deliver to the appropriate poll officials the official list of electors that is required to conduct the election in their polling station on election day, and

(c) deliver to each candidate for that electoral district the official list of electors for the electoral district.

(4) The official list of electors prepared pursuant to subsection (3) must include the information described in clauses 42(2)(a), (b), (c) and (g) and voting status of the elector.

(5) A candidate who has been provided with a copy of the list of electors for the electoral district may use the list only for electoral purposes.

58 Each returning officer as soon as possible following an addition or a correction to the list of electors, shall send a notice of registration and voting information to every elector in respect of whom the change has been made describing how the elector's name and particulars will appear on the revised or official list of electors.

59 (1) As soon as possible after election day, the Chief Electoral Officer shall prepare a final list of electors for each electoral district in which an election has been held, which list must include the legal name, mailing address and civic address of each elector whose name was on or added to the official list of electors by the close of polls on election day.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall provide one copy of the final list of electors to each elected member for the member's electoral district and one copy of the final list containing all electoral districts to each registered party.

(3) A registered party or a member of the House of Assembly who has been provided with a copy of the final list of electors may use the list only for electoral purposes.

60 The form of the copies of the list distributed pursuant to clauses 52(3), 57(1)(b) and (c), 57(3)(b) and (c) and subsections 59(2) must be as determined by the Chief Electoral Officer.

61 (1) During the time that the list of electors is being revised, an elector may object to the inclusion of a person on the list of electors by filing an affidavit of objection in the

prescribed form with the returning officer for the electoral district in which the person who is the subject of the objection is shown to reside.

(2) An elector may make an objection on the basis that the person has died or is not qualified to vote and the affidavit must specify the basis of the objection, including the facts supporting the objection and the name and address of the person making the objection.

(3) Where the returning officer is able to confirm that the person is dead, the returning officer shall allow the objection and remove the person from the list of electors.

(4) Except where the returning officer has determined that the person is dead under subsection (3), the returning officer shall make a reasonable effort to notify the person against whom the objection is made of the objection, identify the individual who made the objection and the basis on which it is made.

(5) Where after receiving notice of the objection the person provides satisfactory proof of the person's right to vote or swears an oath or affirmation as to this right, the returning officer shall leave the person's name on the list of electors.

(6) Where after receiving the notice of objection the person refuses or is unable to provide proof of qualifications to vote or refuses to swear an oath as to such qualifications, the returning officer shall remove the person's name from the list of electors.

(7) Where the returning officer is unable to contact the person who is the subject of the objection, the returning officer shall remove the person's name from the list of electors if the returning officer is satisfied that the objection is valid.

PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION OF ELECTORS

62 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer may include fictitious information within the elector information provided pursuant to Section 44 and within the preliminary, revised or official lists of electors provided during an election, for the purpose of tracing any unauthorized use of elector information.

(2) Candidates shall destroy all lists of electors received during an election and any copies of the list of electors provided to others by or on behalf of the candidate and inform the Chief Electoral Officer of the destruction of such lists in the prescribed form, within ten days of the close of the polls on election day.

(3) Notwithstanding the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the information contained in

(i) clauses 42(2)(a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g) may be disclosed by the Chief Electoral Officer to municipalities and school boards for electoral purposes; and

(ii) Section 42 may be disclosed to the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada at the time and in the manner determined by the Chief Electoral Officer.

(4) A municipality or school board shall only disclose the information contained in clauses 42(2)(a), (b), and (c) received from the Chief Electoral Officer to villages or candidates nominated at a municipal or school board election.

(5) A school board provided with elector information pursuant to clause 3)(i) shall destroy all such information received during an election and any copies of elector information provided to others by or on behalf of the school board and confirm to the Chief Electoral Officer that the information has been destroyed in the prescribed form, within ten days of the close of polls on election day.

(6) A municipality provided with elector information pursuant to clause (3)(i) shall confirm in the prescribed form, within ten days of the close of polls on election day that all the elector information provided by the Chief Electoral Officer and provided by the municipality to others including a candidate nominated at a municipal election, has been used only for election administration purposes.

NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES

63 A candidate must

- (a) be a Canadian citizen;
- (b) be eighteen years of age or older on election day; and
- (c) not be disqualified or ineligible under this Act, the *House of Assembly Act*, or any other Act, to be a candidate or a member of the House of Assembly.

64 A person may be a candidate in only one electoral district at a time.

65 (1) A nomination must be in the prescribed form and include

- (a) a signed statement by the prospective candidate of
 - (i) the prospective candidate's legal name and residential address,
 - (ii) the name by which the prospective candidate is usually known, if different than the legal name and the prospective candidate wishes to have that name on the ballot instead of the prospective candidate's legal name,
 - (iii) the prospective candidate's official agent's name and residential address,
 - (iv) the prospective candidate's auditor's name and business address,
 - (v) an address for serving documents under this Act on the candidate or the official agent if different than the address given under clause (i) or (iii),
 - (vi) the name of any registered party that has endorsed the prospective candidate or a statement that the prospective candidate is an independent candidate,

(vii) a signed declaration of the prospective candidate that the prospective candidate is qualified and eligible to be nominated,

(viii) a signed statement by the prospective candidate consenting to the nomination, and

(ix) where the prospective candidate is endorsed by a registered party, a statement by the prospective candidate consenting to the endorsement;

(b) in the prescribed form, the names and residential addresses of at least five electors in the electoral district who support the nomination, and a signed oath by each of them that they are eligible to vote in the electoral district; and

(c) the nomination must be accompanied by the following

(i) where the prospective candidate is endorsed by a registered party, a statement signed by the leader that the prospective candidate is the endorsed candidate of the party, and

(ii) a nomination deposit of two hundred dollars in legal tender or a certified cheque or money order for that amount made payable to the Minister of Finance.

66 (1) Nominations close on the fourteenth day before election day at two o'clock in the afternoon.

(2) The nomination documents and nomination deposit required by Section 65 must be received by the returning officer between the date of the notice of election and two o'clock in the afternoon on the close of nominations.

(3) It is the prospective candidate's obligation to ensure that the nomination documents and nomination deposit are received in accordance with this Section.

67 (1) Upon receiving nomination documents and the nomination deposit, the returning officer shall review them according to the instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer to ensure that they are complete and acceptable.

(2) As soon as possible after reviewing nomination documents and the nomination deposit, the returning officer shall give the prospective candidate

(a) a signed certificate in prescribed form accepting the nomination, which indicates that the person is a candidate in the election; or

(b) notice in prescribed form that the returning officer refuses to accept the nomination and the reason for such refusal.

(3) Nomination documents and the nomination deposit that are not accepted may be replaced or corrected if the new or corrected documents or appropriate nomination deposit are filed with the returning officer before the close of nominations.

(4) As soon as possible after accepting a nomination pursuant to subsection (2), the returning officer shall send a copy of the accepted nomination documents, a copy of the certificate, and the nomination deposit to the Chief Electoral Officer.

68 (1) Upon receiving the nomination documents and the copy of the certificate given pursuant to subsection 67(2), the Chief Electoral Officer must publish on the Elections Nova Scotia website

- (a) the name and registered party, if any, of each candidate; and
- (b) the name of each candidate's official agent.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall publish any changes in a candidate's particulars, withdrawal of a candidate or death of a candidate and any postponement of an election on the Elections Nova Scotia website.

69 (1) For the purpose of Section 67 and 68, a prospective candidate who is absent may, in writing, and using the prescribed form, name and authorize another individual to complete the nomination documents and present the nomination deposit on the prospective candidate's behalf.

(2) The other individual shall cause the authorization to be filed with the returning officer before the nomination documents are filed.

70 A candidate's nomination documents are only valid for one election and for greater certainty, a candidate's nomination documents are superseded and withdrawn if a by-election is superseded and withdrawn by a general election.

71 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall return the nomination deposit of a candidate to

- (a) the candidate's official agent if the candidate
 - (i) is elected,
 - (ii) receives not less than ten per cent of the valid votes cast in the electoral district in the election in which the candidate stood for election, or
 - (iii) dies before the close of the polls on election day; or
- (b) the candidate's official agent if nomination documents are superseded and withdrawn pursuant to Section 70.

(2) In all other cases, the Chief Electoral Officer shall transfer the nomination deposit to the Minister of Finance for deposit into the General Revenue Fund of the Province.

72 (1) Before the close of nominations, the nomination for the election may be withdrawn by the candidate by filing a signed declaration in prescribed form with the returning officer.

(2) The candidate's signature on the withdrawal must be witnessed by one other individual of the age of the majority who must sign the withdrawal as witness.

(3) Upon filing the declaration pursuant to subsection (1), the candidate is deemed not to have been officially nominated and the candidate's nomination deposit is forfeited.

(4) The returning officer shall promptly notify the Chief Electoral Officer, in writing, of the withdrawal of the candidate.

(5) The Chief Electoral Officer shall publish in the electoral district a notice of the withdrawal in the prescribed manner.

73 (1) Before three o'clock in the afternoon on the fourteenth day before election day, a candidate, or the candidate's official agent, may direct the returning officer in writing to change the particulars of the name of the candidate that appears in the nomination documents and, where the returning officer is satisfied that the particulars, as changed, correspond to those by which the candidate is known in the electoral district, the returning officer shall attach the direction to the nomination document, amend it accordingly and promptly notify the Chief Electoral Officer, in writing, of the change in particulars.

(2) Where two members are to be elected for an electoral district, the candidates may, in writing, within one hour after the close of nominations agree in writing to their names being arranged on the ballot otherwise than alphabetically, and the returning officer shall have the names arranged accordingly.

74 (1) Where a candidate dies before the close of nominations, the candidate shall be deemed not to have been officially nominated.

(2) Where a candidate dies between the close of nominations and the close of the poll on election day, the returning officer, with the approval of the Chief Electoral Officer, shall

(a) revoke the grant of the poll by transmitting a declaration, in prescribed form, to the Chief Electoral Officer; and

(b) fix the date of a new election day which must be not less than thirty days nor more than forty-five days from the date of the death of the candidate, unless the circumstances are deemed by the Chief Electoral Officer to warrant a longer period and the writ is deemed to have been amended accordingly.

(3) After revoking the grant of the poll, the Chief Electoral Officer shall issue a notice of election as provided in Section 30 and commence afresh all the other proceedings for the election as if the amended writ had been received immediately following the revocation of the grant of the poll, but,

(a) notwithstanding Section 70 a person, other than the candidate who died, nominated before the revocation of the grant of the poll or nominated in accordance with Sections 67 and 69 between the date of the new notice of election and the close of nominations is deemed to have been duly nominated; and

(b) the list of electors prepared after the issue of the writ including all corrections, and deletions applied as of the date of the revocation of the grant of the poll, shall be used at the postponed election as the list of electors.

(4) The returning officer shall make a full report to the Chief Electoral Officer of any action taken under this Section with the return of the writ.

(5) The Chief Electoral Officer shall publish in the electoral district a notice of the death of a candidate and postponement of the election.

CAMPAIGNING

75 A candidate or candidate's representative may enter any apartment building or other multiple residences during reasonable hours for the purpose of lawfully campaigning.

76 (1) No landlord or person acting on the landlord's behalf may prohibit a tenant from displaying election advertising posters on the premises leased by the tenant and no condominium corporation or any of its agents may prohibit the owner of a condominium unit from displaying election advertising posters on the premises of that person's unit.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), a landlord, person, condominium corporation or agent referred to in that subsection may set reasonable conditions relating to the size or type of election advertising posters that may be displayed on the premises and may prohibit the display of election advertising posters in common areas of the building in which the premises are found.

RETURN BY ACCLAMATION

77 Where only one candidate, or only the number of candidates authorized by law to be elected to represent the electoral district, are officially nominated in the electoral district at the close of nominations, the returning officer shall

- (a) declare the candidate or candidates duly elected by completing the return in prescribed form on the writ; and
- (b) comply with the provisions of Section 160.

THE GRANTING OF A POLL

78 (1) Where there are more candidates nominated than are required to be elected, a returning officer, as soon as practical after the close of nominations, shall

- (a) grant a poll for taking the votes of the electors according to instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer;
- (b) post a notice of the grant of poll in the returning office;
- (c) transmit one copy of the notice of the grant of poll to each candidate in the electoral district; and

(d) transmit to the Chief Electoral Officer one copy of the notice of the grant of poll, together with the name of any person proposed for nomination, but rejected by the returning officer for non-compliance with this Act, and the reasons for the rejection.

(2) Following receipt of the notice of the grant of poll from the returning officers in an election, the Chief Electoral Officer shall cause a consolidated notice of the grant of poll in prescribed form to be published once in a newspaper circulating in the Province and, during a by-election, a notice of the grant of poll to be published in each local newspaper circulating in the electoral district.

(3) In any notice of a grant of poll, the name of a candidate shall be shown in the same manner as it appears on the grant of poll.

ELECTION DAY AND POLL HOURS

79 At a general election, the date fixed for election day must be the same for all electoral districts.

80 Subject to subsection 5(2), the polls must be open for voting on election day at the hour of eight o'clock in the morning and kept open until the hour of seven o'clock in the evening.

ELECTION OFFICERS

81 (1) No later than five days from the issuance of a writ during an election, the returning officer for an electoral district shall request from the two opposed registered parties that, at the preceding election in the electoral district, sponsored the candidates who received the highest number of votes and the next highest number of votes, respectively, to provide the returning officer with a list of persons from which one or more election officers may be selected.

(2) The lists referred to in subsection (1) must be transmitted to the returning officer no later than five o'clock in the afternoon on the tenth day following the issuance of the writ.

(3) The returning officer and assistant returning officer for an electoral district shall appoint as deputy returning officer for each polling station a person from lists supplied by the registered party whose candidate finished first in that electoral district in the last election.

(4) The returning officer and assistant returning officer for an electoral district shall appoint as poll clerks from lists supplied by the registered party whose candidate finished second in that electoral district in the last election.

(5) Where the lists received pursuant to subsection (1) do not contain a sufficient number of qualified persons, a returning officer and assistant returning officer shall proceed to appoint deputy returning officers and poll clerks without the lists.

(6) A returning officer and assistant returning officer may, on reasonable grounds, refuse to appoint a deputy returning officer or poll clerk from lists received pursuant to subsection (1), and the returning officer shall advise the registered parties of those grounds.

(7) The returning officer and assistant returning officer shall endeavour to appoint deputy returning officers and poll clerks who represent different registered parties at a polling location.

(8) The Chief Electoral Officer shall determine how the deputy returning officers and poll clerks are to be appointed where

(a) the boundaries of an electoral district have been altered since the last election for the electoral district; or

(b) there is no registered party to which subsection (1) applies.

(9) A returning officer and assistant returning officer may

(a) dismiss and replace a deputy returning officer or poll clerk for cause;

(b) appoint a deputy returning officer or poll clerk in the place of one who resigns or dies; and

(c) direct the person replaced pursuant to clause (a) or (b) to deliver up anything relating to the revoked appointment to the person designated in writing by the returning officer or assistant returning officer.

(10) Where a returning officer or assistant returning officer establishes a central polling location in which several polling stations are located, the returning officer or assistant returning officer may appoint a supervising deputy returning officer, to attend at the central polling location on election day for the purpose of keeping the returning officer or assistant returning officer informed with respect to matters affecting peace and good order in the central polling location.

(11) A supervising deputy returning officer has all of the powers and privileges of the deputy returning officer and may be dismissed or replaced in the same manner as a deputy returning officer.

Additional Election Officers

(12) The Chief Electoral Officer may to improve returning office and poll operations for a single election

(a) designate additional election officer positions, determine the responsibilities of these positions, and the qualifications required of those hired into the positions;

(b) appoint, dismiss for cause and replace, such election officers to perform the responsibilities of the designated position; and

(c) pursuant to Section 343 pay the fees and expenses of such additional election officers under the tariff or what is just and reasonable.

(13) Notwithstanding subsection 4(1) of the *Labour Standards Code*, returning officer, assistant returning officer, election clerk, assistant election clerk, supervising deputy returning officer, deputy returning officer, poll clerk, presiding officer, deputy presiding officer, enumerator, revision assistant, information officer, write-in ballot coordinator, assistant write-in ballot coordinator, ballot box courier and a constable appointed under this Act and other additional election officers appointed pursuant to subsection 81(12) are exempted from the application of subsections 40(4), 66(2) and 66(B) of the *Labour Standards Code*.

(14) The *Workers Compensation Act* and *Occupational Health and Safety Act* apply to election officers appointed pursuant to subsection 81(12).

Qualifications of election officers

82 No person shall be appointed as a returning officer, assistant returning officer, election clerk, assistant election clerk, enumerator, supervising deputy returning officer, deputy returning officer, poll clerk, write-in ballot coordinator, assistant write-in ballot coordinator, presiding officer, or deputy presiding officer unless the person is qualified as an elector in the Province.

83 The Chief Electoral Officer by policy may designate election officer positions that may be held by a resident of the Province who is 16 to 18 years of age excluding those listed in Section 82.

84 Where a deputy returning officer dies or fails to act and no replacement has been appointed, the poll clerk shall act as the deputy returning officer and appoint a poll clerk by prescribed form.

85 Not later than the third day before election day, a returning officer shall prepare a list of the names of the supervising deputy returning officers, deputy returning officers and poll clerks appointed for the electoral district, and of the polling locations for which each is to act, in the prescribed form and shall provide a copy of the list to each candidate in the electoral district.

BALLOT BOXES, BALLOT PAPER AND BALLOTS

86 (1) A ballot box must be

(a) made of suitable material; and

(b) constructed so that ballots can be inserted into it, but cannot be withdrawn without unlocking or unsealing the box.

(2) The ballot paper must be of a quality, weight, colour and size as determined by the Chief Electoral Officer.

(3) The Chief Electoral Officer, the returning officer, the assistant returning officer, the deputy returning officer and the printer shall secure the ballot paper while it is in their possession.

87 (1) Pursuant to subsection 30(2) the Chief Electoral Officer shall cause to be delivered to each returning officer a sufficient number of ballot papers to conduct the election in the returning officer's electoral district.

(2) A returning officer shall

(a) count the ballot papers received and forward a receipt for them to the Chief Electoral Officer; and

(b) transmit to the printer a sufficient number of ballot papers to print ballots for not less than twenty per cent more than the total number of electors in the electoral district.

(3) The printer shall

(a) count the number of ballot papers received and forward a receipt for them to the returning officer;

(b) according to the instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer, prepare a proof of the ballot and submit the proof to the returning officer for the returning officer's approval; and

(c) upon receipt of the approval of the returning officer, print the number of ballots requested by the returning officer.

(4) Upon completing the printing of the ballots, the printer shall advise the returning officer who shall make arrangements for the delivery to the returning office of

(a) the ballots;

(b) all remaining ballot papers including that which was spoiled, as well as parts or scraps of ballot paper left over from the printing process; and

(c) a completed affidavit of the printer in prescribed form.

(5) Upon receipt of the ballots from the printer, the returning officer shall count them and forward the count on the prescribed form to the Chief Electoral Officer along with the affidavit received under subsection (4).

(6) The returning officer shall in a timely manner

(a) supply each deputy returning officer with a ballot box and a sufficient number of ballots for the electors at each polling station;

(b) provide a written record in prescribed form to each deputy returning officer of the quantity and serial numbers of ballots provided; and

(c) forward the record to the Chief Electoral Officer with the other documents required to be forwarded at the close of the election.

88 (1) The ballots for each voting opportunity must be of the same description and as nearly alike as possible in the form prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer.

(2) The following information must be printed on each ballot for the advance polls and election day polls

(a) the legal name of each candidate in the election or, where a candidate specified a different usual name in the nomination documents, this usual name;

(b) in the case of a candidate endorsed by a registered party, the name or abbreviation of the name of the registered party, which shall not exceed the number of characters prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer, printed under the candidate's name;

(c) in the case of a candidate who is not endorsed by a registered party, the word "Independent" printed under the candidate's name;

(d) on the back of the stub and on the counterfoil, the same a serial number; and

(e) on the back of the ballot

(i) a space for and the phrase "DRO Initials",

(ii) the stamp of the returning officer,

(iii) the date of election day, and

(iv) the name of the printer and the community in which the printer's business is located.

(3) A ballot must not include

(a) an indication that a candidate is holding or has held an elected office;

(b) a candidate's occupation; or

(c) an indication of a title, honour, degree or other decoration received or held by a candidate.

(4) Except as provided in subsection 73(2), the names of candidates must be arranged alphabetically in order of their family names and, where two or more candidates have the same family name, the names must be arranged alphabetically in order of their first given or usual names.

(5) Where two or more candidates

(a) have the same family names and given or usual names; or

(b) have names so similar that, in the opinion of the Chief Electoral Officer, they are likely to cause confusion,

the Chief Electoral Officer may modify the names or include additional information to assist the electors to identify the candidates, subject to the restrictions under subsection (3), and may establish their order on the ballot.

SUPPLY OF ELECTION MATERIALS TO DEPUTY RETURNING OFFICER

89 (1) Not later than the day before a poll is scheduled to be open to the public, a returning officer shall provide to the deputy returning officer or other appropriate election officer for the polling station to which the deputy returning officer has been appointed, the election materials and supplies required to operate the poll as prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer.

(2) Until the opening of the poll, a deputy returning officer is responsible for the election materials and supplies received from the returning officer, and shall prevent any person from having unlawful access to them.

POLLING STATIONS

90 (1) With the approval of the Chief Electoral Officer, the returning officer

(a) not later than the twenty-fifth day before election day, shall secure within each polling division at least one accessible premises for a polling station;

(b) may provide additional polling stations in more than one location in any polling division as required having regard to the extent of the division and the electors that may conveniently vote at each polling location;

(c) may provide one polling location for the polling stations of two or more polling divisions.

(d) if unable to secure accessible premises for a polling station within the polling division, the returning officer shall secure a convenient and accessible premises for a polling station elsewhere within that electoral district for the electors in that polling division.

(2) As soon as possible after the close of nominations the returning officer shall provide a list of the polling stations and their locations to all candidates in the electoral district.

(3) Where it is not practical to hold a poll in the location indicated to the electors in their notice of registration and voting information, the poll shall be held in another location as near as practicable to the original polling location, and thereupon the returning officer shall

(a) if time permits, publish notice of the change in a newspaper, or broadcast it on radio or television or give notice in any other manner the returning officer considers appropriate.

(b) post notices of the new location for the polling station at or near the location of the former polling station; and

(c) as soon as possible after the close of nominations, give notice in writing of the new location of the polling station to each candidate in the electoral district.

91 The identification on the polling station shall include

- (a) the number of the polling division,
- (b) where there is more than one polling location for a polling division, the designation of the polling location, and,
- (c) where the list of electors for a polling station is split alphabetically, the initial letter of the family name of the first and last electors on the list of electors for the polling station, such as Polling Station No. (A. to L.) or as the case may be.

92 (1) A polling station must be located in premises that are convenient for a majority of electors in the polling division.

(2) A polling station must be accessible to physically disabled persons.

(3) In the event there is no suitable premises for a polling station, the returning officer may with the approval of the Chief Electoral Officer

- (a) use premises that do not comply with subsection (1) or (2); and
- (b) have a plan for accommodating physically disabled electors if the premises do not comply with subsection (2).

(4) Every polling station must contain a compartment, adequately lighted and located so that electors are screened from observation and may vote without interference or interruption.

93 (1) Where separate polling divisions are established for residential centres, the returning officer, with the approval of the Chief Electoral Officer, may establish a mobile polling station to be located in each of those facilities successively.

