

**Political Contributions Regime
Annual Report**



January 1 to December 31, 2016

Published June 2017 by Chief Electoral Officer
pursuant to the *Elections Act*



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This report is prepared pursuant to Sections 240 and 251 of the *Elections Act*. This report is available on the Elections Nova Scotia website or by contacting Elections Nova Scotia.

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Refer to the Office of the Legislative Counsel website at
<http://nslegislature.ca/legc/index.htm> for electronic versions of the *Elections Act*

1. Message from the Chief Electoral Officer

June 2017

Elections Nova Scotia, under the direction of the Chief Electoral Officer, provides support to individuals, groups and parties by assisting them with record keeping and in meeting their reporting obligations. It also provides a report annually to the members of the House of Assembly outlining the activity within the provincial political contributions regime over the past calendar year.

This report on the 2016 annual disclosure of political contributions is published in accordance with Sections 240 and 251 of the *Elections Act*. It includes information on the timeliness and quality of the filings for political contributions to registered political parties, electoral district associations and registered candidates. The report contains the name and community of each person who contributes \$200 or more in the calendar year, plus the amount of the donation to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate.

Collecting and sharing this information in a timely way, as prescribed by the *Elections Act*, helps to enhance transparency of the financial activities of those registered parties, electoral district associations and candidates who are required to file. Elections Nova Scotia has been proactive in sending reminders to the entities regarding filing deadlines and most reports are filed on or before the imposed deadline.

Absent from this report are political contributions relating to the by-election that took place on August 30, 2016 in the electoral district of Halifax Needham. Candidate contribution disclosures for these were published on the Elections Nova Scotia website http://electionsnovascotia.ca/2016_HalifaxNeedham as the reports were received from the Official Agents.

While it is not within the mandate of Elections Nova Scotia to undertake a detailed review of the filed reports, if financial contributions are not filed, the political parties and associations run the risk of becoming de-registered.

Copies of this report are available electronically in a searchable Excel format on Elections Nova Scotia's website at <http://www.electionsnovascotia.ca/Electoral-Finance-Reports>.

Original signed by

Richard Temporale

2. Elections Nova Scotia Review Process

2.1 Political Contributions Rules

The *Elections Act* establishes the rules under which registered parties, electoral district associations and candidates may accept political contributions, make or receive loans, and issue tax receipts. The *Act* also provides the Chief Electoral Officer with the authority to prescribe forms and establishes deadlines by which these reports are to be filed.

2.2 Contribution Limit Review and Eligibility Review

Under subsection 236(1) of the *Elections Act* the contribution limit of \$5,000 applies to all contributions made by a resident of Nova Scotia to a registered party, its electoral district associations and its registered candidates combined in a calendar year. Compliance with the contribution limit can be problematic for a recognized party, electoral district association or candidate endorsed by that party since each associated entity can accept contributions independently. Even with collaboration, it is difficult to track contributions cumulatively in real time.

Elections Nova Scotia conducted a compliance review of the contribution limit after the reports were received and did not find any individual who had exceeded the limit. The review consolidated all political contributions disclosure statements for each registered party, its electoral district associations and its candidates on a contributor basis.

2.2.1 Registered Parties

Contributor eligibility respecting political contributions disclosure statements filed by each registered party was reviewed. Eligible contributors during the 2016 reporting year were limited to individuals resident in Nova Scotia. No evidence of ineligible contributors was found during the review.

2.2.2 Electoral District Associations

Contributor eligibility respecting political contributions disclosure statements filed by each electoral district association was reviewed. Either the official agent of the electoral district association or registered party addressed queries made by Elections Nova Scotia.

2.2.3 Candidates

Following the August 30, 2016 by-election, the candidates' contribution reports were posted on Elections Nova Scotia website as they were received. In addition to the by-election, 46 candidates were registered with Elections Nova Scotia in 2016 for the anticipated 40th provincial general election.

3. Registered Parties

Annually, by April 30th, the official agent of a registered party is required to file a disclosure statement detailing political contributions received by the official agent during the previous calendar year. While this statement discloses the name and full residential address of each contributor and the total amount of their contributions received by the official agent during the calendar year equal to or exceeding \$200, Elections Nova Scotia discloses only the community name of the contributor as per Section 251(3) of the *Elections Act*.

