

Fact Sheet

Candidate Electoral Support Program (CESP)

What is the CESP?

During electoral events in Nova Scotia, candidates should not face undue barriers to political participation or engagement with the electorate. The CESP provides financial support for eligible candidates who incur additional expenses related to childcare, spousal care, eldercare, or to accommodate a candidate's disability during an election. The program is designed to lower barriers for eligible candidates running in a provincial election or by-election.

Who is Eligible for the CESP?

For candidates to qualify for the CESP they must be a nominated candidate in a provincial election and sign a self-declaration that they are eligible for the benefit. The candidate must receive 10% of the valid votes their district, the same criteria for eligibility for other election expense reimbursement.

What Expenses can be Claimed?

Coverage for eligible candidates with disabilities:

- CESP will cover any reasonable incremental cost(s) up to the election expenses limit eligible candidates with disabilities incur related to their disability while running in a provincial electoral campaign during the writ period. These additional costs may include:
 - transportation costs
 - attendant costs
 - interpretation cost,
 - assistive technology and associated communications costs
 - other costs that represent barriers to participation for candidates with disabilities
- If the candidate qualifies for reimbursement of election expenses, incremental costs are reimbursable to the candidate's campaign with submission of documentation including original receipts and bank statements for all expenses claimed over \$25. Documentation of costs normally incurred is also required to substantiate the claim. The maximum expense and reimbursement amounts must fall with the candidate's spending limit for their electoral district.

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Coverage for eligible candidates with dependents:

- During the writ period, CESP will cover any reasonable incremental cost(s) eligible candidates with dependents incur over and above those they normally incur. These additional costs may include:
 - childcare costs*
 - spousal care costs
 - eldercare costs

**Childcare costs are available to eligible candidates who are a parent or legal guardian*

- If the candidate qualifies for reimbursement of election expenses, incremental costs are reimbursable to the candidate's campaign with submission of documentation including original receipts and bank statements for all expenses claimed over \$25. Documentation of costs normally incurred is also required to substantiate the claim.

How to Make a Claim

- A nominated candidate is responsible to sign a declaration that they are eligible for the CESP benefit.
- The official agent of a nominated candidate must sign the declaration on the financial submission form for the CESP claim by the candidate

References: Elections Nova Scotia has a policy to guide the administration of the CESP. For more information, please see: Electionsnovascotia.ca

Contact: Questions regarding the CESP should be directed to the Chief Financial Officer at Elections Nova Scotia:

902-424-8584
1-800-565-1504 (Toll free)
902-424-7475 (TTY)
1-866-774-7074 (Toll Free TTY)

Please see the frequently asked questions and the examples of the CESP claim form and declaration included with this fact sheet.

Frequently Asked Questions

Candidate Electoral Support Program (CESP)

Question: What costs would be considered for eligibility by ENS under the CESP?

Answer: Eligible candidates running in a provincial election who currently pay for child, spousal and/or elder care can apply for a rebate of the reasonable incremental costs that they have as a result of campaigning during the writ period. Incremental costs are those costs that are over and above expenses they normally pay for these services.

Question: What if I have not paid for this kind of service in the past but need this kind of help just to run a campaign? Would these costs be considered eligible for a rebate?

Answer: Yes, these costs would be considered incremental. A written explanation and attestation would be required to be submitted with the claim.

Question: Do I need to qualify for election cost reimbursement to make a claim under the CESP?

Answer: Yes, all candidates who are eligible for election expense reimbursement are also eligible for the CESP during the election period. The current reimbursement requirement under the *Act* that a candidate must receive no less than 10% of the valid votes cast applies to expenses covered under CESP.

Question: Are these costs counted toward my maximum spending limits or reimbursement limits?

Answer: Yes, these costs would be categorized separately in the election expense and will count toward the maximum permitted spending or reimbursable limits.

Question: Will CESP reimbursements be made public?

Answer: Yes, all costs incurred for a by-election or general election are published following the event. Candidate costs are reported separately in the publication and will include amounts paid under the CESP. Details are not disclosed publicly but are available for review at Elections Nova Scotia to any member of the public.

Question: How are incremental costs determined?