(2) The returning officer shall set the times during which a mobile polling station will be in the facilities referred to in subsection (1).

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (2), a mobile polling station must be in a facility referred to in subsection (1) for not less than two hours.

(4) The returning officer shall give to the candidates and electors residing in each residential centre notice of the itinerary of the mobile polling station in such form and manner as is prescribed.

(5) Subject to the instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer, the provisions of this Act relating to election day polling stations apply to mobile polling stations.

PERSONS PRESENT IN POLLING STATION

94 (1) The only persons permitted to be in a polling station while the poll is open are

- (a) election officers authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer;
- (b) candidates;
- (c) two agents for each candidate or, in their absence, two electors to represent each candidate;
- (d) an elector and a friend or relative who is helping the elector only for the period necessary to enable the elector to vote;
- (e) any person necessarily present in order to comply with any other provision of this Act;
- (f) at the discretion of and on such terms and conditions as specified in writing by the Chief Electoral Officer, any person or group of persons for educational purposes;
- (g) media representatives authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer, upon request to be present and to film or photograph registered party leaders and the candidates running against them, as they cast their ballot.

(2) When a candidate's agent is admitted to a polling station, the agent shall deliver the agent's written authorization from the candidate or the candidate's official agent in the prescribed form to the deputy returning officer.

(3) An agent who has written authorization under subsection (2) is entitled to represent the candidate in preference to, and to the exclusion of, an elector who might otherwise claim the right to represent the candidate.

(4) Each elector, friend or relative described in clause (1)(d) who will be assisting the elector to vote, on being admitted to the polling station, shall take an oath in the prescribed form.

95 (1) A candidate or the candidate's official agent may authorize any number of agents to be present at a polling station, but for each polling station a maximum of two agents or electors described in clause 94(1)(c) may be present inside the polling location in which the polling station is situated at any time.

(2) An agent of a candidate, or an elector described in clause 94(1)(c), may leave a polling station at any time and return at any time before the counting of the votes begins and is not required to produce a new written authorization from the candidate or official agent or to take another oath.

(3) A candidate's agent may, during voting hours,

- (a) obtain at the polling station a list showing the unique number of those electors who have been crossed off the list as having voted;

- (b) view the names and addresses of electors who have applied and been added to the list of electors at a polling station;

(c) convey any information obtained by the examination referred to in clauses (a) and (b) to a representative of the candidate who is on duty outside the polling location;

(d) subject to this Act and without disturbing the conduct of the election, observe the voting process and inspect the voting environment.

(4) An agent of a candidate or an elector described in clause 94(1)(c) shall not use a recording or communications device in a polling location during voting hours.

96 A candidate may act as or assist an agent, or may assist an elector described in clause 94(1)(c) and may be present at any place that the agent or such elector is authorized to be present.

OFFICIAL LIST OF ELECTORS USED AT THE POLL ON ELECTION DAY

97 (1) The list of electors for a polling division that is certified pursuant to subsection 57(3) is the official list of electors for that polling division.

(2) The official list of electors must be used at a polling station on election day.

98 Where the official list of electors for a polling station contains the names of more than four hundred and fifty electors, a returning officer may

(a) provide two or more polling stations in that polling location, and

(b) in the prescribed manner, divide the official list of electors into as many separate lists as required for the taking of the vote at each polling station.

TRANSFER CERTIFICATE

99 (1) A candidate whose name appears on the official list of electors for a polling station and any agent of the candidate where the agent's name appears on a list of electors is entitled, on request, to receive a transfer certificate to vote at another polling station in the electoral district on election day.

(2) A returning officer or election clerk shall issue a transfer certificate to any person whose name appears on the official list of electors for a polling station and who has been appointed after the last day of the advance poll to act as an election officer on election day for another polling station in the electoral district to vote at that other polling station.

(3) Where the physical layout of or access to the polling station prevents or impedes an elector from voting at the polling station where the elector's name is on the official list of electors, the elector may apply for a transfer certificate to vote at another polling station on election day.

(4) An application pursuant to subsection (1) or (3) must be in the prescribed form and delivered to the returning officer or election clerk by the elector or a person designated in writing by the elector.

(5) An application pursuant to subsection (1) or (3) must be delivered to the returning office during office hours no later than the third day before election day.

(6) Where a transfer certificate is issued pursuant to this Section to an elector to vote at a polling station other than the polling station where the elector's name is on the official list of electors, the elector may vote at the other polling station on election day.

100 A returning officer or election clerk, on issuing a transfer certificate, shall

- (a) complete the certificate in triplicate;
- (b) consecutively number each certificate in the order of its issue;
- (c) deliver the original certificate to the elector;
- (d) transmit a copy of a certificate issued pursuant to subsection 99(1) or (3) and, where possible, a copy of a certificate issued pursuant to subsection (2) to the deputy returning officer of the polling station where the name of the person to whom the certificate is issued appears on the official list of electors; and
- (e) keep a copy of the certificate in the returning office, available for public inspection at all reasonable times.

VOTING BY WRITE-IN BALLOT

101 (1) A write-in ballot poll must be established in the office of each returning officer and assistant returning officer.

(2) A returning officer and assistant returning officer shall begin to receive applications to vote by write-in ballot as soon as possible but no later than the fifth day from the date of the writ.

(3) An elector may make an application for a write-in ballot by prescribed form during the hours the returning office is open to the public, excluding Sunday

- (a) in person or by agent appointed pursuant to Section 108, at a returning office other than the returning office in the district where the elector is resident, up to the commencement of the advance poll;
- (b) by an agent appointed pursuant to Section 108, at the returning office in the district where the elector is resident, up to the close of the advance poll;
- (c) to a write-in ballot coordinator in a district where the elector is not resident up to the commencement of the advance poll;
- (d) to a write-in ballot coordinator in the electoral district where the elector is resident, up to the close of the advance poll; and

(e) by any other means, but the application must be received at a returning office on the tenth day before election day.

(4) The write-in ballot poll shall be open for the receipt of write-in ballots up to the close of polls on election day.

(5) On the first day of the write-in ballot poll, in full view of the candidates or their agents or electors representing the candidates as are present, the presiding officer for the write-in ballot poll shall

(a) open two ballot boxes and ensure both are empty;

(b) secure the ballot boxes according to the instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer;

(c) label one box for write-in ballots of electors resident in the electoral district, and the second box for electors residing outside the electoral district

(6) The returning officer and assistant returning officer shall appoint

(a) a presiding officer and a deputy presiding officer to conduct the write-in ballot poll; and

(b) one or more teams of write-in ballot coordinators and assistant write-in ballot coordinators from lists provided pursuant to subsection 81(1) to provide additional opportunities to vote by write-in ballot.

(7) A write-in ballot coordinator must be appointed from the list supplied by the registered party whose candidate received the highest number of votes at the preceding election in the electoral district.

(8) An assistant write-in ballot coordinator must be appointed from the list supplied by the registered party whose candidate received the next highest number of votes at the preceding election in the electoral district.

(9) Where the lists received pursuant to subsection 81(1) do not contain a sufficient number of qualified persons, a returning officer and assistant returning officer shall proceed to appoint a write-in ballot coordinator and an assistant write-in ballot coordinator without the lists.

(10) A returning officer and assistant returning officer may, on reasonable grounds, refuse to appoint a write-in ballot coordinator or an assistant write-in ballot coordinator from lists received pursuant to subsection 81(1), and the returning officer shall advise the registered parties of those grounds.

(11) The returning officer and assistant returning officer shall endeavour to appoint a team of a write-in ballot coordinator and an assistant write-in ballot coordinator who represent different registered parties.

- (12)** Where, in an electoral district,
- (a) a candidate was elected by acclamation at the preceding election;
 - (b) the boundaries have been altered since the preceding election; or
 - (c) a registered party mentioned in subsection 81(1) is not available to nominate persons,

the returning officer, in consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer shall determine which two opposed registered parties shall provide the list of persons pursuant to subsection 81(1).

(13) The returning officer shall notify each registered party that supplied a list of persons of the names of a write-in ballot coordinator and an assistant write-in ballot coordinator appointed.

(14) The returning officer and assistant returning officer shall assign a temporary ballot box for each writing-in ballot coordinator team to use for receiving write-in ballots while conducting the write-in poll outside the returning office.

(15) A write-in ballot coordinator accompanied by an assistant write-in ballot coordinator shall carry out the write-in ballot poll procedures outside the returning office by

- (a) visiting electors requiring special assistance at their residences;
- (b) visiting electors at hospitals or residential centres;
- (c) visiting electors at educational institutions as approved by the Chief Electoral Officer;
- (d) approving applications of such electors;
- (e) delivering the ballot kit to an elector whose application for write-in ballot has been approved;
- (f) receiving the completed write-in ballot from the elector and placing the ballot in the temporary ballot box; and
- (g) returning the temporary ballot box to the returning officer.

102 (1) The returning officer, assistant returning officer, presiding officer, assistant presiding officer or write-in ballot coordinator shall approve an application for a write-in ballot from an elector only if the application is complete, signed by the elector and received in accordance with subsection 101(3), and

- (a) the name of the elector is on the list of electors for a polling division in any electoral district; or
- (b) the elector provides the prescribed proof of identity and residence; or
- (c) swears or affirms the elector's eligibility to vote and current residence.

(2) Where an application is received pursuant to subsection 101(3), and approved, the applicant, if not on the list of electors, is deemed to have applied to be added to the list of electors for the electoral district in which the elector resides.

(3) Where an elector's application is approved, the election officer who has approved the application shall record in the poll record that the elector has chosen to vote by write-in ballot.

(4) Where an application is approved, the returning officer, assistant returning officer, presiding officer or write-in ballot coordinator shall provide the elector with the ballot kit described in subsection 103(1) in as timely and convenient a fashion as possible.

103 (1) Where an application is approved pursuant to subsection 102(1), a ballot kit including the following documents as prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer must be transmitted to the elector

(a) an outer envelope, on which there is the elector's name, the electoral district number of the elector and an oath;

(b) an inner envelope; and

(c) a write-in ballot initialled by the presiding officer.

(2) In order to complete a write-in ballot, the elector shall, after receiving the ballot kit,

(a) mark the ballot by printing or writing on it, in the prescribed manner,

(i) the name of the candidate for whom the elector intends to vote, or

(ii) the name of the registered party that endorsed the candidate the elector wishes to have elected,

or both;

(b) place the marked ballot in the inner envelope;

(c) seal the inner envelope;

(d) place the inner envelope into the outer envelope;

(e) seal the outer envelope; and

(f) sign and date the oath on the outer envelope.

(3) Where an elector requests assistance because the elector is unable to vote in the manner prescribed by subsection (2) because the elector is unable to read, or is incapacitated by blindness or other physical infirmity, an election officer, an agent appointed under Section 108 or a write-in ballot coordinator may assist the elector by marking the write-in ballot in the manner directed by the elector.

(4) Unless voting by means of a write-in ballot coordinator, it is the voter's responsibility to return the completed write-in ballot to the returning office of the electoral district where the voter is resident before the close of polls on election day.

104 (1) When an application is approved pursuant to subsection 102(1) for an elector residing in another electoral district the presiding officer shall

(a) cause to be delivered to the returning officer for that elector's electoral district

(i) one copy of the elector's approved application; and

(ii) if the outer envelope containing the write-in ballot was returned, the unopened outer envelope;

(b) if the outer envelope containing the write-in ballot was returned, the unopened outer envelope must be deposited in the appropriate ballot box until such time the write-in ballot is delivered pursuant to clause (1)(a); and

(c) note in the poll record the transmittal date, and the electoral district to which the write-in ballot application and outer envelope, if any, were sent.

(2) Upon receiving the application and the outer envelope pursuant to subsection (1), if any, the presiding officer of the electoral district where the elector is resident shall note in the poll record

(i) the date the application and the outer envelope, if any, were received,

(ii) the electoral district from which the application and outer envelope, if any, were sent,

(iii) the name of the elector; and

(iv) that the elector has chosen to vote or has voted by write-in ballot, as the case may be.

105 (1) When an outer envelope of a voter resident in the electoral district is received at the returning office before the close of polls on election day, the presiding officer shall, without unsealing the outer envelope,

(a) verify the information and signature on the outer envelope against that on the voter's application;

(b) place the presiding officer's initials on the outer envelope;

(c) deposit the outer envelope in the ballot box used for the write-in ballot poll; and

(d) record in the poll record the electoral district that issued the write-in ballot and that the voter has voted.

(2) At the close of the write-in ballot poll each day, the presiding officer shall, in the presence of the deputy presiding officer and those candidates or their representatives present,

(a) affix a seal on the ballot box in such a manner that the ballot box cannot be opened or anything deposited in or removed from it without breaking the seal;

(b) note the number of the seal in the poll record; and

(c) give the ballot box, unused ballots, stubs, poll record and other voting materials to the returning officer who shall secure them in the prescribed manner until the opening of the write-in ballot poll the next day.

(3) At the time fixed for accepting write-in ballots on each day, the presiding officer, in the presence of the persons referred to in subsection (2) who are present, shall remove the seals from the ballot box, open the secured materials and open the poll.

106 (1) The returning officer may appoint additional presiding officers and deputy presiding officers to assist with the counting of the ballots for the write-in ballot poll and the continuous poll.

(2) At the close of polls on election day, or at an earlier time on election day as approved by the Chief Electoral Officer, the presiding officer assisted by the deputy presiding officer shall in full view of candidates, up to two agents per candidate or two electors representing each candidate, and if none is present, then in the presence of at least two electors,

(a) remove the seals from the ballot box;

(b) remove the outer envelopes and verify the information and signature on each outer envelope against that on the voter's application and reject any outer envelope on which the identity of the voter cannot be determined; and

(c) record the number of envelopes rejected and accepted,

and secure the outer envelopes, the poll record, the voters' write-in ballot applications and any other documents until the close of polls on election day.

(3) A candidate, agent or elector representing a candidate or other elector present, may object to the acceptance or the rejection of an outer envelope, and the presiding officer shall record the objection in the poll record in the prescribed manner.

(4) A ballot that is not contained in an inner envelope must not be rejected if it is found in the ballot box in a sealed outer envelope but, after being taken from the outer envelope, the ballot must be placed and sealed in an inner envelope without being unfolded and that envelope must be mixed together with the other inner envelopes.

(5) An inner envelope that is found in the ballot box other than within an outer envelope must be so marked and laid aside and is deemed to be a rejected ballot.

(6) A ballot found in the ballot box other than in an outer envelope must be so marked and laid aside and is deemed to be a rejected ballot.

107 (1) Pursuant to Section 106, after the close of polls on election day, the presiding officer, assisted by the deputy presiding officer, shall in full view of candidates, up to two agents per candidate or two electors representing each candidate, and if none is present, then in the presence of at least two electors,

- (a) open the outer envelopes that have been accepted and remove the inner envelopes;
- (b) mix the inner envelopes together in the ballot box;
- (c) remove the inner envelopes from the ballot box;
- (d) remove the ballot from each inner envelope;
- (e) where fewer than fifteen votes are cast at the write-in ballot poll the presiding officer shall combine the ballots with the ballots from the returning office continuous poll; and
- (f) count the vote at the poll in accordance with Sections 128 to 130.

(2) In the manner prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer, the presiding officer shall secure the envelopes containing the statement of poll, the ballots, and the poll record, outer envelopes of the write-in ballots, write-in ballot applications and any other documents and deliver them to the returning officer.

(3) Notwithstanding Section 130, a ballot must be laid aside and is deemed to be a rejected ballot if the voter has printed or written on the ballot

- (a) the name of a person who is not a candidate;
- (b) the name of a person and a party, and
 - (i) the person is not a candidate endorsed by the party marked, or
 - (ii) the party is not a registered party;
- (c) the name of a registered party that did not sponsor a candidate; or
- (d) the name of a political party that is not a registered party.

(4) It is not necessary that a voter print or write on a ballot the name of a candidate or the name of a registered party as specified for use on the ballot in the nomination documents.

(5) Where the name of a candidate or registered party is printed or written on the ballot in such manner that it is clear for which candidate the voter intended to vote or to which registered party the voter intended to refer, the ballot must be counted.

(6) The presiding officer shall keep a record in the poll record of every objection made by a candidate, agent of a candidate or elector who was present during the counting of the ballots.

108 (1) Subject to subsection (2), where an elector is unable to attend or vote in person at a poll and the elector wishes to vote by write-in ballot, the elector may request the assistance of an election officer, or appoint an agent in accordance with this Section.

(2) The appointment of the agent must be in writing, and contain a statement signed or marked by the elector to appoint the agent.

(3) An agent appointed under subsection (1) shall take an oath in the prescribed form that the agent

- (a) is at least sixteen years of age;
- (b) will not try to influence the elector in choosing a candidate; and
- (c) has not, except as permitted under subsection (4), assisted another elector.

(4) A person appointed as an agent may not assist more than one elector in an election unless the person is the child, grandchild, brother, sister, parent, grandparent, spouse or caregiver of the elector.

PROCEEDINGS AT THE ELECTION DAY POLL

109 During the thirty minutes before the opening of the polling station, the deputy returning officer shall, in the presence of the poll clerk and any candidates, or their agents or electors as may be present

- (a) post signs providing directions to electors inside and outside the polling location;
- (b) inspect, count and record the number of the ballots in the poll record and permit a candidate, agent or elector to examine all election materials;
- (c) show the ballot box to all persons present to show it is empty, seal or lock it so that it cannot be opened without breaking the seal, and place it on a table in full view of all present, where it must remain sealed or locked until the close of the poll except as permitted in Section 110; and
- (d) affix the deputy returning officer's initials on the ballots either entirely with ink of one colour or entirely with a black lead pencil.

110 Notwithstanding Section 109, and according to instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer, the ballot box may be moved by an election officer to facilitate voting by an elderly or disabled elector.

111 (1) At the time determined for the opening of a polling station and during polling hours, the deputy returning officer, according to instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer, shall

- (a) admit into the polling station each elector who has not already voted;
- (b) have the elector state his or her name and address;
- (c) where the elector is qualified to vote under Section 122, and subject to subsection 113(1), fold the ballot paper so that when folded the deputy returning officer's initials can be seen without unfolding it;
- (d) deliver the folded ballot to the elector with instructions on the proper method for voting;

- (e) record in the poll record that the elector has voted; and
- (f) direct the elector to return the ballot, when marked, folded as shown with the counterfoil attached.

(2) At intervals of no less than 2 hours, provide to a candidate's agent, on the prescribed form, the unique number of every elector who has voted on election day, excluding that of electors who were added to the list of electors on that day.

(3) On request, provide a candidate's agent with access to view the information of electors who were added to the list of electors and voted on election day.

112 An elector, on receiving a ballot, shall

(a) proceed into the voting compartment and using a pencil or pen, mark with a cross, an "X", a check mark, a line or other mark on the blank space provided on the ballot opposite the name of the candidate for whom the individual wishes to vote;

(b) fold the ballot so that the initials and the serial number on the counterfoil can be seen without unfolding it;

(c) return and hand the ballot to the deputy returning officer, who shall

(i) without unfolding it, ascertain that it is the same ballot delivered to the elector and, where it is, remove the counterfoil,

(ii) return the ballot to the elector to deposit in the ballot box or, in full view of the elector and all others present, deposit the ballot in the ballot box, and

(d) leave the polling station.

113 (1) Where required by an election officer or a candidate, the candidate's agent or an elector representing a candidate, an elector shall, before receiving a ballot, take an oath in the prescribed form.

(2) Where the elector refuses to take the oath under subsection (1), the elector must not be permitted to vote and the appropriate notation shall be made in the poll record.

(3) A person who has taken the required oath is entitled to receive a ballot even if another person has already voted under the person's name.

114 (1) Voting at an election must be by secret ballot.

(2) Every person present at a polling station either to exercise the right to vote, assist an elector to vote, or to witness or participate in the counting of the vote shall preserve the secrecy of the ballot and shall not

(a) attempt to discover how a person voted;

(b) communicate information regarding how another person voted or marked a ballot; or

(c) induce an individual to show the ballot in a way that reveals how the individual voted.

115 (1) Where an elector is unable to mark a ballot because of physical disability or difficulty reading or writing, the elector may be assisted in voting by an election officer or by a person accompanying the elector.

(2) A person other than an election officer shall not act under this Section to assist more than one elector in an election unless the person is the child, grandchild, brother, sister, parent, grandparent, spouse or caregiver of the elector.

(3) Where the person assisting the elector is not an election officer, the person shall take an oath that the person will

- (a) mark the ballot in the manner directed by the elector;
- (b) not disclose the name of the candidate for whom the elector voted;
- (c) not try to influence the elector in choosing a candidate; and
- (d) not, except as permitted under subsection (2), assist another elector under this Section.

(4) The person assisting shall accompany the elector to the voting compartment and mark the ballot in accordance with the directions of the elector.

(5) Where the ballot has been marked under subsection (4), the election officer shall enter in the poll record

- (a) the reason why the ballot was marked with assistance;
- (b) the name of the person who assisted the elector; and
- (c) that the required oaths were taken.

116 (1) Where an elector has inadvertently dealt with a ballot so that it should not be used,

- (a) the elector shall return it to the deputy returning officer; and
- (b) the deputy returning officer shall
 - (i) without showing the ballot to any other person, write “cancelled” upon the back of the ballot and place it into the envelope provided for the purpose, and
 - (ii) provide the elector with another ballot.

117 (1) Where an elector’s name or address does not match a name and address on the list of electors, the elector may receive a ballot and vote if the elector completes the prescribed form and

- (a) provides the prescribed proof of identity and residence; or

(b) swears or affirms his or her eligibility to vote and current residence before an election officer.

118 An elector, who received a ballot and declines to vote, shall return the ballot to the deputy returning officer, who, without showing it to any person, shall mark "cancelled" upon the back of the ballot and place it the envelope provided for that purpose, and the elector shall not be given a further ballot.

119 (1) Where neither the deputy returning officer nor another election officer understands the language spoken by a person admitted to a polling station, the deputy returning officer shall

(a) where possible, obtain an interpreter who is the means of communication between the deputy returning officer and the elector with reference to all matters required to enable the elector to vote; or

(b) where no interpreter is obtained and the person is required to take an oath in order to vote, not allow the elector to vote until an interpreter is obtained.

(2) Every person other than an election officer must take an oath in the prescribed form before acting as an interpreter.

120 Where a polling station has been established in a residential centre, the deputy returning officer and poll clerk, while the polling station is open, may

(a) suspend temporarily the voting in the polling station; and

(b) accompanied by a representative of the facility and if permitted by the facility, not more than one agent of each candidate, if any, carry the ballot box, poll book, ballots and other necessary election documents from room to room in the facility and take the votes of the bedridden patients who meet the conditions under Section 122 to vote in the polling station.

WHO MAY VOTE AT A POLL

121 A person may not vote if

(a) the person refuses to take the oath, as provided for in subsection 113(1);

(b) subject to clause 122(f), the deputy returning officer has received a transfer certificate pursuant to Section 99, from the returning officer certifying that the elector is entitled to vote at another polling station; or

(c) the person fails to comply with Section 122.

