**Sample By-Law and Instructions**

The below sample by-law is to assist municipalities in implementing recent amendments to The Municipal Act, which require that a municipal council pass a by-law establishing rules and procedures for the use of municipal resources during the 42-day period before a general municipal election or by-election.

There are specific instructions and notes for several of the clauses included in the sample by-law.

Municipalities are responsible for their own by-laws. When passing a by-law, a municipal council should carefully consider each clause and ensure that it appropriately reflects the municipality’s specific context and existing by-law framework.

**Sample By-Law: Use of Municipal Resources in an Election**

**(Name of Municipality)**

**By-law No. \_\_\_\_**

**WHEREAS** The Municipal Act provides that a council must pass a by-law establishing rules and procedures for the use of municipal resources during the 42-day period before a general election or a by-election.

**NOW THEREFORE** the Council of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ enacts as follows:

**TITLE**

1. This by-law may be known as the “Use of Municipal Resources in an Election By-Law”.

**DEFINITIONS**

2. In this by-law,

 **“Candidate”** means an individual who has been registered under section 93.3 of The Municipal Act.

 **“Restricted Period”** means the period beginning 42 days before a municipal general election or by-election, and ending after polls close on the date of the municipal general election or by-election.

***For the definition below, carefully consider what municipal resources the by-law will cover.***

**“Municipal Resources”** means:

1. any resource owned or controlled by the Municipality, including but not limited to:
2. property, facilities, infrastructure and equipment,
3. websites, social media accounts and other communication tools or media,
4. employees or volunteers in the course of their employment or volunteer service, including any full-time, part-time, casual or contract employees, and volunteers, whether or not the volunteer receives reasonable compensation or expense money from the municipality for their voluntary service,
5. events or functions organized by the Municipality,
6. the municipal logo, seal, or other identifying marks associated with the Municipality,
7. any information collected or controlled by the Municipality that is not available to the general public.

**“Municipality”** means the \_\_ ***insert municipality’s full name***\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**RESTRICTIONS ON CANDIDATES’ USE OF MUNICIPAL RESOURCES**

***For the clause below, carefully consider when the use of Municipal Resources by a Candidate would be appropriate.***

1. Subject to section 4, during the Restricted Period, a Candidate or a person acting on their behalf may only use a Municipal Resource for an election-related purpose if:
	1. The Municipal Resource is normally made available to the general public without the general public needing to seek permission or authorization for its use; and
	2. The Candidate’s use of the Municipal Resource does not unreasonably interfere with use of the Municipal Resource by other members of the public.

***For the clause below, carefully consider the restrictions, as well as the scope of the by-law. For example, consideration should be given to whether this clause should capture the use of Municipal Resources by the Municipality and persons acting on its behalf only, or whether it should also capture the use of Municipal Resources by any other entities or persons.***

**RESTRICTIONS ON MUNICIPAL ACTIVITIES**

1. Subject to section 4, during the Restricted Period, the Municipality and any person acting on its behalf is restricted from using:
	1. Municipal Resources in communicating information about the Municipality’s programs or services, if the communication may reasonably be seen as providing an electoral advantage to a Candidate; and
	2. The name, voice or image of a member of council in municipal communications.

**EXCEPTIONS**

 ***For the clause below, carefully consider any exceptions to the restrictions and ensure they are justifiable within your municipality’s specific context.***

1. Restrictions in sections 2 and 3 do not apply:
	1. To any use of Municipal Resources that may be necessary in respect of an emergency or dangers to property or health;
	2. To any event where all Candidates are invited and provided equivalent opportunities with respect to any election-related purpose;
	3. To any use of Municipal Resources by the Municipality to educate and inform the public about the election process, as long as no Candidate is promoted, supported or opposed;
	4. To the preparation of any document, notice or communication that is required by legislation, and any subsequent distribution that is normally made by the Municipality, such as posting council meeting minutes online;
	5. To the preparation of any documents or communications of a strictly administrative nature required for the usual functioning of the Municipality, such as members of council signing payments;
	6. To any method of providing public access to council meetings;
	7. To any Candidate declared elected by acclamation during the Restricted Period, after such declaration is made.

**INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT**

1. Any person appointed or designated to enforce the Municipality’s by-laws may determine compliance with and enforce this by-law, and in the course of this activity may request access to records and make any inspection they deem necessary.

***For the clause below, carefully consider the enforcement method to be used and include language that aligns with your municipality’s own framework for enforcing by-law infractions (e.g. creating an offence under* The Provincial Offences Act***)****.***

1. Insert enforcement clause.

***Use the clause below if your by-law will be coming into force on a date later than the day after the by-law is passed. Note that to be effective for the 2022 General Municipal Election, the by-law must be in force 180 days before the date of the election.***

**COMING INTO FORCE**

1. This by-law comes into force on DATE.

**DONE AND PASSED**, in Manitoba this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_.

 Reeve/Mayor/Head of Council

 Chief Administrative Officer