For the reporting period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016, there were five registered parties in Nova Scotia:

- the Atlantica Party Association of Nova Scotia (Atlantica)
- the Green Party of Nova Scotia (GPNS),
- the Nova Scotia Liberal Party (NSLP),
- the Nova Scotia New Democratic Party (NSNDP), and
- the Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia (PC).

All five registered parties filed their statutory reports on or before the prescribed deadline of April 30th.

4. Electoral District Associations

In 2016, there were 51 electoral districts in Nova Scotia. The Nova Scotia Liberal Party and The Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia each had 51 electoral district associations. The Nova Scotia New Democratic Party had 43 electoral district associations. The Atlantica and Green Parties did not have registered electoral district associations.

An electoral district association, with the endorsement of the leader of the registered party, must register in the prescribed form with the Chief Electoral Officer. The information contained in this registration must be confirmed annually under Section 196(2) of the *Elections Act*.

There were 145 registered electoral district associations in 2016. Of these, 126 or 87% filed the *Electoral District Association's Financial Statements and Supporting Schedules* on or before the deadline. Issues with incomplete or missing forms are followed up with the relevant official agents. The official agent is the legislated person responsible for completing the annual filings and signing the declarations. In the cases where an EDA fails to file their report, Elections Nova Scotia follows up with the official agents for the party and EDA. If the reports from the EDA are not filed, a process to deregister commences. In this case, all bank accounts are closed.

Registered Party	Number of EDA reports due	Number of EDA reports filed before the March 31, 2017 deadline	Number of EDA reports not filed as of June 1, 2017
Atlantica Party Association of Nova Scotia (Atlantica)	0	0	0
Green Party of Nova Scotia	0	0	0
Nova Scotia Liberal Party	51	51	0
Nova Scotia New Democratic Party	43	26	17
The Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia	51	49	0
Total	145	126	17

5. Candidates

Subsection 230(1)(f) of the *Elections Act* requires that for all loans, the official agent of a candidate to provide a written loan agreement respecting all loans for their candidate's campaign. The loan agreement must be filed at the same time the official agent files their disclosure statement of political contributions. The *Act* requires the official agent to report the outstanding balance of a loan and any changes to the loan agreement in years subsequent to the original loan contract. Loans must be paid within 2 years. In cases where a loan remains unpaid after 2 years, all avenues for compliance are used by Elections Nova Scotia including legal remedies available through the *Elections Act*.

There were no candidate loans outstanding at the end of 2016.

There were 46 registered candidates in 2016.

Registered Party	Number of candidate reports due	Number of candidate reports filed before the March 31, 2017 deadline	Number of candidate reports not filed as of June 1, 2017
Atlantica Party Association of Nova Scotia (Atlantica)	0	N/A	N/A
Green Party of Nova Scotia	0	N/A	N/A
Nova Scotia Liberal Party	23	21	0
Nova Scotia New Democratic Party	2	2	0
The Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia	21	19	0
Total	46	46	0

Links to Disclosure Reports (PDF)

Registered Party	Disclosure Report for Party	Disclosure Report for EDA	Disclosure Report for Candidate
Atlantica Party Association of Nova Scotia (Atlantica)	Atlantica	N/A	N/A
Green Party of Nova Scotia (GPNS)	Green	N/A	N/A
Nova Scotia Liberal Party (NSLP)	Liberal	Liberal EDA	Liberal Candidate
Nova Scotia New Democratic Party (NSNDP)	NDP	NDP EDA	NDP Candidate
The Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia (PC)	PC	PC EDA	PC Candidate

Links to Disclosure Reports (Excel)

Registered Party	Disclosure Report for Party	Disclosure Report for EDA	Disclosure Report for Candidate
Atlantica Party Association of Nova Scotia (Atlantica)	Atlantica	N/A	N/A
Green Party of Nova Scotia (GPNS)	Green	N/A	N/A
Nova Scotia Liberal Party (NSLP)	Liberal	Liberal EDA	Liberal Candidate
Nova Scotia New Democratic Party (NSNDP)	NDP	NDP EDA	NDP Candidate
The Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia (PC)	PC	PC EDA	PC Candidate