122 Subject to Section 121, a person may vote if

(a) for the returning office continuous poll and the write-in ballot poll, the person's name is on the list of electors for the electoral district where the person is resident,

(b) for the advance poll, the person's name is on the revised list of electors for a polling division where the person is resident; and

(c) for an election day poll, the person's name is on the official list of electors for the polling station of the polling division where the person is resident;

(d) the person's name is not on the list of electors, the revised list of electors or the official list of electors for a polling division but the person applies to be added to the appropriate list of electors pursuant to Section 123; or

(e) the person delivers to the deputy returning officer of the polling station where the person's name is not on the list of electors the original transfer certificate issued under Section 99;

(f) the person delivers to the deputy returning officer of the polling station where the person's name is on the list of electors the original transfer certificate issued under Section 99.

123 (1) A person whose name is not on

- (a) the list of electors,
- (b) the revised list of electors, or
- (c) the official list of electors

for a polling division where the person is a resident may vote by write-in ballot, at the returning office continuous poll, the advance polling station or the polling station on election day if the person applies to be added to the appropriate list by completing the prescribed application for addition and providing proof of identity and residence of prescribed types or taking the prescribed oath.

(2) The application for addition must be made to

(a) the presiding officer or deputy presiding officer when applying for a write-in ballot in the returning office or when voting at the returning office continuous poll;

(b) a poll clerk when voting at the advance poll or at the polling station on election day; or

(c) a write-in ballot coordinator who is conducting the write-in ballot poll outside the returning office.

(3) Upon accepting the application for addition,

(a) in the case of a write-in ballot poll in the returning office, the the presiding officer or deputy presiding officer shall add the elector to the list of electors, and the presiding officer shall cause to be delivered a write-in ballot kit to the elector; or

(b) in the case of the returning office continuous poll, the presiding officer or deputy presiding officer shall add the elector to the list of electors;

(c) in the case of the advance poll and an election day poll, the poll clerk shall add the elector to the revised list of electors or the official list of electors respectively and issue to the elector a certificate in the prescribed form to be presented to the deputy returning officer; or

(d) in the case of a write-in ballot poll where an application is approved outside the returning office, the write-in ballot coordinator shall cause to be delivered a write-in ballot kit to the elector and shall add the elector to the list of electors.

124 A person in attendance at a polling station, or at the counting of the votes, shall maintain and aid in maintaining the secrecy of the voting.

125 (1) A returning officer, during an election, and a supervising deputy returning officer and a deputy returning officer, during the hours a polling station is open or while the votes are being counted

(a) must maintain peace and order as far as reasonably possible at the election proceedings for which they are responsible;

(b) may of the officer's own accord, or on the written request of a candidate, the candidate's agent or an elector representing a candidate, appoint a constable by prescribed form in the poll record;

(c) restrict or regulate the number of persons admitted at any time to a polling station or polling location;

(d) order a person to leave a polling station or polling location if, in the officer's opinion, the person is

(i) not permitted to be at the polling station or polling location,

(ii) disturbing the peace and order,

(iii) is interfering with the conduct of voting, or

(iv) contravening a provision of this Act;

(e) require proof of identification from a person who is ordered to leave under clause (d);

(f) order the removal of a person ordered to leave under clause (d) if the person does not comply; and

(g) require the assistance of peace officers to maintain peace and order.

126 For the purpose of Section 125, from the time a writ of election is issued until a candidate is declared elected, an election officer referred to in subsection 125(1) has all the authority and protection of a peace officer.

COUNTING AND REPORTING THE VOTES

127 (1) Immediately after the close of the poll, the deputy returning officer assisted by the poll clerk shall count the vote in full view of candidates, up to two agents for each candidate or two electors representing each candidate, and if none is present, then in the presence of at least two electors.

(2) The deputy returning officer shall count the votes at the poll in accordance with Sections 128 to 130.

(3) A candidate, a candidate's agent or an elector representing a candidate or other elector present, may object to the acceptance or the rejection of a ballot and the deputy returning officer shall record the objection in the poll record in the prescribed manner.

(4) In the manner prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer, the deputy returning officer shall secure the envelopes containing the statement of poll, the ballots, and the poll record, and any other documents and deliver them to the agent of the returning officer or the returning officer directly in accordance with the instructions of the returning officer.

128 (1) The deputy returning officer or presiding officer according to instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer shall

(a) count the number of voters recorded as having voted at the polling station and write the number in the statement of poll;

(b) count the number of cancelled ballots, place them in the envelope provided, record the number on the envelope and seal it; and

(c) count the number of unused ballots, place them with the stubs of all used ballots in the envelope provided, record the number of the unused ballots on the envelope and seal it;

(d) remove the seals from the ballot box and count the vote on the ballots according to Section 129 to 130.

(2) After counting the votes, the deputy returning officer or presiding officer according to instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer shall

(a) complete and sign a statement of the poll, in the prescribed form, setting out the number of votes cast for each candidate, the number of rejected ballots, the number of cancelled ballots and other information required in the prescribed form, and

(i) attach one copy of the statement of the poll to the poll record, retain one copy and enclose one copy in the envelope provided to deliver it to the returning officer; and

(ii) make available one copy of the statement of the poll for candidates, candidate's agents, or electors representing a candidate, who are present and request it;

(b) place the ballots cast for each candidate in a separate envelope provided for the purpose, write on it the name of the candidate and the number of votes the candidate received and seal it;

(c) place the rejected ballots in the appropriate envelope, write on it the number of rejected ballots and seal it.

129 (1) In counting the votes, a deputy returning officer or presiding officer, after each person present is given the opportunity to examine a ballot, decide whether the ballot should be rejected under Section 130 or counted.

(2) If the ballot is to be counted, the deputy returning officer or presiding officer shall call out the vote and have it entered on the tally sheet.

(3) When, in counting the votes, a ballot is found with the counterfoil attached or without the initials of the deputy returning officer or presiding officer, in the presence of any person present in the polling station, the deputy returning officer or presiding officer shall

(a) after carefully concealing the number on the counterfoil and without examining it, remove and destroy the counterfoil; or

(b) where satisfied that the ballot is one that was provided to an elector to be used at the polling station according to this Act, initial the ballot,

and subject to Section 130, count the vote on the ballot.

130 (1) In counting the votes, a deputy returning officer or presiding officer shall reject and place in the appropriate envelope, a ballot

(a) that was not provided by the deputy returning officer or presiding officer;

(b) that is not marked for any candidate;

(c) upon which the specified space at the right of the name of a candidate is not marked in a manner that shows the elector's intent;

(d) on which votes have been given for more candidates than are to be elected;

(e) that is so marked to render it uncertain for which candidate or candidates, if more than one is to be elected, the elector has voted; or

(f) that is marked in a way that could identify the voter, but no ballot may be rejected because of a writing, number, or mark placed on the ballot by the deputy returning officer or presiding officer.

(2) Where during the counting of the votes, a candidate, a candidate's agent, or an elector, who is present, objects to any ballot found in the ballot box, the deputy returning officer or presiding officer shall

(a) hear, make and declare a decision on each objection, which decision is final subject only to reversal on a recount or on a petition questioning the election or return;

- (b) where the ballot is declared rejected, place it in the appropriate envelope;
- and
- (c) where the ballot is declared not rejected, count the vote on the ballot.

TIME FOR EMPLOYEE TO VOTE

131 (1) An employee who is an elector must, while the polls are open on election day, have three consecutive hours for the purpose of casting the employee's vote.

(2) Where the employment of an employee does not permit the use of three consecutive hours of the employee's own time for voting, the employer shall allow the employee such additional time with pay from the hours of the employee's employment as may be necessary to provide the three consecutive hours, but the additional time for voting must be granted to the employee at the time of day that best suits the convenience of the employer.

(3) This Section does not apply to an employee who is engaged in the operation and dispatch of scheduled railway trains, buses, motor transports, ships, and aircraft, and to whom the three consecutive hours mentioned in subsection (1) cannot be allowed without interfering with the scheduled operation or dispatch of the trains, buses, motor transports, ships or aircraft.

ADVANCE POLL

132 For the advance poll, a returning officer shall

- (a) group all the polling divisions in the electoral district into one advance polling district and establish an advance polling station for the district; or
- (b) with the approval of the Chief Electoral Officer, divide and group the polling divisions of the electoral district into two or more advance polling districts and establish an advance polling station in each district.

133 (1) A returning officer shall establish an advance polling station in a convenient place within an advance polling district.

(2) An advance polling station must be located in premises that are accessible by an elector who is physically disabled.

134 (1) An advance polling station must be open on the Friday and Saturday before election day between the hours of ten o'clock in the morning and eight o'clock in the evening.

(2) The dates and times must be the same for all electoral districts in which an election is being held.

135 (1) The returning officer shall appoint a deputy returning officer and one or more poll clerks and other election officers as may be required to conduct the advance poll.

(2) The revised list of electors, prepared pursuant to subsections 57(1) and (2) must be used for the advance poll.

136 The provisions of this Act respecting polling stations, voting procedure, keeping of records and the candidate's agent's access to information at the poll apply to an advance poll in the same manner as the election day poll in so far as they are applicable.

137 At the close of the advance polling station on each day, the deputy returning officer and poll clerks shall affix seals

(a) on the ballot box in such a manner that it cannot be opened, or anything deposited in or removed from it, without breaking the seals;

(b) on the envelope provided for the purpose, in which the deputy returning officer has placed the unused ballot and stubs; and

(c) initial and request a candidate, the candidate's agent or any elector representing a candidate, who is present to initial the seals,

and before the counting of the votes at the close of polls on election day, none of the seals may be broken or removed, except at the opening of the advance polling station on each advance poll day.

138 (1) On the close of an advance poll, the deputy returning officer shall deliver the ballot box to the returning officer, and the ballot box must remain in the custody of the returning officer until the counting of the votes takes place at the close of polls on election day.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply if the returning officer directs the deputy returning officer to maintain custody of the ballot box.

139 (1) At the close of an advance poll on each day of advance polling, the deputy returning officer shall provide a list of the persons who voted at the advance polling station in prescribed form, and forthwith deliver it to the returning officer.

(2) At the close of the poll on election day, at the place where the advance poll was held or at the returning office for the electoral district as determined by the returning officer, the deputy returning officer assisted by the poll clerk shall count the vote in full view of candidates, up to two agents per candidate or two electors representing each candidate, and if none is present, then in the presence of at least two electors.

(3) A candidate, agent or elector representing a candidate or other elector present, may object to the acceptance or the rejection of a ballot and the deputy returning officer shall record the objection in the poll record in the prescribed manner.

(4) The deputy returning officer shall count the vote at the poll in accordance with Sections 128 to 130.

(5) In the manner prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer, the deputy returning officer shall secure the envelopes containing the statement of poll, the ballots, and the poll record, and any other documents and deliver them to the agent of the returning officer or the returning officer directly in accordance with the instructions of the returning officer.

RETURNING OFFICE CONTINUOUS POLL

140 (1) A returning office continuous poll must be conducted every day except Sunday during the hours the returning office is open to the public up to and including the day before the commencement of the advance poll.

(2) A returning office continuous poll must be established in the office of each returning officer and assistant returning officer.

(3) The returning officer and assistant returning officer shall appoint the presiding officer of the write-in ballot poll and, where required the deputy presiding officer of the write-in ballot poll, to conduct the returning office continuous poll.

141 On the first day of the continuous poll, in full view of the candidates or their agents or electors representing the candidates or other electors as are present, the presiding officer shall

- (a) open the ballot box and ensure it is empty;
- (b) secure the ballot box according to the instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer.

142 (1) Each day at the time determined for the opening of the continuous poll and during polling hours, the presiding officer, according to the instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer, shall

- (a) admit into the polling station each elector who has not already voted; and
- (b) have the elector state the elector's name and address.

(2) Where the elector is qualified to vote under Section 122 or 123, the presiding officer shall

- (a) initial the ballot;
- (b) fold the ballot so that when folded, the presiding officer's initials can be seen without unfolding it;
- (c) deliver the ballot to the elector with instructions on the proper method for voting;
- (d) record in the poll record that the elector has voted; and
- (e) direct the elector to return the ballot, when marked, folded as shown.

(3) An elector, on receiving a ballot, shall

- (a) proceed into the voting compartment;
- (b) use a pencil or pen to mark the ballot by printing or writing on it in the space provided
 - (i) the name of the candidate for whom the elector intends to vote, or
 - (ii) the name of the registered party that endorsed the candidate the elector wishes to have elected,or both;
- (c) return and hand the ballot to the presiding officer, who shall
 - (i) without unfolding it, ascertain that it is the same ballot delivered to the elector and, where it is; and
 - (ii) return the ballot to the elector to deposit in the ballot box or in full view of the elector and all others present, deposit the ballot in the ballot box;
- (d) leave the polling station.

(4) At the close of voting on each day of the returning office continuous poll, the presiding officer shall in the presence of candidates and agents or electors representing candidates who are present

- (a) affix a seal on the ballot box in such a manner that the ballot box cannot be opened or anything deposited in or removed from it without breaking the seal;
- (b) note the number of the seal in the poll record; and
- (c) give the ballot box, unused ballots, stubs, poll record and other voting materials to the returning officer who shall secure them in the prescribed manner until the opening of the returning office continuous poll the next day.

(5) At the opening of the returning office continuous poll on each voting day, the presiding officer, in the presence of the candidates and agents or electors representing candidates who are present, shall remove the seal from the returning office continuous poll ballot box, open the secured materials and open the poll.

143 (1) At the close of polls on election day, the presiding officer assisted by the deputy presiding officer shall count the vote in full view of candidates, up to two agents for each candidate or two electors representing each candidate, and if none is present, then in the presence of at least two electors.

(2) Where fewer than fifteen votes are cast at the returning office continuous poll the presiding officer shall combine the ballots with the ballots from the write-in ballot poll.

(3) The presiding officer shall count the vote at the continuous poll in accordance with Sections 128 to 130.

(4) A candidate, agent or elector representing a candidate or other elector present, may object to the acceptance or the rejection of a ballot and the presiding officer shall record the objection in the poll record in the prescribed manner.

(5) In the manner prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer, the presiding officer shall secure the envelopes containing the statement of poll, the ballots, and the poll record, and any other documents and deliver them to the returning officer.

(6) Notwithstanding Section 130, a ballot shall be laid aside and is deemed to be a rejected ballot where the voter has printed or written on the ballot

- (a) the name of a person who has not been nominated as a candidate;
- (b) the name of a person and a party, and
 - (i) the person is not a candidate endorsed by the party; or
 - (ii) the party is not a registered party; or
- (c) the name of a registered party that did not sponsor a candidate;
- (d) the name of a political party that is not a registered party.

(7) It is not necessary that a voter print or write on a ballot the name of a candidate as specified for use on the ballot in the nomination documents or the name or abbreviation of the name of a registered party as confirmed or updated by a registered party pursuant to subsections 180(2) and 182(3)

(a) as long as the name of the candidate for whom the elector intended to vote;

or

(b) to which registered party the elector intended to refer

is clear, it shall be counted.

(8) The presiding officer shall keep a record in the poll record of every objection made by a candidate, an agent of a candidate or an elector who was present during the counting of the ballots.

PROCEEDINGS AFTER RETURN OF ELECTION MATERIALS AND ON OFFICIAL ADDITION DAY

144 Upon receipt of the envelopes containing the statement of poll, the ballots, and the poll record, and any other documents from the deputy returning officer, a returning officer shall

- (a) where the seal on an envelope is not in good order, affix a further seal without removing the existing one, and record the condition of the seal on the envelope; and
- (b) take every precaution for the safe-keeping of the envelopes and any other documents and for preventing any person from having unlawful access to them.

145 (1) Subject to Section 146, the official addition of the votes must be held by the returning officer at the returning office commencing at ten o'clock on the second day after election day.

(2) On the official addition of the votes, a returning officer shall, in the presence of the election clerk, candidates, agents and electors representing candidates, who are present or, where none is present then in the presence of at least two electors, ascertain the number of votes cast for each candidate in each polling station in the electoral district by obtaining the information

- (a) from the statement of the poll enclosed in the appropriate envelope; or
- (b) from the statement of poll in the poll record in the appropriate envelope if a candidate or the candidate's agent objects in writing to the use of the statement of the poll in clause (a), or the envelope is missing.

146 (1) Where the statement of the poll cannot be obtained for a polling station, the returning officer may ascertain the number of votes cast for each candidate

- (a) from the endorsements on the appropriate envelopes which contain the ballots cast for the candidates;
 - (b) from the deputy returning officer, presiding officer, or any other person;
- or
- (c) from such evidence as the returning officer is able to obtain.

(2) The returning officer, in the performance of the returning officer's duties under subsection (1)

- (a) shall give notice of the proceedings, and of the day and hour thereof, to the candidates or their official agents;
- (b) may summon any person to appear before the returning officer at a day and hour to be named by the returning officer and to bring all necessary papers and other documents; and
- (c) may examine under oath any person respecting the matter in question.

147 Where the poll materials are opened for the purpose of ascertaining the number of votes cast for the candidates, a returning officer shall return all documents and materials to the appropriate envelopes, affix and sign a seal on each envelope, and permit a candidate or a candidate's agent to sign each seal.

148 (1) At the conclusion of the official addition of the votes which must be completed not later than the second day after election day or, where the statement of poll cannot be obtained and the returning officer ascertains the number of votes cast for each candidate pursuant to Section 146, not later than the seventh day after election day, a returning officer shall

- (a) complete the statement of official results in prescribed form;

(b) transmit to the Chief Electoral Officer in the manner prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer

(i) a copy of the statement of official results, and

(ii) where a statement of a poll was not obtained for a polling station, a statement of how the returning officer ascertained the number of votes cast for each candidate at that polling station.

(c) transmit, to each candidate or the candidate's official agent, a copy of the statement of official results;

(d) where fewer than fifteen votes have been cast at a polling station the returning officer shall for purposes of clause (c), combine the count of the vote of the polling station with the count of the vote of one or more neighbouring polling stations;

(2) Where, on the official addition of the votes,

(a) there is an equality of votes between two or more candidates and an additional vote for one of such candidates would enable one of those candidates to be declared as having obtained the largest number of votes; or

(b) the number of votes separating the candidate receiving the highest number of votes and any other candidate is fewer than ten,

the returning officer with the assistance of the Chief Electoral Officer shall

(c) apply for a recount to a judge to whom an application may be made pursuant to Section 149; and

(d) give written notice to each candidate in the electoral district or the candidate's official agent of the application for a recount.

(3) The provisions of this Act relating to a recount by a judge, except provisions for security for costs, apply, with such modification as the circumstances require, to an application for a recount by a returning officer under subsection (2).

RECOUNT BY JUDGE

149 (1) Within four days after the day on which the returning officer has completed and distributed the statement of official results pursuant to Section 148, any candidate or official agent of a candidate may, for the purpose of challenging the election of a candidate, apply to a judge of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia for a recount of all the ballots cast in the electoral district by

(a) filing an application in prescribed form with the prothonotary of the Supreme Court, and

(b) depositing with the prothonotary the sum of one hundred dollars in legal tender or a certified cheque or money order for that amount made payable to the Minister of Finance as security for the cost of the recount.

- (2) Within two days after the application for a recount has been filed,
 - (a) the judge shall by order appoint a date, time and place for the recount; and
 - (b) the prothonotary of the Supreme Court shall notify the individual filing the application of the date, time and place at which the recount is to be conducted.

(3) The recount must be held within eight days of the filing of the application for the recount.

150 (1) Within one day of being notified by the prothonotary pursuant to subsection 149(2), the applicant shall serve notice of the date, time and place of the judicial recount on the

- (a) candidates or their official agents; and
- (b) Chief Electoral Officer.

(2) The judge may direct that service of the notice of the time and place of the recount be substitutional, made by mail, by posting, or in any other manner.

151 (1) The following persons and their counsel may be present before the judge at a recount

- (a) the applicant,
- (b) the Chief Electoral Officer,
- (c) the returning officer and other appropriate election officers,
- (d) the candidates and not more than three persons representing each candidate, and
- (e) where a candidate is not present or represented, three persons who have requested to attend on the candidate's behalf.

(2) The returning officer and appropriate election officers shall

- (a) attend at the time and place appointed for the recount, and
- (b) bring the sealed envelopes which contain the statement of poll, the ballots, outer envelopes of the write-in ballots, write-in ballot applications, the unused ballots, stubs and the poll record, and any other documents used at the poll, for all polling stations in the electoral district.

152 (1) The recount must be

- (a) conducted by the returning officer and the appropriate election officers according to procedures established by the Chief Electoral Officer to the extent possible in accordance with Sections 129 and 130; and
- (b) supervised by the judge.

(2) A recount must, so far as practicable, proceed continuously as directed by the judge, until the recount is complete.

153 At the conclusion of a recount and in the presence of those in attendance, the judge shall

- (a) ensure that the ballots are sealed in the same manner as they are at the close of polls on election day and all election documents are secured;
 - (b) add the number of votes cast for each candidate as ascertained on the recount;
 - (c) certify the result of the recount on the statement of official results in duplicate;
- and
- (d) transmit
 - (i) the statement of official results in duplicate to the returning officer, and
 - (ii) a copy of the statement of official results to each candidate, or the candidate's authorized agent and the Chief Electoral Officer.

154 At the conclusion of a recount, the judge may make such order as the judge sees fit respecting costs, including the disposition of money deposited as security for costs.

155 (1) A candidate may appeal the decision of the judge who conducted the recount to the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal by filing a notice of appeal with the Registrar of the Court of Appeal within two days following the judge's decision under Section 153 or 154.

(2) Within the appeal period referred to in subsection (1), the appellant shall give written notice of the appeal to the judge who conducted the judicial recount, the candidates or their authorized agents and the Chief Electoral Officer.

(3) Upon receiving the notice of appeal, the Registrar of the Court of Appeal shall immediately

- (a) arrange a hearing date that is within ten days after the notice is received;
- and
- (b) notify the candidates and the Chief Electoral Officer of the time and place of the hearing.

(4) An appeal is limited to decisions made by the judge about

- (a) specific ballots cast at identified polling stations, and those polling stations must be identified in the notice of appeal, or
- (b) the decision of the judge regarding costs.

(5) All ballots related to the polling stations identified in the notice of appeal must be sealed in a separate package and delivered to the Court of Appeal along with the judge's decision under Section 153 or 154.

(6) Where the appeal is limited to the judge's decision regarding costs, the decision and any submissions respecting the award of costs must be delivered to the Court of Appeal.

156 (1) The individuals entitled to be present at an appeal of a judicial recount are the same as those entitled to be present at the judicial recount, and other individuals may only be present if permitted by the Court of Appeal.

(2) On the hearing of the appeal, the ballots that are the subject of the appeal must be recounted according to the procedures established under Section 152 and the recount must be supervised by the Court of Appeal.

(3) At the conclusion of the appeal, the Court of Appeal shall declare the results of the election in accordance with its recount decision and must issue to the candidates, the returning officer and the Chief Electoral Officer a certificate of those results.

157 For the purpose of Sections 149 to 156, time is to be calculated according to the rules in the *Interpretation Act*.

RECOUNT BY CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

158 (1) Where an application is made pursuant to Section 143, the Chief Electoral Officer may, upon the written request of a candidate or the official agent of a candidate, conduct a recount of all the ballots cast in the electoral district for the sole purpose of determining whether a candidate received the required percentage of the valid votes cast in an election to be entitled to reimbursement of election expenses pursuant to Section 267.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer may designate a person to conduct a recount pursuant to subsection (1).

(3) The Chief Electoral Officer or person designated pursuant to subsection (2), as the case may be, is not required to give notice to any person before conducting a recount pursuant to subsection (1).

(4) Only persons authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer or the person designated pursuant to subsection (2) may be present at a recount pursuant to subsection (1).

