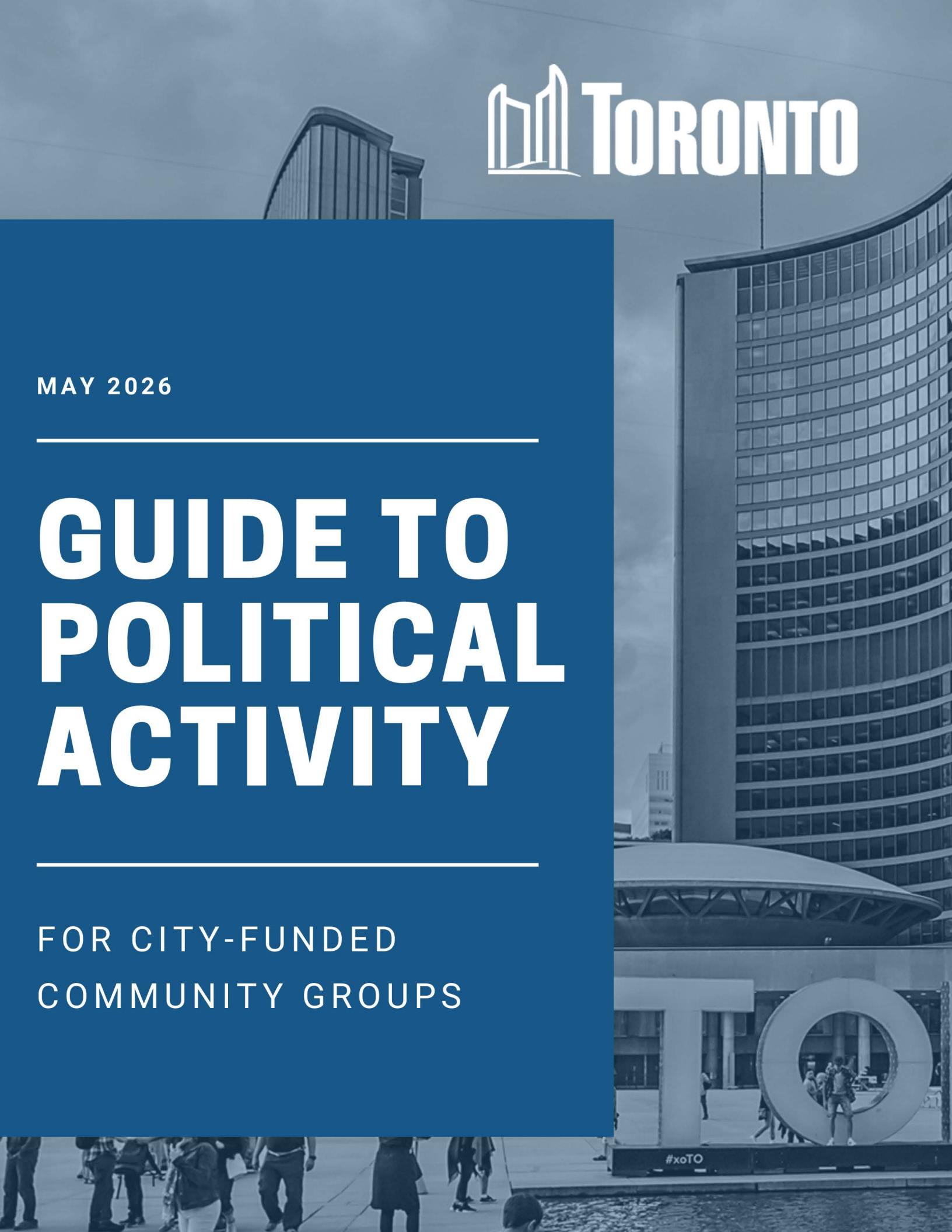




MAY 2026

GUIDE TO POLITICAL ACTIVITY

FOR CITY-FUNDED
COMMUNITY GROUPS



We want to remind all City-funded groups and organizations that the City of Toronto has a responsibility to ensure there is no unfair advantage to any candidate, political party, registrant or a supporter of a question on a ballot during an election.

This document contains helpful pointers from the Canada Revenue Agency website that distinguishes between political activity and partisan political activity. We encourage all non-profits, and especially registered charities, to review the [Canada Revenue Agency](#) website for additional guidance.

