

Political Donations Annual Report 2019



January 1 to December 31, 2019

Published July 2020 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 (ENS) website or by contacting ENS.

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Please click [here](#) for an online version of the *Elections Act*

Message from the Chief Electoral Officer

July 2020

Elections Nova Scotia (ENS) publishes on the ENS website annually the reported provincial political donations over the past calendar year. Under the direction of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), ENS provides support to individuals, groups, and registered parties by assisting them with record keeping so they can meet their reporting obligations.

This report is published in accordance with Sections 240 and 251 of the *Elections Act* (the *Act*). After the province declared a state of emergency due to the Covid-19 pandemic on March 22, 2020, deadlines for reporting by registered political parties and electoral district associations (EDAs) were each extended by 30 days. The legislated publication date of June 30th for this report was extended to July.

This report includes information on the timeliness and quality of the filings for political donations. The report lists the name and community of each person who contributes \$200 or more in the calendar year, plus the amount of the donation to registered political parties, electoral district associations, and registered candidates

Collecting and sharing this information in a timely way, as prescribed by the *Act*, helps to enhance transparency of the financial activities of those registered parties, EDAs, and candidates who are required to file. ENS has been proactive in sending reminders to the entities regarding filing deadlines. Most reports are filed on or before the legislated deadline.

It is not within the mandate of ENS to undertake a detailed review of the filed reports. However, if financial donations are not filed, the political parties and associations run the risk of becoming de-registered.

This report is available online at <http://www.electionsnovascotia.ca/Electoral-Finance-Reports>. It includes searchable Excel files for each disclosure report.

Richard Temporale
Chief Electoral Officer

Elections Nova Scotia Review Process

Political Donations Rules

The *Act* spells out the rules under which registered parties, EDAs, and candidates may accept political donations, make or receive loans, and issue tax receipts. The *Act* also provides the CEO with the authority to prescribe forms and it includes the deadlines for filing these reports.

Contribution Limit Review and Eligibility Review

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

ENS 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 donations disclosure statements for each registered party, its EDAs, and its candidates on a contributor basis.

Registered Parties

Contributor eligibility respecting political donations disclosure statements filed by each registered party was reviewed. Eligible contributors were individuals who are residents in Nova Scotia during the 2019 reporting year. No evidence of ineligible contributors was found.

Electoral District Associations

Contributor eligibility respecting political donations disclosure statements filed by each EDA was reviewed. All questions raised by ENS of either the official agent of the EDA or registered party were satisfactorily addressed.

Candidates

Following the June 18, 2019 Sackville-Cobequid by-election and the three by-elections held on September 3, 2019 in the electoral districts of Argyle-Barrington, Northside-Westmount, and Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg, the candidates' donations reports were posted on the ENS website as they were received. These reports are available online using the following links:

Sackville-Cobequid by-election June 18, 2019 -

https://electionsnovascotia.ca/2019_SackvilleCobequid

September 3rd, 2019 by-elections -

https://electionsnovascotia.ca/2019_ByelectionsSeptember3

Registered Parties

By April 30th each year, the official agent of a registered party is required to file a disclosure statement detailing political donations received by the official agent during the previous calendar year. This year the deadline was extended to May 31 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This statement discloses the name and full residential address of each contributor and the total amount of their donations received by the official agent during the calendar year of \$200 or more. ENS discloses only the community name of the contributor as per Section 251(3) of the *Elections Act*.

For the reporting period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019, there were five registered parties in Nova Scotia:

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

All five registered parties filed their audited financial statements by the prescribed May 29th deadline.

Electoral District Associations

In 2019, there were 51 electoral districts in Nova Scotia. The NSLP and the PC each had 51 EDAs. The NSNDP had 42 EDAs, the Atlantica had three EDAs and the Green Party did not have registered EDAs. There will be 55 electoral districts for the 41st Provincial General Election and the EDAs reporting for 2019 will be reformed to 55 electoral districts for the 2020 disclosure period.

An EDA, with the endorsement of the leader of the registered party, must register in the prescribed form with the CEO. The information contained in this registration must be confirmed annually under Section 196(2) of the *Act*.

Of the 147 registered EDAs in 2019, 130 or 88% filed the *Electoral District Association's Financial Statements and Supporting Schedules* on or before the deadline. All outstanding reports were filed before July 30 except the 3 from the Atlantica Party and 5 from the NSNDP. 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. Where an EDA fails to file their report, ENS 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 and all bank accounts must be closed. In 2020, the three Atlantica EDAs were de-registered.

Registered Party	Number of EDA reports due	Number of EDA reports filed before the April 30, 2020 deadline*
Atlantica Party Association of Nova Scotia (Atlantica)	3	0
Green Party of Nova Scotia (Green Party)	0	0
Nova Scotia Liberal Party (NSLP)	51	51
Nova Scotia New Democratic Party (NSNDP)	42	30
The Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia (PC)	51	49
Total	147	130

*The deadline was extended from March 31 to April 30 due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Candidates

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

There were no candidate loans outstanding at the end of 2019.

Links to Disclosure Reports (PDF)

Registered Party	Disclosure Report for Party	Disclosure Report for EDA (1)
Atlantica Party Association of Nova Scotia (Atlantica)	Atlantica	Not filed
Green Party of Nova Scotia (Green Party)	Green Party	N/A
Nova Scotia Liberal Party (NSLP)	NSLP	NSLP EDA
Nova Scotia New Democratic Party (NSNDP)	NSNDP	NSNDP EDA
The Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia (PC)	PC	PC EDA

Links to Disclosure Reports (Excel)

Registered Party	Disclosure Report for Party	Disclosure Report for EDA (1)
Atlantica Party Association of Nova Scotia (Atlantica)	Atlantica	Not filed
Green Party of Nova Scotia (Green Party)	Green Party	N/A
Nova Scotia Liberal Party (NSLP)	NSLP	NSLP EDA
Nova Scotia New Democratic Party (NSNDP)	NSNDP	NSNDP EDA
The Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia (PC)	PC	PC EDA

(1) – Green Party did not have registered EDAs.

Readability Measure

ENS has a strategic goal to measure and improve the readability of reports like this one. The reading level of this report is 12.6.