(5) The Chief Electoral Officer shall establish procedures to be followed during a recount pursuant to subsection (1).

(6) Following a recount pursuant to subsection (1), the Chief Electoral Officer shall advise the candidate or the official agent of a candidate who requested the recount whether, as a result of the recount, the candidate is entitled to a reimbursement of election expenses pursuant to Section 267, the amount of the reimbursement to which the candidate is entitled pursuant to that Section and whether the candidate is entitled to a return of the deposit pursuant to Section 71.

(7) A written request for a recount pursuant to subsection (1) must be received by the Chief Electoral Officer within thirty days of the election to which it relates.

(8) The decision of the Chief Electoral Officer or the person designated pursuant to subsection (2), as the case may be, respecting a recount pursuant to subsection (1) is final.

ELECTION RETURN

159 (1) Subject to subsection (2) and where a poll is held, the returning officer for each electoral district shall

(a) where there is no recount, then on the tenth day following election day or, where the official addition has been conducted in accordance with Section 146, not later than the fourteenth day after election day; or

(b) where there has been a recount, upon receipt of the statement of official results in duplicate from the judge pursuant to Section 153,

declare elected the candidate for the electoral district, having the largest number of votes, by completing the return in prescribed form on the writ.

(2) Where the statement of official results received from the judge shows that an equality of votes exists between candidates on a recount, and the addition of a vote would entitle any of those candidates to be declared elected, the returning officer shall, at the close of the recount and in the presence of the election clerk, the candidates or their agents, who are present or, where none are present, in the presence of at least two electors and in the presence of the judge who conducted the recount, place the name of each candidate on an equal size piece of paper of the same colour and

(a) fold each piece of paper so that the name of the candidate cannot be seen;

(b) place the folded pieces of paper into a box;

(c) secure the lid of the box;

(d) shake the box;

(e) open the box;

(f) draw one piece of paper from the box;

(g) unfold the piece of paper so that the name on it can be seen;

(h) declare elected the candidate whose name appears on the paper; and

(i) endorse the return on the writ.

RETURN OF ELECTION DOCUMENTS, MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

160 Upon completing the return on a writ, the returning officer shall

(a) cause to be delivered to the Chief Electoral Officer

- (i) the writ certified by the returning officer indicating which candidate or candidates, if more than one candidate is to be elected for the electoral district, has been elected,
 - (ii) the original nomination documents of each candidate,
 - (iii) where there has been a recount, the statement of official results duly certified in duplicate by the judge, and
 - (iv) the final list of electors; and
- (b) cause to be delivered to the Chief Electoral Officer as directed
- (i) the sealed envelopes which contain the official list of electors, the statement of poll, the ballots, outer envelopes of the write-in ballots, write-in ballot applications, the unused ballots, stubs and the poll record, and any other documents used at the poll, for all polling stations in the electoral district,
 - (ii) all unused election materials and supplies, and
 - (iii) the ballot paper that remains unused or has been spoiled, as well as parts or scraps of ballot paper left over from the printing process and the printer's affidavit referred to in subsection 87(4).

161 Where a returning officer does not comply with Section 160, the return is not deemed to have been received by the Chief Electoral Officer until Section 160 has been complied with.

162 Subject to Section 161, the Chief Electoral Officer, on receiving the return of a member elected to the House of Assembly, shall

- (a) provide the Clerk of the House of Assembly with a copy of the return on the writ;
- (b) give notice of the name of the member elected in an issue of the Royal Gazette and on the Elections Nova Scotia website;
- (c) inform the Minister of Finance of the number of votes received by each candidate according to the return.

REPORTS OF CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

163 (1) As soon as possible after the election, the Chief Electoral Officer shall prepare a detailed report of the conduct of the election that includes

- (a) the results by candidate for each polling station in the electoral district,
- (b) the total cost of the election,
- (c) other information as determined by the Chief Electoral Officer, and
- (d) recommended amendments to this Act or any related enactment.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall report at least annually to the House of Assembly on the administration of Elections Nova Scotia including any recommendations made to the Chief Electoral Officer pursuant to subsection 344(1).

(3) The reports referred to in subsections (1) and (2) and subsection 345 (6) must be submitted to the House of Assembly through the Speaker or, if the House is not sitting, to the Clerk of the House.

(4) The Speaker shall lay the reports referred to in subsection (3) before the House of Assembly immediately or, if the House is not sitting, within ten days of its next sitting.

CUSTODY OF ELECTION DOCUMENTS BY CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

164 The Chief Electoral Officer shall request a certificate for each electoral district in which an election was held from the prothonotaries of the Supreme Court pursuant to Section 79 of the *Controverted Elections Act*.

165 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall destroy the election and electoral finance documents and records in the possession of Elections Nova Scotia in accordance with the *Government Records Act*.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), where an election is contested the Chief Electoral Officer shall retain the election documents transmitted to the Chief Electoral Officer pursuant to Section 160 until the time for appeal has expired or in accordance with the *Government Records Act*, whichever time period is longer.

PART II

ELECTORAL FINANCE

166 In this Part,

(a) “audit” means an examination of financial statements, accounting records and supporting documents by an independent public accountant to obtain reasonable assurance of whether the financial statements or any element of the financial statements are presented fairly in all material respects in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and includes

(i) examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements,

(ii) assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made in the financial statements, and

(iii) evaluating the overall financial statement presentation;

(b) “audited financial statement” and “audited financial statements respecting all moneys or funds held by or in trust for the registered party at the end of the fiscal year” mean the audited financial statements of a registered party prepared by an independent public accountant following an audit respecting all money or funds held by or in trust for the party as of the applicable date and includes, but is not limited to, statements of

(i) all income, on a gross basis, of the registered party during the reporting period before related or associated expenses are deducted,

(ii) all contributions and transfers received by the registered party during the reporting period,

(iii) all expenses and transfers made by the registered party during the reporting period,

(iv) all loans payable and receivable, and

(v) all assets and liabilities of the registered party;

(c) “bank prime rate” means the prime business rate published by the Bank of Canada;

(d) "contributions" means services, money or other property donated to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate or an individual acting on behalf of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate to support the political purposes of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate, but does not include

(i) personal services or the use of a vehicle volunteered by an individual unless the services or vehicle are provided as part of that individual's work in the service of an employer,

(ii) goods or services produced or provided by the voluntary, unpaid labour of an individual,

(iii) an annual membership fee paid to a registered party or electoral district association, if

(A) the fee does not exceed twenty-five dollars in total per calendar year,

(B) no individual pays membership fees for anyone other than that individual or a member of that individual’s immediate family, and

(C) the registered party or electoral district association that receives the fee maintains a current membership list,

(iv) money received at a meeting held on behalf of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate in response to a general solicitation of money from individuals in attendance if

(A) no individual gives more than twenty-five dollars, and

(B) the date of the meeting, number of attendees and gross amount received are recorded by the official agent or an individual acting on behalf of the official agent in accordance with this Act,

(v) the price paid by an individual for a fundraising event held on behalf of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate if the price paid by the individual minus the value of the benefit received by the individual, is fifty dollars or less,

(vi) the net profit resulting from the sale or auction of goods, services or property sold or auctioned on behalf of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate to an individual at a fundraising event if the net profit resulting from the sale or auction of goods, services or property is fifty dollars or less,

(vii) a donation in kind if it is made by an individual for the benefit of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate if

(A) the fair market value of the donation in kind is fifty dollars or less, and

(B) the individual has not already made previous donations in kind with a total value exceeding fifty dollars as determined pursuant to Section 248;

(e) "corporation" means a corporation incorporated by or pursuant to an Act of the Legislature or a corporation registered under the *Corporations Registration Act* or a corporation doing business in the Province and exempt from registration under that Act but does not include a Crown corporation, a public body within the meaning of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* or a government business enterprise or governmental unit within the meaning of the *Finance Act*;

(f) "donation in kind" means goods, services or property provided by an individual eligible to make a contribution under this Act for the benefit of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate but does not include

(i) personal services or the use of a vehicle volunteered by an individual and not provided as part of that individual's work in the service of an employer,

(ii) the services of an individual who acts as an official agent of a candidate, or

(iii) the services of a individual who acts as an official agent or officer of a registered party or electoral district association or provides legal counsel to a registered party or electoral district association;

(g) "disclosure statement" means the disclosure statement required by Section 240;

(h) "election expenses" means all expenses incurred during an election for the purpose of promoting or opposing directly or indirectly the election of a candidate, or the program or policy of a registered party or candidate and includes expenditures incurred before an election for literature, objects or materials of an advertising nature used during the election for a purpose above referred to, but does not include

(i) the cost of publication in a newspaper or other periodical of editorials, news, reports or letters to the editor that are published in the same manner and under the same rules as outside an election period without payment, reward or promise of payment or reward, if that the newspaper or other periodical is not established for the

purpose of the election or with a view to the election and that the frequency and circulation of publication do not differ from what obtains outside an election period,

(ii) the cost of transmission by a radio or television station of a broadcast of news or comment that is made in the same manner and under the same regulations as outside an election period without payment, reward or promise of payment or reward,

(iii) the necessary cost of holding a convention in respect of an electoral district for the selection of a nomination candidate including the reasonable expenses of nomination candidates at the convention, the cost of renting a hall and the convening of delegates but not including publicity costs and, apart from expenses of nomination candidates other than the nomination candidates selected, a maximum of one thousand dollars,

(iv) reasonable expenses incurred by a candidate or any other individual, out of the candidate or other person's own money, for lodging and food during a journey for election purposes if those expenses are not reimbursed to the candidate or other individual,

(v) a candidate's transportation costs,

(vi) the transportation costs of any individual other than a candidate, paid out of the individual's own money if those costs are not reimbursed to the individual,

(vii) the sum deposited with nomination documents, or

(viii) the usual expenses incurred for the current operation of one permanent office in the Province of a registered party if the leader of the party, before the seventh day following the issue of the writ has given written notice to the Chief Electoral Officer of the existence of the office, its exact address and any change of address;

(i) "fair market value" means the amount that goods, services or property would sell for in an open market between a willing buyer and a willing seller who are

(i) knowledgeable, informed and prudent, and

(ii) acting independently of each other;

(j) "held assets" means funds or assets held in trust for a registered party before July 11, 1991, and includes income earned on those funds or assets;

(k) "immediate family" means the spouse, parents and children of a person;

(l) "leadership contestant" means an individual who is campaigning to become the leader of a registered party;

(m) "net profit" means the amount equal to the difference between the selling price of goods, services or property and the greater of

(i) the actual cost of the goods, services or property, or

(ii) the fair market value of the goods, services or property at the time the goods, services or property are acquired;

- (n) "organization" means a corporation, a partnership or a trade union;
- (o) "partnership" means a partnership registered under the *Partnerships and Business Names Registration Act* or a partnership doing business in the Province and exempt from registration under that Act by that Act;
- (p) "public accountant" means a public accountant licensed under the *Public Accountants Act*;
- (q) "registered candidate" means an individual who has been registered under Section 203;
- (r) "review engagement" means an examination of the financial statements or any element of the financial statements of an electoral district association by an independent public accountant to obtain a moderate level of assurance of whether information contained in the financial statements is plausible and whether there is any reason to believe that the financial statements are not, in all material respects, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and consists primarily of
 - (i) enquiry,
 - (ii) analytical procedures, and
 - (iii) discussion related to information supplied by the electoral district association;
- (s) "trade union" means a certified bargaining agent as defined in the *Trade Union Act* or a labour organization representing workers in the Province;
- (t) "transfer" means a transfer of services, money or other property made without consideration in accordance with Sections 213 and 214.

OFFICIAL AGENTS

167 The following must appoint an official agent:

- (a) a registered party;
- (b) an electoral district association;
- (c) a candidate; and
- (d) a registered candidate.

168 (1) A registered party may appoint up to three official agents and may, at any time, in writing delivered to the Chief Electoral Officer, revoke any appointment of an official agent.

(2) Where a registered party appoints more than one official agent,

the registered party must designate one official agent as the primary contact for the Chief Electoral Officer.

169 (1) Subject to subsection (2), an individual who is

- (a) of the age of majority; and
- (b) an elector

may act as official agent for any one or more registered parties, electoral district associations or candidates.

(2) The following are not eligible to act as the official agent of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate:

- (a) a member of the House of Assembly;
- (b) a candidate;
- (c) an auditor acting for a registered party, an electoral district association or a candidate;
- (d) an election officer or an employee of Elections Nova Scotia;
- (e) an individual who does not have full capacity to enter into contracts;
- (f) an individual who, at any time in the previous seven years, has been convicted of an offence under this Act or the former Act.

170 (1) A registered party, electoral district association or candidate may revoke the appointment of an official agent at any time.

(2) The appointment or replacement of an official agent by a registered party, electoral district association or candidate must be made in writing and must be confirmed immediately upon appointment or replacement, as the case may be, in prescribed form, to the Chief Electoral Officer by

- (a) the leader of the registered party for an official agent of the registered party;
- (b) a duly authorized officer of the electoral district association for the official agent of the electoral district association; and
- (c) the candidate for the official agent of the candidate.

(3) The appointment or replacement of an official agent in subsection (2) must include the name, mailing address and telephone number of the individual appointed as official agent and the effective date of the appointment.

(4) Notwithstanding subsection (2) where during an election the official agent of a candidate ceases for any reason to hold that office, the candidate shall immediately appoint a new official agent and deliver a written confirmation of the appointment to the returning officer in the candidate's electoral district.

(5) The returning officer shall immediately notify the Chief Electoral Officer of every appointment and replacement of an official agent.

(6) A registered party, electoral district association or candidate shall provide information as to the reason for an official agent ceasing to hold office as the Chief Electoral Officer requests.

171 (1) An official agent shall exercise due diligence in

(a) maintaining an account in a financial institution in the Province in the name of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate;

(b) maintaining records of contributions, including the name and address of each contributor and the cumulative value of an individual's contributions during the year, and filing a disclosure statement, with the Chief Electoral Officer, in accordance with Section 240;

(c) keeping records of receipts, including transfers and other income; and

(d) maintaining records of contributions pursuant to Section 241, including contributions received by an individual appointed by an official agent of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate to accept contributions on their behalf pursuant to Section 237;

(e) issuing tax receipts in the case of registered parties and candidates in accordance with Section 253;

(f) maintaining records of all expenses, including election expenses in the case of a registered party and a candidate;

(g) complying with the election expenses spending limits, in the case of a registered party and a candidate, in accordance with Sections 259 and 260, respectively;

(h) filing statements, reports and other information required under this Part with the Chief Electoral Officer, in accordance with the time frames prescribed in this Part;

(i) providing the auditor appointed by a registered party, electoral district association or candidate with access at all reasonable times to all records, documents, books, accounts, vouchers or other information and explanation as in the opinion of the auditor may be necessary to enable the auditor to report as required by this Act.

(2) Where an official agent refuses, fails or is unable to comply with the provisions of this Act, the Chief Electoral Officer may apply to a judge for an order directing the official agent to appear before the judge to show cause why the official agent has not complied with this Act and, upon the hearing of the matter, the judge may order the official agent to be examined with respect to any report or particulars which have not been provided in accordance with this Act and may order the official agent to make such return or supply such statement of particulars as the judge thinks appropriate within the time, to the person and in the manner as the judge may direct.

AUDITORS

- 172** (1) Every registered party shall appoint an auditor.
- (2) Every electoral district association shall appoint an auditor if it receives contributions in excess of five thousand dollars in a calendar year.
- (3) Every registered candidate who files nomination documents shall appoint an auditor.
- (4) A registered candidate who receives contributions in excess of five thousand dollars in a calendar year in which
- (a) a writ of election is not issued in the registered candidate's electoral district; or
 - (b) a writ of election is issued in the registered candidate's electoral district and the registered candidate does not become a candidate in the election,
- shall appoint an auditor.

173 An auditor must be a public accountant.

- 174** Where the auditor of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate ceases to act for any reason the registered party, electoral district association or a candidate, as the case may be, shall
- (a) appoint another auditor immediately; and
 - (b) advise the Chief Electoral Officer in writing of the appointment of the new auditor.

175 The following individuals may not act as an auditor for a registered party, an electoral district association or a candidate:

- (a) an election officer;
- (b) an individual already acting as the official agent of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate;
- (c) an individual involved in the raising, spending or custody of money or property of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate;
- (d) an individual engaged by an electoral district association to provide bookkeeping services;
- (e) a candidate.

176 A partner or employee in a firm of public accountants may act as an auditor notwithstanding that another individual in the firm is an official agent or auditor of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate.

177 (1) An auditor engaged to express an opinion respecting a financial statement, an element of a financial statement or report of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate required under this Act, shall hold himself or herself free from any influence, interest or relationship in respect of the client's affairs that would, or would in the view of a reasonable person, impair the auditor's professional judgment or objectivity.

(2) An auditor whose professional judgment or objectivity is impaired in the manner described in subsection (1) is disqualified from being an auditor and shall resign immediately on becoming aware of the disqualification.

178 (1) The auditor appointed by a registered party, electoral district association or candidate shall make a report to the official agent of the registered party, electoral district association or candidate, as the case may be, and the report of the auditor shall

(a) provide an opinion respecting the financial statement, an element of a financial statement or report being audited;

(b) indicate that the audit is performed using generally accepted auditing standards.

(2) An auditor, in the auditor's report pursuant to subsection (1), shall make such statements and qualifications as the auditor considers necessary in any case where

(a) the financial statement, an element of a financial statement or report being audited does not present fairly the financial transactions required to be detailed in the financial statement or report;

(b) the auditor has not received all the information and explanations that the auditor has requested from the official agent;

(c) possible non-compliance with this Act has come to the attention of the auditor during the audit; or

(d) any other qualification the auditor deems necessary.

179 An auditor appointed by a registered party, electoral district association or candidate is entitled to access at all reasonable times to all records, documents, books, accounts and vouchers of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate, and is entitled to require from the official agent and officers of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate such information and explanation that the auditor considers necessary to prepare the report required under Section 178.

REGISTRATION OF A POLITICAL PARTY

180 (1) In this Section and Section 181, a “political party” means a group of individuals that has as its primary purpose the fielding of candidates for election as members of the House of Assembly.

(2) An application for registration of a political party must be in prescribed form and include

- (a) the proposed registered name of the political party;
- (b) subject to clause 88(2)(b), the name of the political party, or abbreviation of the name, if any, that is to be used as the name of the political party on a ballot;
- (c) the abbreviation of the political party name to be used in official publications of Elections Nova Scotia, if different than (b);
- (d) the political party logo, if any;
- (e) the name, residential address and telephone number of the leader and two principal officers of the political party and the address to which communications intended for the political party may be addressed;
- (f) the name, residential address, and telephone number of the political party’s official agent or official agents;
- (g) the address where the books, records and accounts, including those pertaining to contributions and to expenditures by the political party, are maintained;
- (h) the name, address and telephone number of the political party’s auditor;
- (i) the financial institution and account number of all accounts held by the political party and the identification of accounts into which all money is to be deposited;
- (j) a written statement that the political party’s primary purpose is to field candidates for election as members of the House of Assembly; and
- (k) any other information of an administrative nature required by the Chief Electoral Officer.

(3) The application in subsection (2) must include an audited financial statement of the political party as of a date not more than sixty days prior to the date of the application for registration.

(4) An application for registration pursuant to this Section must be accompanied by a complete and accurate petition in prescribed form signed by no fewer than twenty-five electors in each of ten different electoral districts, requesting registration of the political party.

(5) An application for registration pursuant to this Section must be signed by the leader of the political party.

(6) Where the Chief Electoral Officer requires further information to clarify or verify any information contained in the application for registration, audited financial statement or petition for registration of a political party, the political party shall file such further information with the Chief Electoral Officer.

181 (1) On receipt of the application pursuant to Section 180, the Chief Electoral Officer shall examine the application and determine whether the political party meets the requirements for registration and inform the leader of the political party, in writing

(a) if the political party's application does not fully comply with Section 180, setting out where the application does not comply;

(b) if the Chief Electoral Officer requires additional information, setting out the information required;

(c) if the political party's application complies with Section 180 register the political party and inform the leader in writing that the political party is registered, confirming the date of registration.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall publish the audited financial statements filed pursuant to subsection 180(3) on the Elections Nova Scotia website once a political party has been registered.

(3) The examination required under subsection (1) must be completed as follows:

(a) within thirty days after the application is received unless clause (b) or (c) applies;

(b) where writs of election for a general election are issued after the application is received but before the examination is completed, within sixty days after election day for the election;

(c) where the application is received during a general election the examination must not be completed until after election day but within sixty days after election day.

(4) A political party whose application does not meet the requirements for registration may amend its application but, where the requirements are not met within sixty days of its receipt of notice under clause (1)(a), the application ceases to be effective and the Chief Electoral Officer shall advise the political party that its application has ceased to be effective.

(5) The Chief Electoral Officer shall not register a political party if

(a) the Chief Electoral Officer is of the opinion that the name, abbreviation or logo of the political party seeking registration so closely resembles the name, abbreviation or logo of a registered party that it is likely to be confused with the name, abbreviation or logo of that registered party; or

(b) the name, abbreviation or logo of the political party includes the word "independent" or an abbreviation of that word.

182 (1) A registered party shall update, with the Chief Electoral Officer, in prescribed form, information required by subsection 180(2) within ten days of any change in the information. with the Chief Electoral Officer

(2) A registered party shall confirm or update, with the Chief Electoral Officer, in prescribed form, by April 30 of each year the information required by subsection 180(2).

(3) Not later than five days after a writ of election is issued for a general election or a by-election a registered party shall confirm or update, with the Chief Electoral Officer, in prescribed form, the information required by subsection 180(2).

183 Every political party that was a recognized party under the former Act, at the time the former Act was repealed, is deemed to be a registered party under this Act.

SUSPENSION AND DEREGISTRATION OF A REGISTERED PARTY

184 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall suspend the registration of a registered party if the registered party fails to

- (a) publish an audited financial statement pursuant to Section 222;
- (b) file a report of election expenses pursuant to Section 223;
- (c) file an annual financial report pursuant to Section 224; or
- (d) file a report of tax receipts pursuant to Section 225.

(2) A suspension pursuant to subsection (1) begins on the day following the date on which the registered party failed to meet any of the requirements in subsection (1) and remains in effect until the earlier of

- (a) the date on which the registered party meets the requirements under subsection (1); and
- (b) thirty days.

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (2), where the failure to meet the requirements under subsection (1) occurs during an election, the suspension does not begin until the day after election day.

(4) Where a registered party is suspended, the Chief Electoral officer shall immediately notify, in writing, the official agent and two principal officers of the registered party of the effective date of the suspension and the reason for the suspension.

(5) During the period in which a registered party is suspended, the registered party remains registered but shall not

- (i) accept a contribution,

- (ii) issue a tax receipt, or
- (iii) make or receive a transfer.

(6) Where a registered party publishes or files the reports required by subsection (1) within thirty days of being suspended the Chief Electoral Officer shall immediately revoke the suspension and notify, in writing, the official agent and two principal officers of the revocation of the suspension and the effective date.

(7) The suspension of a registered party continues until it is revoked by the Chief Electoral Officer or the registered party is deregistered.

185 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall deregister a registered party if the registered party has failed to publish an audited financial statement or file the required reports pursuant to subsection 184(1) within thirty days of the effective date of the suspension.

(2) At least thirty days before deregistering a registered party pursuant to subsection (1), the Chief Electoral Officer shall deliver a written notice to two principal officers of the registered party and shall give the registered party an opportunity to be heard.

