



## ***MUNICIPAL POLICY HANDBOOK***

**CODE NUMBER:** 2110

**CATEGORY:** Financial Operations

### **Political Contributions**

#### **Purpose:**

Athabasca County recognizes that attendance by Councillors and senior administrative staff at Federal and Provincial political events and fund raisers is part of local governance and benefits the County.

Athabasca County also recognizes that there is binding legislation that restricts the County from funding these events.

This policy is intended to provide guidance in determining what expenses incurred in attending Federal or Provincial political events will be covered by the County and what expenses are to be personal expenses that will not be covered by the County.

#### **Definitions:**

Council/Councillors include Reeve, Deputy Reeve, Councillors, and the County Manager.

#### **Legislation:**

##### **1. Federal Political Events**

The Federal Elections Act, as amended, provides that no person or entity other than an individual who is a citizen or permanent resident shall make a contribution to a registered party, a registered association, a candidate, a leadership contestant, or a nomination contestant. A municipality, being a corporation, is an ineligible contributor and cannot make contributions. Accordingly, any tickets, registration fees or donations to any federal registered party, registered association, a candidate, a leadership contestant or a nomination contestant are personal expenses of a member of Council.

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Effective

Policy Date: 10/01/12

Reference: Res. #10-005

Revision:

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### 2. **Provincial Political Events**

The Provincial Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act, RSA 2004, c. E-2 ("the Act") provides that a municipality is a prohibited corporation and may not make any contributions to a registered party, registered constituency association or registered candidate.

A "contribution" means any money or real or personal property that is provided

- (i) to a political party, constituency association or candidate, or
- (ii) for the benefit of a political party, constituency association or candidate with it's or the candidate's consent,

without compensation from that political party, constituency association or candidate.

### **Procedure:**

#### 1. **Business Meetings**

Meetings with the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, MP's, Premier, Cabinet Ministers, or MLA's, call by or arranged by either the politician or the County, where in governance matters relating to the County, either directly or indirectly, are discussed.

In such instances the costs of the meeting, hall rental, meals, etc. shall be treated as business costs of the meeting and are reimbursable in accordance with County expense limits.

Examples: Luncheon meeting with Minister, MLA breakfast, etc.

#### 2. **Fundraisers**

Under the Act, a 'fund-raising function' includes any social function held for the purpose of raising funds for a registered party, registered constituency association or registered candidate by whom or on whose behalf the function is held. Any contribution to a registered party, registered constituency association or registered candidate as determined below is a personal expense of a Councillor. Any amount deemed to be allowed for expenses as determined below may be reimbursed in accordance with County expense limits.

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Effective

Policy Date: 10/01/12

Reference: Res. #10-005

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If an individual charge by the sale of tickets or otherwise is made for fund-raising function held by or on behalf of a registered party, registered constituency association or registered candidate, then for the purposes of the Act,

- (i) if the individual charge is \$50.00 or less, it shall not be considered as a contribution unless the person who pays the charge specifically requests that the charge be considered as a contribution, in which case one-half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) of the amount shall be allowed for expenses and one-half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) of the amount shall be considered as a contribution to the registered party, registered constituency association or registered candidate, as the case may be, and,
- (ii) if the individual charge is more than \$50.00, \$25.00 shall be allowed for expenses and the balance shall be considered as a contribution to the registered party, registered constituency association or registered candidate, as the case may be.

Examples: The Premier's dinner, constituency golf tournaments, etc.

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Effective

Policy Date: 10/01/12

Reference: Res.# 10-005

Revision:

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