Answer: The eligible candidate would provide documentation of costs incurred for a reasonable period prior to the writ, then that weekly average would be used as the baseline for the calculation. Total costs incurred during the election with supporting documentation will substantiate the amount claimed by the candidate.

Question: Who determines whether a submitted cost is reasonable?

Answer: If Elections Nova Scotia receives questions about the reasonableness of an expense submitted under the CESP, staff will contact the official agent of the candidate for clarification. Ultimately, if an amount cannot be agreed upon, the CEO will decide.

Question: What happens if I incur incremental costs prior to the writ?

Answer: Only costs incurred during the writ period will be considered for the CESP.

Question: How is the period of “during an election” defined?

Answer: From the time the writ is issued until close of polls at 8:00pm on election day.

Question: Who can provide childcare, spousal care, eldercare or disability support?

Answer: Any individual who provides the service and who you pay at market rate to for those services can provide care. This can include a family member who does not normally charge the candidate for these services. All costs must be substantiated with invoices or time logs including hours and dollar amount. Proof of payment must also be provided.

Question: When and how will CESP reimbursements be made?

Answer: Processing of all election expense reimbursements, including CESP, will be completed as financial reports are submitted and are normally done within two months of receipt. Financial reports are due no later than 90 days after election day.

Question: What types of disability expenses are covered?

Answer: This is open based on the nature of the disability; examples of incremental costs are:

- transportation costs
- attendant costs
- interpretation costs
- assistive technology and associated communications costs
- other costs that represent barriers to participation for candidates with disabilities

Question: What are some examples of reasonable expenses that are over and above the expenses normally incurred by an eligible candidate?

Answer: The following are examples of reasonable expenses that could be claimed under the CESP:

Example 1: Candidate X normally pays \$250 per week for childcare expenses that cover the hours of 8AM to 6PM for five days per week. During the writ period, Candidate X also pays for childcare four additional evenings per week plus 16 hours on the weekend. These additional costs total 32 hours per week at a cost of \$640. In total Candidate X now pays \$890 per week for childcare. Upon submission of supporting documentation (dates, name of care provider, hours worked, charge per hour, total cost paid), Elections Nova Scotia would reimburse an eligible candidate X for 100% of the additional childcare costs of \$640.

Example 2: Candidate X rents a vehicle for campaigning during the election. The normal cost for 30 days is \$500, and the cost to modify for wheelchair accessibility is \$250. In this case the \$500 is a normal election cost and the \$250 is a new incremental cost to be claimed under the CESP. In this example, if Candidate X received less than 10% of the valid votes, therefore they are not eligible for any of these election expense reimbursement .

Example 3: Eligible candidate X is a single mother of two elementary school aged children who doesn't normally pay for childcare but needs to pay for coverage during the writ period for after school evenings and weekends to be able to run a campaign. These costs are incremental and would be covered under the CESP up to the candidate's total election expense limit.

CLAIM- Candidate Electoral Support Program (CESP)

(please print)

Candidate Name _____

Official Agent Name _____

Electoral District _____

Complete if incremental costs were incurred by an eligible candidate in relation to a disability, or for childcare, eldercare or spousal care of a dependent.

List and describe the nature of the election expenses incurred and the amounts claimed. (supporting documents must be included with claim- invoice, receipt, bank statement PLUS documentation of amount normally paid).

Description of election expense	Date of expense (start and finish)	Amount paid	Less amount normally paid	Net amount eligible for reimbursement.
Sample- childcare	April 1-May 1, 2021	\$1,200	\$800	\$400
Total (to be included on Form 2-3E)				

Declaration (by Official Agent)

I, the undersigned Official Agent, file with the Chief Electoral Officer a completed Form xx, Candidate's Claim for Candidate Electoral Support Program (CESP)

I declare, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that only claims for a CESP benefit permitted under the Elections Act and this policy were included, and that the information contained in this Form is complete, accurate and in compliance with the Elections Act.

Signed at _____, Nova Scotia on _____(date)

Signature of Official Agent	date
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I declare that I (Candidate) am eligible for the benefits, provided under the Candidate Electoral Support Program (CESP), as claimed.

Signed at _____, Nova Scotia on _____(date)

Signature of Candidate	date
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