

## Election Advertising Sponsor Contributions

This document provides answers to questions frequently asked by registered election advertising sponsors about contributions.

**Q: What is a contribution?**

**A:** Section 228 of the *Election Act* defines a contribution as “a contribution of money provided to a sponsor of election advertising, whether given before or after the individual or organization acts as a sponsor.” This definition applies to what are known as “third party advertisers”.

**Q: Are goods and services donated to a third party advertising sponsor contributions?**

**A:** No. Contributions must be monetary. Donations of goods and services are not contributions to election advertisers. *(Please note that political contributions are defined differently for candidates, political parties, and constituency associations.)*

**Q: Is donated money still a contribution if it is not used to pay for election advertising?**

**A:** Yes. Any money donated to a sponsor of election advertising is a contribution, regardless of whether it was used for the purpose of election advertising.

**Q: Is a grant or honorarium a contribution?**

**A:** Yes. A grant or honorarium given to a sponsor of election advertising is a monetary contribution and must be reported as such.

**Q: Are proceeds from sales of goods or services contributions?**

**A:** No, as long as the goods or services are sold at fair market value. If goods or services are sold at a premium to raise funds, the difference between the price paid and the fair market value of the goods or services provided is a contribution.

**Q: Are membership fees contributions?**

**A:** No. If fees are normally paid for membership in an organization, upon registration or in regular intervals, they are not contributions.

## Reporting and Disclosure of Contributions

**Q: What contribution information needs to be recorded?**

- A:** Sponsors of election advertising must maintain records of the following information in respect of contributions received by the sponsor:
- (a) the value of the contribution
  - (b) the date the contribution was made
  - (c) the full name and address of the contributor
  - (d) the class of the contributor as described in subsection 190(2) (individuals, corporations, unincorporated organizations engaged in business or commercial activity, trade unions, non-profit organizations, other contributors)
  - (e) if the contributor is a numbered corporation or an unincorporated organization, the full names and addresses of at least two individuals
    - i) who are directors of the organization, or
    - ii) if there are no individual directors, who are principal officers or principal members of the organization
  - (f) in the case of anonymous contributions, the date on which the contributions were received, the total amount received on each date and, if applicable, the event at which they were received

Pursuant to section 244 of the *Election Act*, **all individuals or organizations that sponsored election advertising with a total value of \$500 or more must file an election advertising sponsor disclosure report.**

**Q: What if the value of sponsored election advertising is less than \$500?**

- A:** Sponsors of election advertising valued at under \$500 do not need to submit a disclosure report, but are encouraged to complete the cover page of the report to indicate that less than \$500 was spent.

**Q: Do all contributions need to be reported?**

- A:** Yes. If election advertising valued at \$500 or more was sponsored, all contributions received in the period beginning six months before the election was called and ending at the close of voting on General Voting Day must be reported. However, only in the case of contributions over \$250 must the sponsor disclose information about the contributor. Contributions of \$250 or less are reported as an aggregate sum and the names of such contributors are not disclosed.

**Q: What if a contributor makes multiple small contributions totalling more than \$250?**

- A:** If a single contributor makes multiple contributions during the period of disclosure which total more than \$250, the detailed information about each of the contributions must be reported, including the name of the contributor and the value and date of each contribution.

**Q: What if a contributor wishes to remain anonymous?**

**A:** The names of all contributors who gave more than \$250 must be reported, unless the sponsor does not know the identity of the contributor. If a contributor wishes to remain anonymous for reporting purposes, they can make a contribution of \$250 or less.

**Q: What period of time must be disclosed in an election advertising sponsor disclosure report?**

**A:** All contributions accepted during the period beginning six months before an election is called and ending at the end of the campaign period must be reported. ***For the 2009 General Election, this period is from October 14, 2008 to May 12, 2009.***