All groups and organizations (and their employees and directors) funded by the City of Toronto must comply with the requirements listed in their funding agreement with the City. These requirements include those of the City of Toronto's [Community Grants Policy](#) as it relates to Political Activities (please see Appendix 1). We also encourage you to:



Contact the [Toronto Elections Office](#) if you have questions about municipal elections

Find out who the [candidates for office](#) are for **City of Toronto**, **School Board**, and **Provincial elections**

Further, your community group can take part in any or all of the following non-partisan political activities:

1

Providing information related to the organizations' charitable activity to inform/persuade the public in regards to public policy

2

Research public policy - distribute the research and discuss it with the public

3

Disseminating opinions - expressing evidence-based opinions related to their charitable purposes when participating in the development of public policy

4

Advocacy - charities may advocate to retain, oppose, or change a law, policy, or decision, of any level of government in Canada, or a foreign country

5

Mobilizing Others - call on supporters/public to contact elected officials, public officials, political parties and candidates to support or oppose a particular law or policy

6

Representation- Presenting to elected representatives or public officials (e.g. [depute at committees](#), meet or communicate with them directly)

7

Providing forums and convening discussion - charities can invite all competing candidates to speak at the same event to discuss public policy related to the charity's purpose

8

Communicating on social media - charities may express their views in regards to public policy. It will be their responsibility to remove any misleading information or comments on their platforms immediately

What is a Partisan Political Activity?

A partisan political activity is one that involves the direct or indirect support or opposition to any political party at any time, or to a candidate for public office, whether during an election period or not.

The use of a charity's resources for partisan political activities is always prohibited, even if a charity or its beneficiaries will clearly benefit from a particular election outcome.

[Please click here for additional information from the CRA website.](#)

City-funded groups, whether or not they are registered charities, are **not allowed** to use any of their resources to:

- publicly endorse (support) or oppose a candidate
- give money or non-cash gifts to a candidate or political party, either directly or indirectly
 - Please note: The CRA does not consider a charity to support or oppose a political party or candidate if it merely receives a gift from a party or candidate, or is promoted by a party or candidate. For example, if a political party, candidate, or elected representative donates to a charity, or compliments the charity on social media, the CRA would not consider the charity to support or oppose that political party or candidate on this factor alone.
- allow a candidate or political party to use the group's equipment, facilities, volunteer time, or other resources
- suggest that people should vote for a particular candidate or political party, either directly or indirectly
- attend a political fundraiser as a representative of a community organization/resident-led group
- Use a community organization's website to post or hyperlink to statements made by a third party that support or oppose a candidate or political party
- Publish or otherwise disclose the voting record or political platform of specific/selected candidates or political parties of an issue
- make public statements that support or oppose a candidate or political party
- Post signs that support or oppose a candidate or political party
- Distribute literature or voter guides that promote or oppose a candidate or political party, directly or indirectly
- Use your group's social media account to post election related material that promotes or appears to promote a candidate or political party
- Use of the community group's resources (e.g. office space, supplies, phone, photocopier, computer, publications) to support a candidate or incumbent or a political party during an election period
- Use your group's events, functions, activities, publications, or any of the group's other resources as a platform to voice support for or opposition to a candidate, incumbent (current public representative) and/or a political party during an election period

TIPS FOR EVENT PLANNERS

Can we invite a politician or candidate to speak at our event during an election period?



To be fair to all and to not appear to be taking part in a partisan political activity, you must invite all candidates to speak at your event. Let them know in advance that they cannot campaign at your event or activity. Election campaigning activities include handing out flyers, buttons, fundraising, or speaking about their campaign or a political opponent or party.

What do we do if a politician or candidate attends our group's event or activity uninvited?



Let them know that they cannot campaign at your event or activity or engage in the same type of election activities as noted above.

TIPS FOR EMPLOYEES, MEMBERS OF BOARDS OF DIRECTORS, MEMBERS & VOLUNTEERS

Individuals who are Employees, Members, Board of Directors, or Volunteers of a community organization can be involved in political activities in their capacity as individuals and on their own time.

This includes:



- Being involved with an election
- Publicly voicing their views on political issues
- Being involved in a political campaign
- Being involved in any other political activity (such as running for office).

When engaging in the activities listed above it's important for individuals to indicate that their comments are personal rather than the views of the group. Also, be mindful when using social media (Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, etc). It can be difficult to tell the difference between when the individual is speaking on their own behalf, and not on behalf of their organization.



Individuals can't be involved in partisan activities, as described above, when using the organization's resources, events/functions, or social media accounts.

For more guidance, please review a self-assessment tool on political activities developed by Canada Revenue Agency

Registered charities have to be mindful that they are devoting 10% or less of their total resources to political activities. Failure to comply with this could result in the loss of charitable status.

APPENDIX 1

The City's Community Grants Policy, in relation to political activities provides as follows:

Section 9 - Partisan Political Activity

Grant recipients shall not use a Grant for the purpose of engaging in a Partisan Political Activity. In the event there is a dispute whether an activity is a Partisan Political Activity, the Division Head with authority over the Grant shall make a determination and the determination of the Division Head shall be final.

Through its funding, the City of Toronto creates opportunities for communities to play a role in shaping public policy as a way to support an active and engaged civil society. However, these investments are not an endorsement of any particular political or policy perspective held by Grant recipients.