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the Chief Electoral Officer may decide not to deregister the registered party if the Chief Electoral Officer is satisfied that the registered party has rectified the contravention, or will rectify it within ten days of the hearing, and the registered party does rectify the contravention.

186 (1) Where fewer than ten individuals endorsed by a registered party are candidates at a general election the Chief Electoral Officer shall deregister the registered party in accordance with this Section.

(2) A registered party that would otherwise be deregistered under subsection (1) is entitled to remain registered if an individual who is a candidate endorsed by the registered party in the current general election is elected.

(3) Where, at the close of nominations for a general election, a registered party may be subject to deregistration under this Section following the election, the Chief Electoral Officer shall notify two principal officers of the registered party of this at the close of nominations.

(4) Deregistration under this Section is effective on the date of the return of all of the writs for the general election.

(5) The Chief Electoral Officer shall notify, in writing, the official agent and two principal officers of the registered party of the effective date of the deregistration and the reason for the deregistration.

187 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall deregister a registered party where the registered party applies for deregistration in accordance with this Section.

(1) must

(2) An application for deregistration by a registered party pursuant to subsection

- (a) be in writing and be delivered to the Chief Electoral Officer; and
- (b) be signed by two principal officers and the leader of the registered party.

(3) On being satisfied that an application for deregistration is authorized by the registered party for which it is made, the Chief Electoral Officer shall deregister the registered party.

(4) Notwithstanding subsection (3), where a registered party applying to be deregistered has endorsed a candidate in an election in progress, the Chief Electoral Officer shall not deregister the registered party until the day after election day for the election.

(5) Where a candidate endorsed by the registered party applying for deregistration under subsection (4) is elected, the Chief Electoral Officer shall reject the application for deregistration and advise in writing two principal officers of the registered party of the rejection and the reason for the rejection.

188 (1) Where a registered party is deregistered all electoral district associations of the registered party are deregistered as of the effective date of the registered party's deregistration.

- (2) Where a registered party is deregistered, the Chief Electoral Officer shall
- (a) place a notice to that effect in the Royal Gazette;
 - (b) place a notice to that effect on the Elections Nova Scotia website; and
 - (c) record the effective date of the deregistration in the register.

(3) Where a registered party is deregistered, the official agent of the deregistered party shall immediately return to the Chief Electoral Officer all tax receipts that were provided to the official agent under Section 252.

189 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall calculate the amount of any public funding advanced to a registered party pursuant to Section 191 that relates to a period subsequent to the effective date of the deregistration.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall advise the official agent and two principal officers of the deregistered party, in writing, of the amount calculated under subsection (1).

(3) Upon receiving notification under subsection (2), the deregistered party shall immediately pay that amount to the Chief Electoral Officer who shall transmit it to the Minister of Finance for deposit to the General Revenue Fund.

190 The official agent of a deregistered party shall file with the Chief Electoral Officer within sixty days of the effective date of deregistration, with the Chief Electoral Officer, a report

of tax receipts in accordance with Section 225 for the period commencing January 1 of the year in which the party was deregistered and ending on the effective date of deregistration.

PAYMENTS TO REGISTERED PARTIES

191 (1) Each fiscal year the Chief Electoral Officer shall cause to be paid out of the General Revenue Fund to each registered party one dollar and fifty three cents for each vote received by candidates endorsed by that registered party in the most recent general election.

(2) Any reduction in the amount to which a registered party is entitled, as a result of a general election, is effective at the beginning of the next fiscal year.

(3) Any increase in the amount to which a registered party is entitled, as a result of a general election, is effective upon the candidates being declared elected and, for greater certainty, the increase is to be prorated for the remainder of the fiscal year.

(4) The Chief Electoral Officer shall cause to be paid the amounts determined pursuant to subsection (1) in two equal instalments in April and October.

(5) The amount set out in subsection (1) shall be increased at the beginning of each year by the percentage increase in the previous year in the Consumer Price Index for the Province published by Statistics Canada using the annual 2010 index as the base.

HELD ASSETS

192 (1) Held assets must not be expended at any time for or to support any political purpose of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate.

(2) A registered party's held assets must be kept apart from other funds or assets of the registered party.

(3) The chief financial officer for a registered party shall file a report with the Chief Electoral Officer, in the prescribed form, that includes, respecting the registered party's held assets,

(a) all information regarding all deposits into a held assets account, including

- (i) the date of the deposit,
- (ii) the amount of the deposit, and
- (iii) the source of the deposit;

(b) all information regarding all disbursements or withdrawals from a held assets account, including

- (i) the date of the disbursement or withdrawal,
- (ii) the amount of the disbursement or withdrawal,

- (iii) the purpose of the disbursement or withdrawal, and
 - (iv) the person or account who received the disbursement or withdrawal;
- (c) a full description of any and all non-monetary held assets including, but not limited to, real estate or moveable property.

(4) The report filed pursuant to subsection (3) shall include a statement signed by the chief financial officer confirming that the registered party's held assets were not expended or used at any time for or to support any political purpose of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate.

193 The Chief Electoral Officer shall publish on the Elections Nova Scotia website the information provided under Section 192 at the same time as the Chief Electoral Officer publishes disclosure statements.

REGISTRATION OF AN ELECTORAL DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

194 (1) An application for registration as an electoral district association must be in prescribed form and include:

- (a) the full name of the electoral district association;
- (b) the name of the registered party for which the electoral district association is the local organization;
- (c) the name, residential address and telephone number of two principal officers of the electoral district association;
- (d) the name, residential address and telephone number of the electoral district association's official agent;
- (e) the address where the books, records and accounts, including those pertaining to contributions and to expenditures by the electoral district association, are maintained;
- (f) the financial institution and account number of all accounts held by the electoral district association and the identification of accounts into which all money is to be deposited;
- (g) where the electoral district association has appointed an auditor, the name, address and telephone number of the auditor;
- (h) a statement signed by the leader of the registered party confirming that the registered party endorses the electoral district association as the local organization of the registered party;
- (i) a statement of the assets and liabilities of the electoral district association as of the date not earlier than sixty days before the application is submitted to the Chief Electoral Officer, and

(j) any other information of an administrative nature required by the Chief Electoral Officer.

(2) Where the Chief Electoral Officer requires further information to clarify or verify any information contained in the application for registration or the financial statement, the electoral district association shall file such further information with the Chief Electoral Officer.

(3) A registered party may not have more than one registered electoral district association for an electoral district.

(4) Where an application under this Section is made in conjunction with an application for the registration of a political party, an electoral district association endorsed by the leader of the political party may not be registered until after the political party is registered.

195 (1) On receipt of the application pursuant to Section 194, the Chief Electoral Officer shall

(a) examine the application and determine whether the electoral district association meets the requirements for registration in Section 194; and

(b) inform two principal officers of the electoral district association and the leader of the registered party that endorsed the electoral district association, in writing,

(i) where the electoral district association does not fully comply with Section 194, setting out where the application does not comply, and

(ii) where the Chief Electoral Officer requires additional information, setting out the information required.

(2) Where the electoral district association's application complies with Section 194, the Chief Electoral Officer shall register the electoral district association and inform two principal officers of the electoral district association and the leader of the registered party that endorsed the electoral district association, and confirm the date of registration.

(3) An electoral district association whose application does not meet the requirements for registration may amend its application but, where the requirements are not met within sixty days of its receipt of notice under subsection (1), its application ceases to be effective.

(4) The examination under subsection (1) must be completed

(a) within thirty days after the application is received unless clause (1)(b)(i) applies;

(b) where a writ of election is issued after the application is received but before the examination is completed, within sixty days after election day; or

(c) where the application is received during an election, the examination must not be completed until after election day but within sixty days after election day.

196 (1) An electoral district association shall update with the Chief Electoral Officer, in prescribed form information required by subsection 194(1) within ten days of any change in the information.

(2) An electoral district association shall confirm or update, with the Chief Electoral Officer, in prescribed form, by March 31 of each year the information required by subsection 194(1).

197 Every electoral district association that was registered under the former Act, at the time the former Act was repealed, is deemed to an electoral district association under this Act.

SUSPENSION AND DEREGISTRATION OF AN ELECTORAL DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

198 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall suspend the registration of an electoral district association if the electoral district association fails to

- (a) file an annual report by March 31 of each year, confirming the information in subsection 194(1); or
- (b) file an annual financial report pursuant to Section 227.

(2) The suspension begins on the day following the date on which the electoral district association failed to meet any of the requirements in subsection (1) and remains in effect until the earlier of

- (a) the date on which the electoral district association files the report under subsection (1); and
- (b) thirty days.

(3) Where an electoral district association is suspended, the Chief Electoral Officer shall immediately notify, in writing, the official agent of the electoral district association, two principal officers of the electoral district association and the leader of the registered party that endorsed the electoral district association of the effective date of the suspension and the reason for the suspension.

(4) During the period in which an electoral district association is suspended, the electoral district association remains registered but shall not

- (a) accept a contribution; or
- (b) make or receive a transfer.

(5) Where an electoral district association complies with subsection (1) within thirty days of being suspended by filing the reports required by subsection 198(1), the Chief Electoral Officer shall immediately revoke the suspension and notify, in writing, the official agent and two principal officers and the leader of the registered party that endorsed the electoral district association, of the revocation of the suspension and the effective date.

(6) The suspension of an electoral district association continues until it is revoked by the Chief Electoral Officer or the electoral district association is deregistered.

199 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall deregister an electoral district association if the electoral district association has failed to file one or the other, or both, of the reports required by subsection 198(1) within thirty days of the effective date of the suspension.

(2) At least thirty days before deregistering the electoral district association pursuant to subsection (1), the Chief Electoral Officer shall deliver a written notice to two principal officers of the electoral district association and the leader of the registered party that endorsed the electoral district association and shall give the two principal officers of the electoral district association and the leader of the registered party that endorsed the electoral district association an opportunity to be heard.

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the Chief Electoral Officer may decide not to deregister the electoral district association if the Chief Electoral Officer is satisfied that the electoral district association has rectified the contravention, or will rectify it within ten days of the hearing, and the electoral district association does rectify the contravention.

200 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall deregister an electoral district association if the electoral district association applies for deregistration in accordance with this Section.

- (2) An application for deregistration by an electoral district association must be
- (a) made to the Chief Electoral Officer in writing;
 - (b) signed by two principal officers of the electoral district association; and
 - (c) signed by the leader of the registered party that endorsed the electoral district association.

(3) Upon receipt of the application for deregistration under subsection (2) the Chief Electoral Officer shall deregister the electoral district association.

201 Where a registered party is deregistered, the Chief Electoral Officer shall deregister all of its electoral district associations, effective as of the date on which the registered party is deregistered.

202 (1) Where an electoral district association is deregistered, the Chief Electoral Officer shall

- (a) place a notice to that effect in the Royal Gazette; and

- (b) post a notice to that effect on the Elections Nova Scotia website; and
- (c) record the effective date of the deregistration in the register.

CANDIDATE REGISTRATION

203 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall register an individual as a registered candidate under this Act if the Chief Electoral Officer

- (a) receives an application from the individual in prescribed form before the close of nominations; and

- (b) is satisfied that the individual is a prospective candidate.

(2) An individual shall apply to be registered under this Section at the earlier of

- (a) the date on which the official agent of the individual accepts a contribution;

- (b) the date on which the official agent of the individual accepts a transfer from a registered party or an electoral district association; or

- (c) the date on which the official agent of the individual incurs an expense in anticipation of an election.

(3) Where an individual receives a certificate accepting their nomination as a candidate pursuant to Section 67 the individual is deemed to have been registered as a registered candidate under this Section.

(4) The Chief Electoral Officer may receive an individual's application for registration for an election in an electoral district before a writ of election is issued for the electoral district, in which case the application is an application for registration as a registered candidate in the next election in the electoral district.

(5) An application for registration under subsection (1) must be delivered to the Chief Electoral Officer in prescribed form, and must include

- (a) the name, residential address and telephone number of the official agent;

- (b) the name, address and telephone number of the prospective candidate's auditor where the prospective candidate has appointed an auditor prior to the application; and

- (c) the name of the financial institution and account number into which all money is to be deposited.

(6) The Chief Electoral Officer shall confirm the registration of a registered candidate, in prescribed form, including the effective date of the registration.

204 A prospective candidate shall not accept a contribution or transfer, or incur an expense in consequence of an election until such time as the candidate receives confirmation of registration pursuant to subsection 203(6) or is deemed to be registered pursuant to subsection 203(3).

205 Where there is any change in the particulars provided in the application for registration pursuant to subsection 203(5), including withdrawal of the registration, the registered candidate, shall in writing, notify the Chief Electoral Officer of the change in particulars within five days of the change and, upon receipt of any such notice, the Chief Electoral Officer shall vary the register accordingly.

206 (1) Where a registered candidate withdraws from the election for which he or she is a registered candidate, the registration of the candidate terminates on the date the notice of withdrawal is delivered to the Chief Electoral Officer.

(2) Where a registered candidate is not nominated as a candidate pursuant to Section 67 the registration of the registered candidates terminates at the close of nominations.

(3) Where the registration of a registered candidate terminates under subsection (1) or (2) the individual is prohibited from accepting contributions under this Act as of the time of termination.

(4) The termination of a registered candidate's registration under this Section does not impede or impair the ability of that individual or the official agent of that individual from winding down the registered candidate's campaign or fulfilling their obligations under this Act.

207 (1) Where a prospective candidate receives a certificate accepting their nomination pursuant to subsection 67(2), the individual's status as a registered candidate shall terminate upon the return of the writ in that election in the candidate's electoral district.

(2) The termination of a candidate's registration under this Section does not impede or impair the ability of that individual or the official agent of that individual from winding down the candidate's campaign or fulfilling their obligations under this Act.

208 Where an individual is a prospective candidate following an election in which the individual had been a candidate, the individual must become a registered candidate in accordance with Section 203 before the undertaking any of the actions listed in clauses 203(2)(a), (b) and (c).

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

209 A financial institution into which all money is deposited on behalf of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate must be located in the Province.

210 All money accepted on behalf of a registered party must be deposited into one or more accounts established at the financial institution identified to the Chief Electoral Officer under clause 180(2)(i).

211 All money accepted on behalf of an electoral district association must be deposited into a single account established at the financial institution identified to the Chief Electoral Officer under clause 194(1)(f).

212 (1) All money accepted on behalf of a candidate must be deposited into the account established at the financial institution identified in the candidate's registration pursuant to clause 203(5)(c).

(2) An account established at a financial institution to receive money on behalf of a candidate must be closed no later than the time by which the candidate is required to dispose of excess contributions under Section 268.

TRANSFERS

213 Except as otherwise provided in this Part a registered party and any of its electoral district associations and candidates may transfer services, money or property between one another and the transferred services, money or property are not considered to be contributions but must be recorded by the official agent of the registered party, electoral district association and candidate.

214 (1) A fund or trust established for the benefit of a registered party may not transfer money or property to a candidate or electoral district association.

(2) An electoral district association may not transfer services, money or property to another electoral district association or a candidate other than the candidate in the electoral district.

(3) A candidate may not transfer services, money or property to another candidate or an electoral district association other than the electoral district association in the electoral district in which they are a candidate.

(4) An electoral district association may not transfer services or property to a registered party or a candidate if the services or property would qualify as election expenses under this Act if purchased directly by the registered party or a candidate.

(5) Those entities from whom a registered party, electoral district association or candidate shall not accept, as a transfer, services, money or property include:

- (a) a federal political party,
- (b) a federal electoral district association,
- (c) a federal candidate,

- (d) a political party in another province or territory of Canada,
- (e) an electoral district association in another province or territory of Canada,
- (f) a candidate in another province or territory of Canada.

LOANS

215 (1) A loan to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate is not a contribution except as provided in this Section.

(2) Where a loan is made to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate at a rate of interest less than the bank prime rate, the difference between the interest payable at the bank prime rate at the time the loan was made and the interest paid is a contribution.

(3) The Chief Electoral Officer shall publish the bank prime rate on the Elections Nova Scotia website and update the bank prime rate whenever it changes.

(4) Where a payment on a loan to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate, is made by a person other than the registered party, electoral district association or candidate, the payment is a contribution and attributed to the person who made the payment.

(5) Where a payment on a loan to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate is wholly or partly unpaid six months after becoming due, the outstanding amount of the payment is a contribution attributed to the person who made the loan but nothing in this subsection affects the rights of the lender to recover the payment.

(6) Subsection (5) does not apply to a loan by a financial institution.

(7) Where a payment on a loan becomes a contribution under subsection (4) or (5), the contribution is attributed as of the effective date of the original loan agreement and for the purposes of subsection 236(3) is deemed to be a contribution on the date the loan was made.

216 (1) A candidate shall not lend campaign funds or money received as a contribution to any person.

(2) An electoral district association may only lend money to its registered party or its nominated candidate.

(3) No individual shall lend money to a registered party, an electoral district association or a candidate

- (a) that exceeds the maximum allowable contribution to a single party in a calendar year
- (b) for a term of more than two years, including any renewal or refinancing.

(4) Without restriction on the term or amount of a loan

(a) a financial institution or a registered party may make or guarantee a loan to any registered party, electoral district association or candidate;

(b) an electoral district association may make or guarantee a loan to its registered party or its candidate.

217 A tax receipt may not be issued for a loan that arises from a loan pursuant to subsection 215(2) or a loan that becomes a contribution pursuant to subsections 215(4) or (5).

218 (1) A registered party, electoral district association or candidate or the official agent of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate shall not accept a loan unless there is a loan agreement in writing setting out the amount of the loan, the term of the loan, the name and address of the lender, the name and address of any guarantor and the details of any assignment of reimbursement made and the loan agreement must be included with the disclosure statement filed pursuant to Section 240.

(2) The official agent of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate, to whom a loan was made, shall file a report with the Chief Electoral Officer, in prescribed form, within sixty days of the loan being repaid in full and identify the source of funds used to repay the loan.

(3) Where a loan has a balance outstanding at the end of the calendar year in which the loan was made, the official agent of the registered party, electoral district association or candidate that borrowed the funds must file a report with the Chief Electoral Officer, in prescribed form, stating the outstanding balance and describing any changes to the loan agreement.

(4) Where a loan has a balance outstanding at the end of a calendar year subsequent to the year in which the loan was made, the official agent of the registered party, electoral district association or candidate that borrowed the funds must file a report with the Chief Electoral Officer, in prescribed form, stating the outstanding balance and describing any changes to the loan agreement.

(5) The reports required under subsections (3) and (4) giving details of the balance and any changes to the loan agreement must be filed by the official agent on or before:

(a) March 31 of the year following the year for which the loan is being reported in the case where an electoral district association or candidate borrowed the funds;

(b) April 30 of the year following the year for which the loan is being reported in the case where a registered party borrowed the funds.

(6) The Chief Electoral Officer shall publish the details of all loan balances outstanding at the same time the Chief Electoral Officer is required to publish disclosure statements under this Act.

219 (1) No person may be charged with an offence by reason of the outstanding amount of a payment on a loan being a contribution pursuant to subsection 215(5) or the payment of the outstanding amount by a guarantor unless the person had no *bona fide* intent to repay the loan.

(2) Where the outstanding amount of a payment on a loan to a registered party that is a contribution pursuant to subsection 215(5) or the payment of the outstanding amount by a guarantor of a registered party exceeds the contributions permitted by this Act, the amount of the excess contribution shall be deducted from the payments made to the registered party pursuant to Section 191.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND REPORTS

220 The statements and reports required to be filed with the Chief Electoral Officer under this Act must be in prescribed forms and contain the information or particulars required to be disclosed under this Act.

221 (1) When information about the financial affairs of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate is reasonably required to clarify or verify the information contained in a statement or report or other information filed under this Act, the Chief Electoral Officer may request such information in writing.

(2) Within thirty days after receiving a request pursuant to subsection (1) or within any extended period the Chief Electoral Officer may allow, the official agent of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate shall provide the information.

REGISTERED PARTY REPORTING

222 (1) Within one hundred and twenty days after the end of each fiscal year of a registered party, the registered party shall publish audited financial statements respecting all moneys or funds held by or in trust for the registered party at the end of the fiscal year.

(2) For the purpose of subsection (1), a registered party's audited financial statements are published when

- (a) they are produced and made readily available to the public free of charge;
- (b) they are distributed using the registered party's website; and
- (c) an original is provided to the Chief Electoral Officer.

(3) The Chief Electoral Officer shall publish the audited financial statements provided under clause 2(c) by posting the audited financial statements on the Elections Nova Scotia website.

(4) The Chief Electoral Officer shall accept a registered party's audited financial statements if the Chief Electoral Officer is satisfied that the audited financial statements meet the requirements of the Act.

(5) The Chief Electoral Officer shall return any audited financial statements that are not accepted to the registered party, and give details of why the audited financial statements do not meet the requirements of the Act.

(6) A registered party whose audited financial statements are rejected shall provide any new or further material or information required by the Chief Electoral Officer to bring the audited financial statements within the requirements of the Act.

223 (1) Within one hundred and twenty days after the day fixed for return of the writ of election for a by-election or the writs of election for a general election the official agent of a registered party shall file with the Chief Electoral Officer a report of election expenses in prescribed form accompanied by the invoices, receipts and other vouchers or certified copies of them and a list of those documents and an affidavit of the official agent verifying the report and stating that no payment not permitted by the Act was made with the official agent's knowledge and consent and that to the best of the agent's knowledge and belief every expense incurred is entered in the report.

(2) The report in subsection (1) must be accompanied by an auditor's report prepared in accordance with Section 178 respecting election expenses incurred by or on behalf of the registered party.

(3) Within ten days after receiving each report of election expenses, the Chief Electoral Officer shall publish a summary of election expenses reported in prescribed form and in such manner as the Chief Electoral Officer determines, including on the Elections Nova Scotia website.

(4) The Chief Electoral Officer shall preserve the report, invoices, receipts and other vouchers for a period of six months and during that period shall permit any elector, during ordinary office hours to inspect and make copies or extracts therefrom upon payment of the actual cost of providing copies of the requested report, invoices, receipts or other vouchers.

224 (1) A registered party shall file in prescribed form, an annual financial report including:

- (a) a balance sheet;
- (b) a statement of income and expense;
- (c) a disclosure statement pursuant to Section 240;
- (d) a statement of transfers pursuant to Sections 213 and 214;

- (e) a statement of fundraising events;
- (f) a statement of loans pursuant to Section 215; and
- (g) a statement of held assets pursuant to Section 192.

(2) The report referred to in subsection (1) must be delivered to the Chief Electoral Officer on or before April 30 of the year immediately after the calendar year to which the report refers.

(3) The disclosure statement referred to in clause (1)(c) must be accompanied by an auditor's report prepared in accordance with Section 178.

225 (1) A registered party must on or before April 30, of the year immediately after the calendar year to which the report refers, file with the Chief Electoral Officer in prescribed form a report respecting tax receipts including

- (a) a reconciliation of tax receipts issued to the registered party by the Chief Electoral Officer pursuant to Section 252; and
- (b) duplicates of all tax receipts issued pursuant to subsection 253(1).

(2) The report in subsection (1) must be accompanied by an auditor's report prepared in accordance with Section 178 respecting

- (a) the total contributions received by the registered party for which the official agent has issued a tax receipt; and
- (b) total contributions received by an electoral district association on whose behalf the official agent of the registered party has issued a tax receipt.

226 A registered party shall confirm or update its registration annually, in prescribed form, with the Chief Electoral Officer on or before April 30 pursuant to subsection 182(2).

ELECTORAL DISTRICT ASSOCIATION REPORTING

227 (1) An electoral district association shall file with the Chief Electoral Officer in prescribed form, an annual financial report including:

- (a) a balance sheet;
- (b) a statement of income and expense;
- (c) a disclosure statement pursuant to Section 240;
- (d) a statement transfers pursuant to Sections 213 and 214;
- (e) a statement of fundraising events; and
- (f) a statement of loans pursuant to Section 215.

(2) The report referred to in subsection (1) must be filed with the Chief Electoral Officer on or before March 31 of the year immediately after the calendar year to which the report refers.

(3) A copy of a bank statement as at December 31 for each account identified in the electoral district association's registration under Section 194 must be included with the annual financial report referred to in subsection (1).

(4) The disclosure statement in clause (1)(c) must be accompanied by an auditor's report prepared in accordance with Section 178 if the total contributions reported exceed five thousand dollars.

(5) Where an electoral district association has total contributions and other income, excluding transfers, of more than twenty thousand dollars in any calendar year the annual financial report of an electoral district association must be accompanied by a review engagement report prepared by an independent public accountant.

228 An electoral district association must confirm or update its registration annually, in prescribed form, with the Chief Electoral Officer on or before March 31 pursuant to subsection 196(2).

CANDIDATE REPORTING

229 (1) Within eighty days after the day fixed for return of writ of election for a by-election or the writs of election for a general election the official agent of a candidate shall file with the Chief Electoral Officer a report of election expenses in prescribed form together with invoices, receipts and other vouchers or certified copies of them and a list of those documents and an affidavit of the official agent verifying the report and stating that no payment not permitted by the Act was made with the official agent's knowledge and consent and that to the best of the agent's knowledge and belief every expense incurred is entered in the report.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the Chief Electoral Officer may approve an extension of the period for filing pursuant to subsection (1) for up to thirty days upon written application by the official agent of the candidate.

(3) The report in subsection (1) must be accompanied by an auditor's report prepared in accordance with Section 178 respecting election expenses incurred by or on behalf of the candidate.

(4) Within ten days after receiving each report of election expenses, the Chief Electoral Officer shall publish a summary of election expenses reported in prescribed form and in such manner as the Chief Electoral Officer determines, including on the Elections Nova Scotia website.

(5) The Chief Electoral Officer shall preserve the report, invoices, receipts and other vouchers for a period of six months and during that period shall permit any elector, during ordinary office hours to inspect and from which to make copies or extracts therefrom upon

payment of the actual cost of providing copies of the requested report, invoices, receipts or other vouchers.

230 (1) A candidate shall file in prescribed form, an annual financial report including:

- (a) a balance sheet;
- (b) a statement of income and expense;
- (c) a disclosure statement pursuant to Section 240;
- (d) a statement of transfers pursuant to Sections 213 and 214;
- (e) a statement of fundraising events; and
- (f) a statement of loans pursuant to Section 215.

(2) The annual financial report in subsection (1) must be filed for each period that begins when the individual became a registered candidate and ends with the earliest of

(a) the date on which the individual ceases to be a candidate, before an election is held, in which case it must be delivered to the Chief Electoral Officer no later than eighty days after the date the individual ceases to be a candidate;

(b) an election or by-election in the candidate's electoral district, in which case it must be delivered to the Chief Electoral Officer within eighty days after the day fixed for return of the writ of election; and

(c) the end of the calendar year where no election for which the individual became a registered candidate is held, in which case it must be delivered to the Chief Electoral Officer no later than March 31 of the year immediately after the calendar year to which the report refers.

(3) The disclosure statement in clause (1)(c) must be accompanied by an auditor's report prepared in accordance with Section 178 if

(a) the statement is submitted on behalf of an individual who was a registered candidate, and the total contributions are more than five thousand dollars for the reporting period; or

(b) the statement is submitted on behalf of an individual who was a candidate pursuant to subsection 67(2).

231 (1) The official agent of each candidate within eighty days after the day fixed for the return of the writ of election shall file with the Chief Electoral Officer a report in prescribed form respecting tax receipts issued by the official agent.

(2) The report in subsection (1) must be accompanied by an auditor's report prepared in accordance with Section 178.

232 (1) The official agent of each candidate shall file with the Chief Electoral Officer a report in prescribed form respecting the disposal of excess contributions pursuant to Section 268.

(2) The report in subsection (1) must be delivered to the Chief Electoral Officer

(a) within one month after the candidate receives the candidate's reimbursement of election expenses; or

(b) where the candidate is not entitled to reimbursement, within two months after the official agent files a report of election expenses.

QUALITY OF REPORTING

233 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall accept any statement or report filed under this Act if the Chief Electoral Officer is satisfied that the information contained in the statement or report meets the requirements of this Act and the regulations.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall return any statement or report that is not accepted, to the registered party, electoral district association or candidate who filed the statement or report, and give details of why the information contained in the statement or report does not meet the requirements of this Act and the regulations.

(3) A registered party, electoral district association or candidate whose statement or report is not accepted by the Chief Electoral Officer shall file any new or further material or information required by the Chief Electoral Officer to bring the content of the statement or report within the requirements of this Act and the regulations.

CONTRIBUTIONS

234 (1) No individual may make a contribution to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate or to an official agent or trust for a registered party, electoral district association or candidate except as permitted by this Act.

(2) No registered party, electoral district association or candidate and no official agent or trust for a registered party, electoral district association or candidate shall accept a contribution except as permitted by this Act.

235 (1) The official agent shall record the full name and residential address, other than a post office box unless that is the only address available, of each contributor together with the amount of the contribution and the date on which the contribution was received.

(2) The information recorded by an official agent under subsection (1) must be recorded in a single ledger.

(3) The ledger used to record information under subsection (1) may be in the form of an electronic record.

(4) Contributions recorded by an official agent must be recorded on a cumulative basis for the purpose of the contribution limit in subsection 236(3) and the disclosure requirement in Section 240.

236 (1) An individual resident in the Province may make a contribution to one or more registered parties, electoral district associations or candidates.

(2) Where an individual was resident in the Province and is temporarily residing outside the Province while:

- (i) serving as a member of the Canadian Forces,
- (ii) engaged in the service of the Government of Canada or the Government of the Province,
- (iii) attending an educational institution,
- (iv) while engaged as an employee of an international organization of which Canada is a member,

the individual and members of the individual's immediate family who have temporarily left the Province with the individual are deemed to be resident in the Province for the purpose of making a contribution.

(3) The total contributions by an individual to each registered party and all electoral district associations and candidates of that registered party must not exceed five thousand dollars in any calendar year.

(4) For greater certainty, no organization may make a contribution to a registered party, an electoral district association or a candidate.

(5) For the purpose of this Section, a candidate who expends the candidate's own money for electoral purposes is deemed to have made a contribution to himself or herself as a candidate to the extent of the expenditure.

(6) For greater certainty, where an employee provides services to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate and the employee receives remuneration from the employee's employer for providing those services, the employer is deemed to have made a contribution in the amount of that remuneration.

(7) An organization shall not remunerate an employee who provides services to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate.

(8) No individual or organization shall reimburse, directly or indirectly, any other individual, including an employee, for a contribution made by the individual or employee.

(9) No person shall enter into an agreement for the provision of payment for goods or services to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate that includes a term that any individual will make a contribution, directly or indirectly, to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate.

237 (1) An individual may make a contribution by

(a) giving it directly to the official agent of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate; or

(b) giving it to another individual, appointed in prescribed form by the official agent of the registered party, electoral district association or candidate, to collect and receive contributions on behalf of the official agent.

(2) Notwithstanding clause (1)(b) the official agent of a candidate cannot appoint a candidate to collect or receive contributions.

(3) Where an official agent appoints another individual to accept contributions on behalf of the official agent, the appointment must be made before the individual collects or receives a contribution.

(4) The date on which a contribution is deemed to be received by the official agent of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate is the earlier of

(a) the date on which the contribution was made to the official agent pursuant to clause (1)(a); or

(b) the date the contribution was made to an individual appointed to collect or receive a contribution on behalf of the official agent of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate pursuant to clause (1)(b); or

(c) the date a contribution is mailed, couriered or sent by means other than being made directly to the official agent or an individual appointed by the official agent for the purpose of accepting contributions.

(5) No person or organization other than an individual appointed by the official agent of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate shall collect or receive a contribution on behalf of an official agent.

(6) An individual who makes a contribution by cheque, credit card or similar instrument shall make it payable directly to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate.

(7) When collecting or receiving a contribution from a contributor, an individual appointed under clause (1)(b) shall make a transmittal record in duplicate with the following information:

(a) the full name and residential address, other than a post office box unless that is the only address available, of each contributor;

(b) the date the contribution was collected or received;

(c) the amount or value of the contribution; and

(d) the name of the individual collecting or receiving it.

(8) The individual collecting or receiving a contribution under subsection (7) shall promptly forward the contribution, along with the original transmittal record, to the official agent of the registered party, electoral district association or candidate to whom the contribution was made, and retain the copy of the transmittal record.

(9) Where an official agent of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate receives a contribution through an individual appointed under clause (1)(b) that is not accompanied by a transmittal record, the official agent of the registered party, electoral district association or candidate, as the case may be, shall, within 10 days of receipt from such individual

(a) return the contribution unused to the contributor or, if that is not possible, pay the amount of the contribution to the Chief Electoral Officer who shall forward that amount to the Minister of Finance for deposit to the General Revenue Fund;

(b) advise the Chief Electoral Officer in writing that the contribution has been returned.

(10) Nothing in this Section prevents a professional fundraiser, event organizer, call centre, or other similar entity retained for fundraising purposes by a registered party, electoral district association or candidate from doing one or both of the following:

(a) soliciting a contribution on behalf of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate;

(b) collecting information from an individual who wishes to make a contribution and forwarding the information to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate.

238 (1) Notwithstanding the requirement of an individual accepting a contribution on behalf of an official agent to prepare a transmittal record under subsection 237(7), only one official agent is permitted to record a contribution.

(2) A contribution deposited into an account established on behalf of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate is deemed to be received by the official agent who maintains the account.

(3) The official agent of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate shall record the full name and residential address, other than a post office box unless that is the only address available, of each contributor together with the amount of the contribution.

(4) The official agent who records a contribution under subsection (3) is responsible for filing a disclosure statement pursuant to Section 240.

239 (1) A registered party and an electoral district association may accept contributions at any time.

(2) An individual through his or her official agent may accept a contribution from the date the individual becomes a registered candidate to the earlier of

(a) the date on which the individual ceases to be a registered candidate before the close of nominations; or

(b) the date on which the individual ceases to be a candidate up to the close of polls election day; or

(c) the close of polls on election day.

DISCLOSURE OF CONTRIBUTIONS

240 (1) On or before the April 30 in each year, every official agent of a registered party shall file with the Chief Electoral Officer a disclosure statement in prescribed form showing the full name and residential address, other than a post office box unless that is the only address available, of each contributor whose contributions received by that official agent during the previous calendar year exceed two hundred dollars in total and the amount of the total contributions by that contributor.

(2) On or before the March 31 in each year, every official agent of an electoral district association shall file with the Chief Electoral Officer a disclosure statement in prescribed form showing the full name and residential address, other than a post office box unless that is the only address available, of each contributor whose contributions received by that official agent during the previous calendar year exceed two hundred dollars in total and the amount of the total contributions by that contributor.

(3) The official agent of a candidate shall file in prescribed form a disclosure statement showing the full name and residential address, other than a post office box unless that is the only address available of each contributor whose contributions received by that official agent exceed two hundred dollars in total and the amount of the total contributions by that contributor on or before

(a) eighty days after the date fixed for return of the writ where an election is held in the electoral district; or

(b) March 31 of the year following the year being reported where an election was not held in the electoral district in the year being reported.

241 An official agent or an individual appointed by the official agent to collect or receive contributions pursuant to clause 237(1)(b) shall not accept an anonymous contribution in any amount and, where any anonymous contribution cannot be returned to the contributor, it shall be remitted to the Chief Electoral Officer who shall transmit it to the Minister of Finance for deposit to the General Revenue Fund.

242 An official agent or an individual appointed by the official agent to collect or receive contributions pursuant to clause 237(1)(b) shall not accept from any individual in any calendar year cash contributions totalling more than one hundred dollars.

243 (1) No individual shall contribute to any registered party, electoral district association or candidate funds not beneficially belonging to the individual or funds that have been given or provided to that individual by another individual or organization for the purpose of contributing those funds unless the individual contributing the funds is the spouse of the person to whom the funds beneficially belong.

(2) No individual shall accept from any other individual or organization funds that are given or provided to the individual to reimburse a contribution made to any registered party, electoral district association or candidate by that individual.

244 Where an official agent becomes aware after accepting a contribution that the contribution was made in contravention of this Act, the official agent shall

- (a) return the contribution within 30 days of becoming aware of the contravention;
- (b) advise the Chief Electoral Officer in prescribed form that the contribution has been returned; and
- (c) provide proof satisfactory to the Chief Electoral Officer that the contribution has been returned.

245 For greater certainty, the exemptions to the definition of contributions in clause 166(d) are available only to an individual eligible to make a contribution under this Act.

246 (1) A net profit of more than fifty dollars that is derived from the sale or auction of goods, services or property sold on behalf of a candidate registered party, electoral district association or candidate is a contribution attributable to the individual who purchased the goods, services or property from the registered party, electoral district association or candidate.

(2) Where the total amount paid by an individual for a fundraising event held on behalf of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate, minus the value of the benefit received by the individual is more than fifty dollars, the amount of the fees paid that exceeds the benefits received is a contribution to the registered party, electoral district association or candidate and the contribution is attributable to the individual that paid the fees.

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (2), an annual general meeting held by a registered party is deemed not to be a fundraising event and the total fee paid by the individual is a contribution provided the fee is only for registration and does not entitle the individual to a benefit other than registration.

(4) Notwithstanding the exemptions in subclause 166(d)(v), where the total amount paid by an individual for a fundraising event, less the benefit received by the individual is less than fifty dollars, the official agent of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate may elect to record the amount paid less the value of the benefit received as a contribution.

(5) Where an official agent elects to record a contribution under subsection (4), the official agent shall do the same for all individuals who participated in the fundraising event.

(6) An amount recorded as a contribution under subsection (4) must be added to other contributions made by the same individual in accordance with subsection 235(4).

247 A registered party, electoral district association or candidate may give a gift of nominal value to a contributor and the gift is not considered a benefit to the contributor if the fair market value of the gift is no more than ten percent of the contribution and the gift is not provided in the form of cash or a gift certificate.

248 (1) The value of a donation in kind contribution is the fair market value of the goods, services or property at the time the donation in kind is received.

(2) An individual who provides goods, services or property directly to participants in a fundraising event held on behalf of a registered party, electoral district association or candidate without compensation is deemed to have made a donation in kind contribution to the registered party, electoral district association or candidate and the contribution is valued at the fair market value of the goods, services or property at the time they are provided to the participants.

(3) A self-employed individual who normally sells or otherwise charges for services and provides those services to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate is deemed to have made a donation in kind contribution to the registered party, electoral district association or candidate and the contribution is valued at the regular fee or amount that the self-employed individual would normally charge for the services.

(4) An individual who sells goods, services or property to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate at an amount less than fair market value is deemed to have made a donation in kind contribution to the registered party, electoral district association or candidate and the contribution is valued at the difference between the fair market value of the goods, services or property at the time they were sold and the price paid by the registered party, electoral district association or candidate for the goods, services or property.

(5) An individual's donations in kind contributions that total more than fifty dollars in a calendar year are cumulative pursuant to subsection 235(4).

249 (1) Money or property conveyed by a nomination candidate or leadership contestant to a registered party is deemed to be a contribution to the registered party and must be disclosed pursuant to subsection 240(1) of this Act.

(2) The contributions in subsection (1) must be attributed on a proportionate basis to the individuals who gave money or property to the nomination candidate or leadership contestant.

(3) The total amount contributed to a registered party under subsection (1) must not exceed the sum of

(a) the amount of any money or value of any property given to a nomination candidate or leadership contestant by an individual that would have been permitted

as contributions to a registered party if they were made directly to the registered party; and

(b) the amount of any money or value of any property received from a registered party or electoral district association by a nomination candidate or leadership contestant.

(4) Money or property from a nomination candidate or leadership contestant must not be accepted by another leadership contestant, electoral district association or candidate.

(5) The amount by which the total of fees charged by a registered party to leadership contestants exceeds the total cost of holding the leadership convention is deemed to be a contribution to the registered party and the contribution must be attributed on a proportionate basis to individuals who gave money or property to the leadership contestants.

250 (1) Where an individual makes contributions to a registered party and all candidates and electoral district associations of that party totalling more than the amount permitted by subsection 236(3), the registered party, candidate or electoral district association, as the case may be, shall return to the individual the amount in excess of that amount.

(2) Where on a single day an individual makes contributions to two or more of a registered party and all candidates and electoral district associations of that party totalling more than the amount permitted by subsection 236(3) and immediately preceding that day the amount permitted by subsection 236(3) has not been exceeded, the registered party, candidates and electoral district associations, as the case may be, shall return to the individual the amount in excess of that amount in the same proportions relative to each that the contributions received by them on that day are relative to each other.

251 (1) On or before June 30 in each year, the Chief Electoral Officer shall publish on the Elections Nova Scotia website the disclosure statements of registered parties and electoral district associations for the previous calendar year.

(2) On or before one hundred and ten days following the return of a writ of election the Chief Electoral Officer shall publish on the Elections Nova Scotia website the disclosure statements of candidates in a by-election or a general election.

(3) The publication of disclosure statement by the Chief Electoral Officer under subsection (1) and (2) shall not include the residential address of a contributor but only the community name.

TAX RECEIPTS

252 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall prescribe a form for use as an official tax receipt to be issued by official agents for the purpose of the *Income Tax Act*, and the official agent of every registered party and candidate shall use this form and no other.

(2) The form prescribed to be a tax receipt for the purpose of the *Income Tax Act* shall require the official agent to provide such information as is required by the *Income Tax Act* and include a statement that it is an official receipt for Nova Scotia income tax purposes.

(3) The Chief Electoral Officer shall cause to be printed a sufficient supply of tax receipts prescribed pursuant to subsection (1) and

(a) provide them to the official agent of each registered party; and

(b) provide them to returning officers for the official agent of each candidate.

(4) The official agent of a registered party shall file annually, in prescribed form, a reconciliation of all tax receipts received from the Chief Electoral Officer.

(5) The reconciliation pursuant to subsection (4) shall report separately tax receipts issued by the registered party for

(a) contributions received by the registered party; and

(b) contributions received by an electoral district association for which the registered party issued a tax receipt under subsection 253(1).

(6) The official agent of a candidate shall return all unused tax receipts to the returning officer who provided the tax receipts pursuant to clause 3(b), within thirty days of election day.

253 (1) A tax receipt may be issued by the official agent of a registered party, at any time, for

(a) the actual amount of a monetary contribution received on behalf of the registered party; or

(b) the price paid by a participant, less the benefit received by that participant, for a fundraising event held by a registered party or by an electoral district association if

(i) a statement of fundraising event revenue and expenses in the form prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer no later than the earlier of

(A) one hundred twenty days after the date the fundraising event was held, and

(B) March 31 following the calendar year in which the fundraising event was held, and

(ii) the calculation of total fees paid by all participants, less the benefits received by those participants, has been approved by the Chief Electoral Officer.

(2) For greater certainty, a tax receipt issued pursuant to clause (1)(b) for a fundraising event held by an electoral district association must be issued on a tax receipt separate and apart from any other tax receipt issued by an official agent to the same individual.

(3) An electoral district association may not issue tax receipts.

(4) A tax receipt may be issued by the official agent of an individual who is nominated as a candidate, for a contribution received from the time the individual is nominated as a candidate to the close of polls on election day for

(a) the actual amount of a monetary contribution; or

(b) the price paid by a participant, less the benefit received by that participant, for a fundraising event if

(i) a, statement of fundraising event revenue and expenses, in prescribed form, is delivered to the Chief Electoral Officer no later than thirty days after the date the fundraising event is held, and

(ii) the calculation of total fees paid by all participants, less the benefits received by those participants, has been approved by the Chief Electoral Officer.

254 A tax receipt may not be issued for:

(a) amounts exempt from the definition of contributions;

(b) a contribution realized through the sale or auction of goods, services or property;

(c) a contribution realized through a lottery or raffle;

(d) a donation in kind contribution;

(e) loan contributions under Section 215; or

(f) money contributed to a registered party by a leadership contestant or nomination candidate or fees paid to a registered party by a leadership contestant that are contributions under Section 249.

255 (1) Every tax receipt issued by an official agent of a registered party must show clearly, in a manner that cannot be readily altered:

(a) the full name of the registered party;

(b) the serial number of the tax receipt;

(c) the name of the official agent as recorded in the register maintained by the Chief Electoral Officer;

(d) the day on which the tax receipt was issued;

(e) the calendar year during which the contribution was received;

- (f) the full name and residential address of the individual making the contribution;
- (g) the amount of the contribution; and
- (h) the signature of the official agent, which may be a facsimile signature.

(2) Every tax receipt issued by an official agent of a candidate shall show clearly, in a manner that cannot be readily altered:

- (a) the name of the candidate;
- (b) the serial number of the tax receipt;
- (c) the name of the official agent;
- (d) the day on which the tax receipt was issued;
- (e) the day on which the contribution was received;
- (f) the date of the election day;
- (g) the full name and residential address of the individual making the contribution;
- (h) the amount of the contribution; and
- (i) the signature of the official agent.

(3) A tax receipt may only be issued to

- (a) one individual; and
- (b) notwithstanding subsection 243(1), the individual who made the contribution.

256 (1) An official agent of a registered party shall file duplicate copies of all tax receipts issued by the registered party, with the Chief Electoral Officer.

(2) The official agent of a candidate shall file duplicate copies of all tax receipts issued to contributors, with the returning officer at the same time the official agent returns unused tax receipts to the returning officer.

257 (1) For the purpose of subsections 256(1) and (2), a tax receipt issued to replace a previously issued tax receipt must show clearly that it is a replacement receipt and, in addition to its own serial number, must show the serial number of the tax receipt originally issued.

(2) All spoiled tax receipts must be marked “cancelled” and such tax receipts together with the duplicates thereof, must be filed by the official agent, with the Chief Electoral Officer or returning officer, as the case may be, together with the duplicates of tax receipts required to be filed with the Minister pursuant to subsection 50(3) of the *Income Tax Act*.

- (3) Every tax receipt on which
- (a) the day on which the contribution was received;
 - (b) the year during which the contribution was received; or
 - (c) the amount of the contribution,

was incorrectly or illegibly entered must be regarded as spoiled.

ADVERTISEMENTS

258 (1) Every advertisement relating to an election printed, broadcast, published or distributed, either electronically or in hard copy, or in any other manner prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer, that promotes or opposes any candidate or registered party must be authorized by the official agent and must bear the words "authorized by the official agent for [*name of candidate or registered party*]".

(2) No person shall print, broadcast, publish or distribute an advertisement referred to in subsection (1) that does not comply with subsection (1).

ELECTION EXPENSES SPENDING LIMITS

259 (1) The election expenses of a registered party during a general election must not exceed the aggregate of two dollars and twenty nine cents multiplied by the number of electors in the electoral districts in which the party fields one or more candidates for election.

(2) The official agent of a registered party shall not incur election expenses during a by-election to an amount greater than five thousand, seven hundred twenty three dollars and twenty cents.

260 (1) The election expenses of a candidate must not exceed during any election the aggregate of

(a) five dollars and seventy two cents per elector in respect of the number of electors in the electoral district up to five thousand;

(b) four dollars and eighty six cents per elector in respect of the number of electors in the electoral district in excess of five thousand and not in excess of ten thousand; and

(c) four dollars and twenty nine cents per elector in respect of the number of electors in the electoral district in excess of ten thousand.

(2) Where more than one candidate is to be elected in an election in an electoral district, the election expenses of all candidates of the same registered party must not exceed the amounts prescribed by subsection (1) which amounts may be divided equally among those candidates.

(3) The maximum expenses set out in Section 259 and this Section shall be increased or decreased in accordance with the consumer price index of the Province published by Statistics Canada using the annual 2010 index as the base and the latest available index, as determined by the Chief Electoral Officer, as the current index.

(4) During an election the Chief Electoral Officer shall calculate the maximum election expenses permitted pursuant to Sections 259 and 260 for the election based on the most current list of electors at the time the writ of election or a by-election and shall provide this calculation to each official agent of a registered party or a candidate by publishing the calculation on the Elections Nova Scotia website.

(5) Notwithstanding subsection (4) if the final list of electors provided to the registered parties under Section 59 is greater than on the most current list of electors under the issuance of the writ or writs of election, the maximum expenses of a registered candidate or candidates shall be adjusted upward.

ELECTION EXPENSES

261 (1) During an election no person other than the official agent of a candidate or of a registered party or representative of such official agent, authorized in writing by the official agent, shall incur or authorize election expenses on behalf of a candidate or a registered party.

(2) No person shall accept or execute an order for election expenses on behalf of a candidate or a registered party that is not given by an official agent of a candidate or of a registered party or by a representative of such an agent authorized in writing by the agent.

(3) No person shall claim or receive a price different from the person's regular price for similar work, service or merchandise outside the election for election expenses incurred during an election or accept different remuneration or renounce remuneration for election expenses.

(4) Notwithstanding the other provisions of this Section, a candidate may pay the candidate's own personal expenses during an election up to the amount of one thousand dollars and, subject to subclauses 166(h)(iii), (iv) and (v), the expenses so paid, not including any publicity expense, form part of the candidate's election expenses.

(5) A candidate who pays personal expenses pursuant to subsection (4) shall give the candidate's official agent a detailed statement of the payments.

262 (1) Any payment of twenty-five dollars or more for election expenses must be evidenced by a receipt that provides all the particulars required for auditing each item of work or material and the rate or unit price used for computing the amount.

(2) Every person to whom an amount is due for election expenses shall present the person's claim not later than thirty days after election day to the official agent or, where the

agent has died or resigned or is incapable and has not been replaced, to the leader of the registered party or to the candidate.

(3) The right of a person to recover election expenses is barred unless the person presents the person's claim within the time specified in subsection (2) or in the event of the person's death the claim is presented by the person's personal representative within thirty days of the grant of probate or letters of administration.

263 (1) Where the candidate's report and affidavit pursuant to Section 229 are not delivered within the period specified in subsection 229(1) or within the extended period approved by the Chief Electoral Officer pursuant to subsection 229(2), the candidate is disqualified from sitting or voting in the House of Assembly until the report and affidavit are delivered to the Chief Electoral Officer, unless a judge by order excuses the delay.

(2) Where the report of election expenses and affidavit of a registered party pursuant to Section 223 are not delivered within the period specified in subsection 223(1) the party leader is disqualified from sitting or voting in the House of Assembly until the report and affidavit are delivered to the Chief Electoral Officer, unless a judge by order excuses the delay.

264 (1) If a report of election expenses or the associated affidavit contains an error, the official agent, candidate or leader of a registered party may request

- (a) a judge; or
- (b) the Chief Electoral Officer,

to direct the necessary correction and, where the Judge or Chief Electoral Officer is satisfied that the correction should be made, the Judge or Chief Electoral Officer shall cause the report to be amended.

(2) Where, in the opinion of the judge, a substantial change is made by reason of a correction pursuant to subsection (1), the judge may order the publication of a summary of the amended election expense report.

(3) Where

- (a) pursuant to subsection (2), the judge orders publication; or
- (b) in the opinion of the Chief Electoral Officer, a substantial change is made by reason of a correction pursuant to subsection (1),

the Chief Electoral Officer shall publish a summary of the amended election expense report on the Elections Nova Scotia website.

(4) If a candidate or leader of a registered party establishes before a judge that the absence, death, illness or misconduct of an official agent or other reasonable cause prevents the preparation of a report prescribed by Section 223 or 229, the judge may make any order that the judge considers necessary to enable the applicant to obtain all the information and documents to make the report and affidavit and grant such further delay as the circumstances appear to the judge to require.

(5) Failure to comply with an order made under this Section is punishable in the same manner as failure to appear or to testify before the court.

265 (1) In the report required by Section 223 and 229, an official agent shall report separately election expenses which are

- (a) paid;
- (b) unpaid and uncontested; and
- (c) unpaid and contested.

(2) An official agent, candidate or leader of a registered party shall not pay a claim that is so contested except in compliance with a judgment of a court in favour of the creditor after hearing of the case and not upon a confession of judgment or an agreement of settlement.

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (2), a judge may authorize the payment of a contested claim or of a claim not presented within the specified time in subsection 262(2), if it is established before the judge that the contestation or delay in filing results from a bona fide error or oversight and that the payment will not increase the expenses to an amount exceeding the limit fixed by Section 259 or 260.

266 (1) The judge having jurisdiction over an application under Section 263, 264 or 265 is a judge of the Supreme Court.

(2) No such application shall be heard without notice of at least three clear days to the Chief Electoral Officer and to each of the other candidates for election in the electoral district or in the case of the leader of a registered party to each of the other registered party leaders.

REIMBURSEMENT OF CANDIDATE ELECTION EXPENSES

267 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall reimburse each candidate who has been declared elected or who has received not less than ten percent of the valid votes cast in an election in which he or she was a candidate by making payment to the official agent of the candidate in respect of the candidate's election expenses to an amount not exceeding one dollar and forty three cents for each elector on the final list of electors.

(2) In an electoral district in which a registered party endorsed more than one individual who was nominated as a candidate, the total reimbursement made under subsection (1) shall not exceed one dollar and forty three cents for each elector whose name was on the final list of electors and the reimbursement shall be divided equally among those candidates.

(3) After the official agent of a candidate has delivered the report of the election expenses of a candidate as required by this Act, the Chief Electoral Officer shall

(a) approve, as soon as possible, payment of seventy-five per cent of the reimbursement to which a candidate is entitled when the Chief Electoral Officer is satisfied that election expenses in at least that amount have been incurred; and

(b) approve the remaining amount of reimbursement to which a candidate is entitled when the Chief Electoral Officer has determined that the report of election expenses is accurate and that the expenses claimed are election expenses as defined in clause 166(h).

(4) The reimbursement provided for in this Section shall be increased or decreased in accordance with the consumer price index of the Province published by Statistics Canada using the annual 2010 index as the base and the latest available index, as determined by the Chief Electoral Officer, as the current index.

(5) During an election the Chief Electoral Officer shall calculate the maximum reimbursement payable with respect to a candidate's election expenses pursuant to this Section for the election and shall publish the calculations on the Elections Nova Scotia website.

(6) As soon as possible after a writ of an election or a by-election is issued the Chief Electoral Officer shall calculate the interim reimbursement pursuant to this Section based on the most current list of electors at the beginning of the election and shall publish the calculations on the Elections Nova Scotia website.

(7) After the official count is completed the Chief Electoral Officer shall adjust the amount of the interim reimbursement if the final list of electors contains a larger number of electors and shall republish the calculations on the Elections Nova Scotia website.

DISPOSAL OF EXCESS CONTRIBUTIONS

268 (1) Where the aggregate of all contributions received by an official agent of a candidate for which the official agent has issued a receipt for income tax purposes is in excess of the amount required by the candidate to pay the aggregate of

(a) the deposit;

(b) election expenses;

(c) auditor's fees in excess of the amount for which reimbursement is provided; and

(d) costs with respect to a recount, incurred by the candidate in relation to the election,

the amount of such excess shall be paid by the official agent

(e) where the political affiliation of the candidate is shown on the ballot paper as a registered party, to any local organization or association of members of the party in the electoral district of the candidate or, where there is no local organization or association, to the official agent of the registered party; or

- (f) in any other case, to the Minister of Finance
 - (i) within one month after the candidate receives the candidate's reimbursement of election expenses pursuant to this Act, or
 - (ii) where the candidate is not entitled to reimbursement, within two months after the filing by the official agent of the election expense report.

(2) Where an official agent of the candidate pays an excess amount pursuant to this Section, the official agent shall forthwith transmit to the Chief Electoral Officer notification of such payment in the form prescribed.

(3) Where, after payment to the Minister of Finance of an excess amount pursuant to this Section, an official agent is required to make a further payment, the official agent may make application to the Chief Electoral Officer for the repayment to the official agent of an amount not exceeding the lesser of

- (a) the excess amount paid by the official agent to the Minister of Finance;
- or
- (b) the amount of such further payment,

and upon receipt of a certificate from the Chief Electoral Officer to the effect that such further payment has been or may properly be made by the official agent, the Minister of Finance shall pay out of the General Revenue Fund of the Province to the official agent to whom a certificate relates the amount certified by the Chief Electoral Officer.

INSPECTION OF RECORDS

269 (1) The Chief Electoral Officer may conduct inspections of the records of registered parties, electoral district associations and candidates and official agents that relate or may relate to

- (a) information that is or should be in any statements, forms or reports required to be filed with the Chief Electoral Officer under this Act;
- (b) information that shows the basis for any calculation that has been made in order to determine the amount of a contribution; or
- (c) any information other than the information required under clause (a) or (b) that is required to be filed with the Chief Electoral Officer under this Act.

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer may conduct an inspection as part of a preliminary review respecting a complaint pursuant to clause 5(1)(p).

270 On reasonable notice at any reasonable time, the Chief Electoral Officer, or a representative of the Chief Electoral Officer, may visit the premises of a registered party, electoral district association, candidate or official agent to inspect their records and make copies of their records.

PART III

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

271 (1) Upon consultation with the leaders of the registered parties and subject to the approval of the House of Assembly, the Governor in Council shall appoint a person to be the Commissioner of Elections.

(2) The Commissioner may be appointed on either a full-time or part-time basis.

(3) The Commissioner holds office for a term of not more than five years but may be re-appointed.

(4) The Commissioner may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Speaker of the House of Assembly.

(5) The Commissioner may be removed or suspended before the end of the term of office by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the House of Assembly for cause or incapacity.

272 (1) The Governor in Council may appoint an acting Commissioner if the office of the Commissioner becomes vacant

(a) during a sitting of the House of Assembly and the Assembly does not determine whether or not to give approval under Section 271 before the end of the sitting; or

(b) while the House of Assembly is not sitting.

(2) The acting Commissioner holds office until a new Commissioner is appointed.

(3) Where the Commissioner is unable to act because of illness, the Governor in Council may appoint an acting Commissioner who holds office until the Commissioner is again able to act or until the office becomes vacant.

(4) The Commissioner shall be paid such remuneration and allowances as determined by the Governor in Council.

(5) For the purpose of exercising jurisdiction pursuant to this Act, the Commissioner has all the powers, privileges and immunities of a commissioner appointed pursuant to the *Public Inquiries Act* and may establish rules of procedure for the purpose of this Act.

273 The Commissioner may, on the Commissioner's own initiative, or at the request of the Chief Electoral Officer or of another person, conduct an investigation into any matter that might constitute an offence under this Act.

274 (1) Where the Chief Electoral Officer believes on reasonable grounds that an election officer may have committed an offence under this Act, the Chief Electoral Officer shall direct the Commissioner to conduct an investigation into the matter and

(a) where the Commissioner believes on reasonable grounds that an election officer may have committed an offence under this Act refer the matter to the Director of Public Prosecutions, or

(b) may make recommendations with respect to the matter to the Chief Electoral Officer,

or both.

(2) Where the Commissioner makes recommendations to the Chief Electoral Officer pursuant to clause (1)(b), the Commissioner shall publish the recommendations on a public website and by any other means that the Commissioner deems appropriate.

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the Commissioner shall not disclose on a public website any information respecting an election officer's

- (a) residential address;
- (b) residential telephone number;
- (c) spouse;
- (d) dependent children.

275 The Commissioner may engage the services of any person necessary to assist with the duties of the Commissioner pursuant to this Part.

276 Before completing an investigation, the Commissioner shall notify any person who is the subject of an investigation that the person is being investigated and inform the person of the nature of the matter being investigated, unless the Commissioner believes that doing so would compromise or impede the investigation.

277 Where, upon conclusion of the investigation, the Commissioner decides that no further action is to be taken, the Commissioner must notify any person who is the subject of the investigation of that decision.

278 Where the investigation was initiated at the request of another person, the Commissioner shall also notify that person of the decision.

279 Where the Commissioner believes that it is in the public interest to make public the outcome of an investigation, the Commissioner may do so on a public website and other means the commissioner deems appropriate, and may include in the information provided the name of the person and the nature of the matter investigated but shall not include information respecting the residential address or residential telephone number of the person investigated.

280 (1) A prosecution for an offence under this Act may not be commenced without the consent of the Commissioner.

(2) Where the Commissioner, upon conclusion of the investigation, believes on reasonable grounds that an offence under this Act has been committed, and is of the view that the public interest so requires, the Commissioner may refer the matter to the Director of Public Prosecutions who, subject to this Act, shall determine whether to commence prosecution.

281 (1) Where the Commissioner determines that an allegation of a contravention of this Act is frivolous or vexatious, the Commissioner shall dismiss the matter and may order the person who made the allegation to pay costs or damages, or both, to the person, registered party, electoral district association or other organization, including reimbursement of the actual expenses of the person, registered party or electoral district association incurred in responding to the allegation, and grant such other relief as the Commissioner may determine.

(2) The Commissioner shall publish on a public website and by any other means the Commissioner deems appropriate, a summary of each allegation the Commissioner determines to be frivolous or vexatious, and any order made by the Commissioner pursuant to subsection (1) including the name of the person against whom the order was made but shall not make public any person's residential address or residential telephone number.

COMPLIANCE AGREEMENTS

282 (1) In this Section and Sections 283 to 287, "contracting party" means a person who has committed, is about to commit or is likely to commit an act or omission that could constitute an offence under this Act.

(2) Subject to subsection 283(2), the Commissioner may enter into a compliance agreement aimed at ensuring compliance with this Act with a person whom the Commissioner believes on reasonable grounds has committed, is about to commit or is likely to commit an act or omission that could constitute an offence under this Act.

(3) A compliance agreement may contain any terms and conditions that the Commissioner considers necessary to ensure compliance with this Act including undertakings related to training, community service, and new administrative procedures.

(4) Before entering into a compliance agreement, the Commissioner shall advise the prospective contracting party of the right to be represented by counsel and give the prospective contracting party an opportunity to obtain counsel.

(5) A compliance agreement may include a statement by the contracting party in which the contracting party admits responsibility for the act or omission that constitutes the offence.

(6) The fact that a compliance agreement was entered into, and any statement referred to in subsection (5), is not admissible in evidence against the contracting party in any civil or criminal proceedings.

283 (1) Where a matter was not referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions before a compliance agreement is entered into, no referral may be made for an act or omission that led to the agreement unless there is non-compliance with the agreement.

(2) Where a matter has already been referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions, whether or not a prosecution has been initiated, the Director may, where, after consultation with the Commissioner, the Director considers that a compliance agreement would better serve the public interest, remit the matter back to the Commissioner so that it may be so dealt with.

(3) Where a compliance agreement is entered into, any prosecution of the contracting party for an act or omission that led to it is suspended and, unless there is non-compliance with it, the Director of Public Prosecutions may not resume the prosecution.

(4) The Commissioner and the contracting party may renegotiate the terms of the compliance agreement at the request of the Commissioner or contracting party at any time before it is fully executed.

(5) The Commissioner shall provide the contracting party with a copy of a compliance agreement, without delay after it is entered into or renegotiated.

(6) Where the matter has been referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Commissioner shall also provide a copy of the compliance agreement to the Director.

284 (1) Where the Commissioner is of the opinion that the compliance agreement has been complied with, the Commissioner shall cause a notice to that effect to be served on the contracting party.

(2) Where the matter has been referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Commissioner shall also provide a copy of the notice to the Director.

(3) Service of the notice terminates any prosecution of the contracting party that is based on the act or omission in question and prevents the Commissioner from referring the matter to the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Director from instituting such a prosecution.

285 (1) Where the Commissioner is of the opinion that a contracting party has not complied with a compliance agreement, the Commissioner shall serve a notice of default on the contracting party, informing the contracting party that the Commissioner may refer the matter to the Director of Public Prosecutions for any action the Director considers appropriate or, where a prosecution was suspended by virtue of subsection 283(3), it may be resumed.

(2) Where the matter has been referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Commissioner shall also provide a copy of the notice of default to the Director.

286 The court shall dismiss proceedings against a contracting party if it is satisfied on a balance of probabilities that the contracting party has totally complied with the compliance

agreement or, in the case of partial compliance and taking into account the contracting party's performance with respect to the agreement, is of the opinion that the proceedings would be unfair.

287 The Commissioner shall publish as soon as practicable on a public website and by any other means that the Commissioner deems appropriate, a notice that sets out, in the case of a compliance agreement entered into under section 282 the contracting party's name, the act or omission in question and a summary of the compliance agreement and shall update the published information as soon as practicable the disposition of the compliance agreement but shall not make public the residential address or residential telephone number of any person who is the subject of a compliance agreement.

PART IV

OFFENCES

288 A person is guilty of an offence who, directly or indirectly,

(a) at or about a polling station, interferes or attempts to interfere with an elector when marking a ballot, or otherwise attempts to ascertain the name of the candidate for whom an elector is about to vote or has voted;

(b) communicates information about the manner in which a ballot has been marked in the person's presence in a polling station;

(c) induces or endeavours to induce an elector to show the elector's ballot so as to make known the name of the candidate for whom the elector has cast the elector's vote; or

(d) communicates information obtained in a polling station as to the candidate for whom an elector at the polling station is about to vote or has voted.

289 Subject to Sections 108 and 115, every person is guilty of an offence who,

(a) openly declares in a polling station for whom the person intends to vote or has voted; or

(b) shows the person's ballot to permit the name of the candidate, for whom the person has voted, to be known.

290 Every person is guilty of an offence who, refuses without cause or neglects to attend on the summons of a returning officer issued under this Act.

291 A person is guilty of an offence who during the advance poll or election day poll

(a) supplies, carries or wears any flag, ribbon, emblem, badge or other item with the intent to distinguish the user as the supporter of a candidate or a registered party within sixty metres of any entrance to a building in which a polling station is located;

(b) organizes or participates in a parade, demonstration, or broadcast using a loud speaker or a public address system, in support of a candidate or a registered party.

292 (1) Every person is guilty of an offence who, posts or displays within sixty metres of any entrance to a building in which a returning office is located, any literature, emblem, ribbon, flag, banner, card, bill, poster or device that supports or opposes a candidate or a registered party.

(2) A registered party, a candidate or a candidate's official agent may locate their headquarters within sixty metres of the returning office with the agreement of the Chief Electoral Officer and where such agreement is in place the registered party or candidate is not guilty of the offence.

293 An election officer or other person is guilty of an offence who, does any of the following:

- (a) fails or refuses to comply with any of the provisions of this Act;
- (b) while performing the duties of the election officer, engages in politically partisan activity.

294 Every person is guilty of an offence who, knowingly makes, distributes or publishes a false statement that a candidate has withdrawn.

295 Every person is guilty of an offence who, during an election, knowingly makes, distributes or publishes a false statement of fact about a candidate's character or conduct for the purpose of influencing the election.

296 Every person is guilty of an offence who, obstructs a candidate or a candidate's representative in lawfully campaigning.

297 Every person is guilty of an offence who,

- (a) acts, incites others to act or conspires to act in a disorderly manner with intent to prevent the transaction of the business of a public meeting called for the purposes of the election.;
- (b) removes, mutilates, defaces or alters any notice or document required by this Act to be posted;
- (c) impedes or obstructs an enumerator in the performance of duties under this Act is guilty of an offence.

298 An employer who refuses, or by intimidation, undue influence, or in any other way, interferes with the use by an employee of the three consecutive hours for voting, or fails to pay the employee, as provided in Section 131, is guilty of an offence.

299 Every person who issues a tax receipt purporting to be for a contribution received by or on behalf of a registered party or candidate unless the contribution indicated in the tax receipt was made to or for the benefit of the registered party or candidate is guilty of an offence.

300 Every person that knowingly makes a false statement in any application, statement, report, return or other document filed with the Chief Electoral Officer under this Act is guilty of an offence.

301 No person shall knowingly give, to an official agent or any other person authorized to receive contributions on behalf of an official agent, false information in respect of any contribution or alleged contribution.

302 Every person who

(a) fails to file with the Chief Electoral Officer a statement, report, return or other document or information required under this Act within the specified time period; or

(b) files with the Chief Electoral Officer a statement, report, return or other document or information which substantially fails to disclose the information required under this Act; or

(c) fails substantially to provide such clarifying or verifying information with respect to a statement, report, return or other document or information filed with the Chief Electoral Officer under this Act as may be required by the Chief Electoral Officer;

is guilty of an offence.

303 Every person that contravenes Section 234 is guilty of an offence and

(a) in the case of a registered party, to a fine not exceeding \$50,000; and

(b) in all other cases, to a fine not exceeding \$5,000.

304 (1) Every registered party that contravenes Section 259 is guilty of an offence and is liable to a fine not exceeding \$50,000.

(2) Every candidate who contravenes Section 260 is guilty of an offence and is liable to a fine not exceeding \$5,000.

305 Every official agent who fails to make a payment as required by Section 265, or who knowingly makes a payment that is less than the amount that the official agent is required to pay under Section 265, is guilty of an offence.

306 Every official agent or other officer of a registered party or a candidate, who, while acting on behalf of the candidate or registered party, is responsible for a contravention of Section 259 or 260 is guilty of an offence.

307 Every person that uses all or any part of information disclosed under this Act for

commercial or business purposes or for any other purpose not intended by this Act is guilty of an offence.

308 A person who sits or votes in the House of Assembly contrary to Section 263 is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine of \$500 for each day on which the person so sits or votes.

309 Every person who fails to comply with a written request to provide a record containing the information required under this Act about a contribution that he or she accepted, or an expense that he or she incurred or approved, is guilty of an offence.

310 Every person is guilty of an offence who

- (a) wilfully contravenes subsection 346(1) or (2) or, being a sponsor of an election survey, wilfully contravenes subsection 346(3);
- (b) wilfully contravenes section 347;
- (c) wilfully contravenes subsection 348.

311 (1) Every person is guilty of an offence who, contravenes or fails to comply with any provision of this Act and if no other fine is provided, is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$5,000.

(2) The provisions of the *Summary Proceedings Act* shall apply to every proceeding taken against a person charged with an offence under this Act.

(3) A prosecution for an offence under this Act may be instituted at any time but not later than one year after the day on which the Commissioner has reasonable grounds to believe that an offence under this Act has been committed, but in any case, not later than five years after the day on which the offence was committed.

312 A prosecution for an offence under this Act may be instituted against a registered party, electoral district association or other organization in the name of the organization and, for the purposes of the prosecution, the organization shall be conclusively presumed to be a person.

313 Every person is guilty of an offence and liable to the same punishment as the person who commits it who

- (a) attempts to commit or is an accessory after the fact to the commission of; or
- (b) aids, abets, counsels or procures the commission of, an offence punishable under this Act.

314 (1) Subject to subsections (2) and (3), no person shall be excused from answering any question put to the person in any proceeding under this Act concerning any election or the conduct of any person thereat or in relation thereto on the ground of privilege.

(2) The evidence of an elector to show for whom the elector voted at an election is not admissible in evidence in any proceeding under this Act.

(3) No answer given by any person claiming to be excused on the ground of privilege shall be used in any other proceedings under this Act but the person presiding at the proceeding shall give the witness a certificate that the witness claimed the right to be excused on such ground and made full and true answers to the satisfaction of that person.

CORRUPT PRACTICES

315 (1) Every person is guilty of an offence who, directly or indirectly, offers a bribe to induce or influence another person to do any of the following:

- (a) to vote or refrain from voting;
- (b) to vote or refrain from voting for or against a particular candidate;
- (c) to nominate or refrain from nominating a person as a candidate;
- (d) to run or refrain from running as a candidate or to withdraw as a candidate.

(2) Every person is guilty of an offence who, directly or indirectly, accepts or agrees to accept a bribe offered in circumstances described in subsection (1).

(3) Every person is guilty of an offence who, directly or indirectly, solicits a bribe in circumstances described in subsection (1).

316 Section 315 does not extend to

- (a) any food or drink given or provided by
 - (i) a registered party, a registered candidate, or a candidate at a meeting sponsored by it,
 - (ii) a person at the person's place of residence, or
 - (iii) a person supplying lunches to agents at a polling station.

317 (1) Every person is guilty of an offence who,

- (a) directly or indirectly, uses or threatens to use force or violence or threatens to inflict an injury, damage, harm or loss, upon person
 - (i) to induce or compel the person to vote or refrain from voting, or
 - (ii) because that person voted or refrained from voting; or
- (b) impedes or prevents an elector from exercising the right to vote.

(2) Every person is guilty of an offence who, uses false pretenses to induce an elector to vote or refrain from voting, or to vote or refrain from voting for or against a particular candidate.

318 Every person is guilty of an offence who, knowingly makes a false statement in order to have an elector's name omitted or deleted from the list of electors.

319 Every person is guilty of an offence who, knowingly makes a false statement in order to have

(a) the name of a dead or fictitious person added to or kept on the list of electors;
or

(b) the name of a person who is not an elector, including the person, added to or kept on the list of electors.

320 Every person is guilty of an offence who, does either of the following:

(a) knowingly provides false or misleading information when required or authorized by this Act to provide information;

(b) knowingly makes a false or misleading statement or oath when required by this Act to make a statement or oath.

321 Every person is guilty of an offence who, uses, authorizes or permits the use of information contained in the Register of Electors, or list of electors used at any election, for purposes other than electoral purposes.

322 Every person is guilty of an offence who, obstructs, hinders or makes a false or misleading statement to the Commissioner or a person appointed by the Commissioner when conducting an investigation.

323 Every person entrusted with the care, custody and delivery of election materials and supplies, ballot paper, ballots and other election related documents is guilty of an offence who, knowingly fails to deliver them as instructed by an election officer.

324 Every person is guilty of an offence who does any of the following:

(a) knowingly votes or applies to vote in an election when not eligible to do so;

(b) having already voted in an election, either votes or applies to vote in the same election or in an election in another electoral district that has the same election day;

(c) induces or causes another person to vote knowing that the other person is not eligible to vote;

(d) obtains a ballot in the name of another person, whether the other person is alive, dead or fictitious.

(e) applies to be included in a list of electors in the name of some other person, whether that person is living, dead or fictitious

(f) applies to be included in a list of electors for a polling division in which he or she is not resident with intent to be improperly included in that list.

325 Every person is guilty of an offence who, not being authorized by this Act, willfully

- (a) has a ballot or ballot paper in the person's possession;
- (b) alters, defaces, or destroys a ballot;
- (c) supplies a ballot to any person;
- (d) deposits a paper other than a ballot in a ballot box;
- (e) takes a ballot out of a polling station;
- (f) delivers to the deputy returning officer, to be placed in a ballot box, anything other than the ballot given by the deputy returning officer;
- (g) destroys, defaces, alters, takes, opens or otherwise interferes with a ballot, poll record, or ballot box, or a document or envelope used at or prepared for an election;
- (h) prints or reproduces a ballot, or a paper that is capable of being used as a ballot, or prints more ballots than he or she is authorized to print.
- (i) places any writing, number or mark on a ballot so that an elector may be thereby identified;
- (j) as a deputy returning officer, puts the deputy returning officer's initials on the back of a paper that is not a ballot but is capable of being used as one.

326 An election officer or other person is guilty of an offence who, does any of the following:

- (a) accepts an appointment or acts as an election officer when not eligible;
- (b) acts as an election officer without lawful authority;
- (c) knowingly falsifies a list of electors or poll record, enumerators' index sheet, or other election document, whether by making a false addition, deletion or otherwise with intent to falsify it; or
- (d) knowingly miscounts ballots under Section 128 to 130.

327 Every prospective candidate or candidate is guilty of an offence who, during an election

- (a) agrees, at the request of any person, to follow a course of action that will prevent the prospective candidate or candidate from exercising freedom of action in the House of Assembly, or to resign therefrom if called upon by any person;
- (b) makes a payment, advance, loan or transfer, except the personal expenses of the prospective candidate or candidate, for the purposes of the election, other than through the candidate's official agent;
- (c) receives a contribution, transfer, proceeds of a loan or any other money for the purposes of the election, other than through the candidate's official agent.

(d) makes or promises to make any subscription or donation for a religious, charitable, educational, athletic or philanthropic purpose, or to any club, society or association;

(e) makes or promises to make a bet or wager upon the result of the election or on any event or contingency relating to it; or

(f) pays or promises to pay the wages or earnings of an elector lost as a result of casting or agreeing to cast the elector's vote.

328 (1) Every official agent who willfully

(a) incurs election expenses exceeding the maximum fixed by Sections 259 or 260;

(b) delivers or files a false report or affidavit;

(c) produces a falsified invoice, receipt or other voucher; or

(d) produces a falsified record of a contribution or tax receipt; or

(e) after the delivery of the official agent's report, pays a claim otherwise than as permitted by Section 265,

is guilty of a corrupt practice.

(2) A candidate or party leader whose official agent has been guilty of any of the acts mentioned in subsection (1) is also guilty of a corrupt practice unless it is established that the act could not have affected the result of the election, or that the candidate or party leader had taken in good faith all possible and reasonable precautions to carry out the election honestly according to the requirements of this Act or that the act of the official agent was committed without the knowledge of the candidate or party leader.

(3) A candidate or party leader who wilfully incurs, pays or authorizes any election expense otherwise than as permitted by this Act is guilty of a corrupt practice.

329 Every person that obstructs any person carrying out an audit, inquiry, investigation, inspection, or examination under this Act or withholds from the person or conceals or destroys any records, documents or things relevant to the audit, inquiry, investigation, inspection or examination is guilty of an offence.

330 Every person who, directly or indirectly, uses or threatens to use force or violence, or threatens to inflict an injury, damage, harm or loss upon another person to induce or compel the other person to make or refrain from making a contribution is guilty of an offence.

331 Every person who commits a breach of any of the provisions of Sections 315 to 330 may be found guilty of a corrupt practice.

332 Every person who is reported under the *Controverted Elections Act* as having been found guilty of a corrupt practice, in addition to any other punishment provided herein, is during the five years after the report, incapable of being elected to or of sitting in the House of

Assembly, or of holding any office at the nomination of the Governor in Council.

333 Subject to subsection (2), where it is found by the judge trying an election petition under the *Controverted Elections Act* that a corrupt practice has been committed by or with the actual knowledge and consent of a candidate at an election, the candidate's election, where the candidate has been elected, is void.

334 No election is void under Section 333 unless the act or omission that constituted the corrupt practice was done or omitted by

- (a) the candidate in person;
- (b) the candidate's official agent; or
- (c) an agent of the candidate with the actual knowledge or consent of the candidate.

335 Where the witnesses, or any of them, on whose testimony a person has become disqualified under Sections 333 and 334, are convicted of perjury with respect to the testimony, a court shall, upon being satisfied that the disqualification was procured by reason of the perjury, order that the disqualification thereupon cease and determine, and it ceases and determines accordingly.

336 A person who is found guilty of a corrupt practice is liable on summary conviction to an additional penalty of not more than \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term of not more than one year, or both.

PART V

GENERAL

337 When an election officer is by this Act authorized or required to give a public notice the notice may be by advertisement or by posting on the Elections Nova Scotia website or by such means of communication as the Chief Electoral Officer considers will best affect the intended purpose.

338 (1) An oath authorized or required under this Act, may be taken before

- (a) the person who by this Act is expressly required to administer it; or
- (b) where no person is expressly required to administer it, then before the Chief Electoral Officer, assistant chief electoral officer, a returning officer, election clerk, revision assistant, supervising deputy returning officer deputy returning officer, poll clerk, presiding officer, deputy presiding officer, write-in ballot coordinator, a judge, barrister, notary public, justice of the peace, or a commissioner for taking affidavits.

(2) The oath must be administered at no cost.

339 Except in the case of election day, the Chief Electoral Officer may advance or postpone a day on which this Act provides for the doing or carrying out of any act or thing to the first day immediately following or preceding such day that is not a holiday and in that event the Chief Electoral Officer shall immediately give notice on the Elections Nova Scotia website, by such other means of communication as the Chief Electoral Officer considers will best affect the intended purpose and, in writing, to the leaders of the registered parties.

340 No election shall be declared invalid by reason of a non-compliance with the provisions of this Act as to the taking of the poll, or the counting of the votes, or by reason of any want of qualification in the persons signing nomination documents received by the returning officer, under the provisions of this Act, or of any mistake in the use of the forms, if it appears to the tribunal having cognizance of the question that the election was conducted in accordance with the principles laid down in this Act, and that such non-compliance or mistake did not affect the result of the election.

341 After the passing of any amendment to this Act, the Chief Electoral Officer may

- (a) consolidate the amendment in copies of the Act for distribution; and
- (b) correct and reprint all forms, instructions, procedures, codes of conduct, policies and guidelines affected thereby.

342 No amendment to this Act applies in any election for which a writ is issued within six months from the passing of the amendment.

FEES AND EXPENSES

343 (1) Upon the recommendation of the Chief Electoral Officer, the Governor in Council may make

- (a) a tariff of fees and expenses to be paid by Elections Nova Scotia
 - (i) to any person for services and expenses under this Act; and
 - (ii) to any person for services, including payment for accounting programs or software, to registered parties, electoral district associations, official agents and candidates to assist in complying with this Act;
- (b) a tariff of fees to be paid to Elections Nova Scotia for products created or supplied by Elections Nova Scotia;

and may revise and amend the tariff.

(2) Where it appears to the Chief Electoral Officer that the fees and expenses provided for by the tariff

- (a) are not sufficient remuneration for services required to be performed or expenses to be incurred,

(b) that a claim for any necessary services performed or expenses incurred is not covered by the tariff, or

(c) that the tariff does not provide fees and expenses for the additional election officers appointed under subsection 81(12)

the Chief Electoral Officer may authorize the payment of such remuneration or fees for the services or payment of the expenses as is considered just and reasonable.

(3) An account for services or expenses payable under this Section must be

(a) accompanied by satisfactory vouchers showing disbursements made, if any;

(b) certified by the returning officer for services and expenses under clause (1)(a); and

(c) authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer in accordance with the tariff of fees and expenses or pursuant to clause (1)(b) or subsection (2).

(4) The fees, expenses, and compensations authorized under this Section, and expenses incurred by the Chief Electoral Officer under this Act, must be paid out of the General Revenue Fund of the Province.

(5) The tariff of fees and expenses made pursuant to the former Act continues in force until amended or repealed.

ELECTION COMMISSION

344 (1) There shall be a commission to be known as the "Election Commission" which shall

(a) make recommendations to the Chief Electoral Officer respecting amendments to this Act or any related enactment that, in the opinion of the Commission, would improve the elections process or the administration of this Act, which may be included by the Chief Electoral Officer in the Chief Electoral Officer's report pursuant to clause 163(1)(d);

(b) advise the Chief Electoral Officer regarding the administrative conduct of elections and the administration of electoral finance;

(c) advise the Chief Electoral Officer regarding the piloting of a procedure, equipment or technology pursuant to Section 345.

(2) The Commission is composed of

(a) a person appointed by the Governor in Council to be the Chair of the Commission; and

(b) two persons appointed by each of the leaders of a registered party as defined by the *House of Assembly Act*.

- (3) The Chair holds office for a term of five years and may be re-appointed.
- (4) The Chair is removable only for cause by the Governor in Council acting upon a resolution of the House of Assembly.
- (5) A person appointed to the Commission by a leader of a registered party as defined by the *House of Assembly Act* holds office for a term of two years unless the person is sooner replaced by the leader of that registered party.
- (6) Where persons are appointed to the Commission by the leader of a party and the party ceases to be a registered party as defined by the *House of Assembly Act*, those persons cease to be members of the Commission.
- (7) Only persons entitled to be registered as electors at a general election may be appointed to the Election Commission by the Governor in Council or a leader of a registered party.
- (8) No person may be appointed or act as a member of the Commission who is
- (a) a candidate in a provincial or federal election; or
 - (b) a member of the House of Assembly or a member of the Parliament of Canada.
- (9) One half of the members of the Commission at a duly constituted meeting constitute a quorum and any vacancy on the Commission does not impair the right of the remaining members of the Commission to act.
- (10) The Chair and each other member of the Commission shall be compensated for reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of duties and the Chair and each member of the Commission shall be paid such remuneration as the Governor in Council determines.
- (11) The Chief Electoral Officer is entitled to receive notice and attend all meetings of the Commission and make observations and suggestions on any subject under discussion at such meetings.

PILOTING PROCEDURE

- 345** (1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act or the regulations, the Chief Electoral Officer may direct the use at a by-election, or in up to one third of the total electoral districts at a general election, of a process, procedure, equipment or technology that is different from that required by this Act if the procedure, equipment or technology relates to any of the following
- (a) voting;
 - (b) elector registration;
 - (c) the form of ballot;

- (d) the list of electors;
- (e) polling divisions;
- (f) polling stations;
- (g) counting of votes;
- (h) the manner of reporting, filing, disclosing, recording and publishing information and receiving payment;
- (i) the adaptation of voting procedures to enable electors with disabilities to vote without assistance;
- (j) electoral finance.

(2) On the advice of the Election Commission, the Chief Electoral Officer may initiate a directive under subsection (1) or may do so on the Chief Electoral Officer's own initiative if in the opinion of the Chief Electoral Officer it will enhance access, efficiency or the integrity of the vote or improve the electoral finance regime.

(3) A directive of the Chief Electoral Officer under subsection (1) must describe in detail the procedure, equipment or technology to be used and must refer to the provisions of this Act that will be varied or will not apply to the by-election or to one or more of the electoral districts at the general election.

(4) An election must not be held in accordance with a directive under this Section unless the Chief Electoral Officer has

- (a) provided a copy of the directive to each registered party; and
- (b) published the directive on the Elections Nova Scotia website,

at least sixty days before the writ is issued for the by-election or general election.

(5) A by-election or an election in one or more districts of a general election held in accordance with a directive under this Section is not invalidated by a failure to comply with this Act if the non-compliance is authorized by the directive.

(6) Within six months after election day for a by-election or election day in one or more districts of a general election to which a directive applies, the Chief Electoral Officer shall submit a report to the House of Assembly through the Speaker or, if the House is not sitting, to the Clerk of the House, that includes

- (a) information on the procedure, equipment or technology used in accordance with the directive and its effectiveness; and
- (b) recommendations with respect to amendments to this Act that are required for the purpose of adopting the procedure, equipment or technology used in accordance with the directive or otherwise adapted as recommended by the Chief Electoral Officer.

(7) On request, the Chief Electoral Officer shall promptly provide a person with a copy of a directive under subsection (1).

(8) An oath that is prescribed by the Chief Electoral Officer for use under the piloting provisions of the Act shall be published on the Elections Nova Scotia website.

(9) The Chief Electoral Officer may modify, replace or supplement a directive published on the Elections Nova Scotia website if the Chief Electoral Officer considers it necessary to do so in order to deal with an emergency situation or other circumstance during the election, which modification, replacement or supplement must be published on the website as soon as practicable.

PUBLIC OPINION POLLS

346 (1) The first person who transmits the results of an election public opinion poll, other than one that is described in Section 347, to the public during an election period and any person who transmits them to the public within 24 hours after they are first transmitted to the public must provide the following together with the results

- (a) the name of the sponsor of the public opinion poll;
- (b) the name of the individual or organization that conducted the public opinion poll;
- (c) the date on which or the period during which the public opinion poll was conducted;
- (d) the population from which the sample of respondents was drawn;
- (e) the number of people who were contacted to participate in the public opinion poll; and
- (f) if applicable, the margin of error in respect of the data obtained.

(2) In addition to the information referred to in subsection (1), the following must be provided in the case of a transmission to the public by means other than broadcasting:

- (a) the wording of the public opinion poll questions in respect of which data are obtained; and
- (b) the means by which a report referred to in subsections (3) and (4) may be obtained.

(3) A sponsor of an election public opinion poll shall, at any time during an election after the results of the public opinion poll are transmitted to the public, provide, on request, a copy of a written report on the results of the public opinion poll, as transmitted under subsection (1).

(4) The report referred to in subsection (3) shall include the following, as applicable:

- (a) the name and address of the sponsor of the public opinion poll;
- (b) the name and address of the person or organization that conducted the public opinion poll;

(c) the date on which or the period during which the public opinion poll was conducted;

(d) information about the method used to collect the data from which the public opinion poll results are derived, including

(i) the sampling method,

(ii) the population from which the sample was drawn,

(iii) the size of the initial sample,

(iv) the number of individuals who were asked to participate in the public opinion poll and the numbers and respective percentages of them who participated in the public opinion poll, refused to participate in the public opinion poll, and were ineligible to participate in the public opinion poll,

(v) the dates and time of day of the interviews,

(vi) the method used to recalculate data to take into account in the public opinion poll the results of participants who expressed no opinion, were undecided or failed to respond to any or all of the public opinion poll questions, and

(vii) any weighting factors or normalization procedures used in deriving the results of the public opinion poll; and

(e) the wording of the public opinion poll questions and, if applicable, the margins of error in respect of the data obtained.

(5) A sponsor may charge a fee of up to \$0.25 per page for a copy of a report provided under subsection (4).

347 The first person who transmits the results of an election public opinion poll that is not based on recognized polling methods to the public during an election period and any person who transmits them within 24 hours after they are first transmitted to the public must indicate that the public opinion poll was not based on recognized polling methods.

348 No person shall knowingly cause to be transmitted to the public on election day the results of a public opinion poll that have not previously been transmitted to the public.

MISTAKES OF FORM

349 No election shall be declared invalid by reason of a non-compliance with the provisions of this Act as to the taking of the poll, or the counting of the votes, or by reason of any want of qualification in the individuals signing nomination documents received by the returning officer, under the provisions of this Act, or of any mistake in the use of the forms, if it appears to the tribunal having cognizance of the question that the election was conducted in accordance with the principles laid down in this Act, and that such non-compliance or mistake did not affect the result of the election.

REGULATIONS

350 (1) The Governor in Council may make regulations

- (a) defining any word or expression used and not defined;
- (b) respecting the payment of auditors appointed pursuant to this Act;
- (c) any matter necessary or advisable to effectively carry out the intent and purpose of Part II.

(2) The exercise by the Governor in Council of the authority contained in subsection (1) is regulations within the meaning of the *Regulations Act*.

CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS

351 Chapter 35 of the Acts of 2010, the *Conflict of Interest Act*, is amended by striking out the word “recognized” wherever it appears and substituting “registered”.

352 Section 79 of Chapter 96 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the *Controverted Elections Act*, is amended by striking out "returning officer" in the sixth line and substituting "Chief Electoral Officer".

353 Section 17 of Chapter 98 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the *Co-operative Associations Act*, is repealed.

354 Chapter 140 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the *Elections Act*, is repealed.

355 Subclause 3(f)(iv) of Chapter 7 of the Acts of 1995-96, the *Government Records Act*, is repealed and the following subclause substituted:

- (iv) Elections Nova Scotia, and

356 Section 60 of Chapter 1 (1992 Supplement) of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the *House of Assembly Act*, is repealed.

357 (1) Subsection 6(1) of Chapter 34 of the Acts of 2002, *House of Assembly Act* (amended) and *Elections Act* (amended) is amended by striking out "constituency organizations" in the second and fourth lines and substituting "electoral district associations".

(2) Subsection 6(2) of Chapter 34 is further amended by striking out "constituency organization" in the first line and in the second and third lines and substituting "electoral district association".

358 Clause 2(1)(e) of Chapter One is further amended by deleting the word “ordinarily” in the first line.

359 Chapter 1 is further amended by striking out “recognized party” wherever it appears in that Act and substituting in each case “registered party”.

360 (1) Subsection 50(1) of Chapter 217 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the *Income Tax Act*, as amended by Chapter 4 of the Acts of 2000 and Chapter 1 of the Acts of 2007, is further amended by

(a) striking out “recognized” in the first and in the second lines of clause (c) and substituting “registered”;

(2) Clause 50(1)(b) is repealed.

(3) Subsection 50(2) of Chapter 217 is amended by

(a) striking out “donations in kind” in the second line and substituting “contributions exempted by clause (d) of Section 166 of the *Elections Act*”; and

(b) striking out “recognized” in the third line and substituting “registered”.

(4) Subsection 50(3) of Chapter 217 is amended by striking out “recognized” in the sixth line and substituting “registered”.

(5) Subsection 50(4) of Chapter 217 is repealed.

361 Chapter 5 of the Acts of 2010, the *House of Assembly Management Commission Act*, is amended by striking out the word “recognized” wherever it appears and substituting “registered”.

362 Parts II, IIA and VI and Sections 32A and 33 of Chapter 4 of the Acts of 1991, the *Members and Public Employees Disclosure Act*, are repealed.

363 The *Political Contributions Regulations* made under Section 21 and 32 of Chapter 4 are repealed except the forms contained in those regulations which continue in force until replaced by new or amended forms prescribed pursuant to this Act.

364 Chapter 282 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the *Members’ Retiring Allowances Act*, as amended by Chapter 29 of the Acts of 1993, is further amended by striking out “recognized” wherever it appears in that Act and substituting in each case “registered”.

365 Clause 8(1)(h) of Chapter 9 of the Acts of 2001, the *Order of Nova Scotia Act*, is amended by striking out “recognized” in the second line and substituting “registered”.

366 Subsection 77(1) of Chapter 376 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, the *Public Service Act*, as amended by Chapter 8 of the Acts of 1996 and Chapter 4 of the Acts of 2001, is further amended by striking out “recognized” in the seventh line and substituting “registered”.

EFFECTIVE DATE

367 The former Act is repealed.

368 This Act comes into force on such day as the Governor in Council orders and declares by proclamation.