

Township Of Puslinch

2026 Municipal Election

Alternative Voting Procedures





Alternative Voting Procedures

1. <u>Table of Contents</u>	
2. Definitions	5
3. Purpose	9
4. Application of Procedure.....	9
5. Nominations.....	10
5.1. Nomination Papers	10
5.2. Estimated Maximum Campaign Expenses (Section 88.20(6)).....	11
5.3. Notice of Penalties (Section 33.1)	11
5.4. <i>Municipal Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)</i> 11	
5.5. Unofficial List of Candidates	12
5.6. Nomination Day – August 21, 2026 (Section 31).....	12
5.7. Certification of Nomination Papers (Section 35).....	12
5.8. Rejection of Nomination Paper (Section 35(3), (4))	12
5.9. Withdrawal of Nomination Papers (Section 36)	12
5.10. Official List of Candidates	13
5.11. Declaration of Election (Section 40).....	13
5.12. Acclamations (Section 37(1)).....	13
5.13. Fewer Number of Nomination Papers Than Offices (Section 33(5)) .	13
5.14. Additional Nomination More than the Number of Offices Remaining (Section 33(5)).....	14
5.15. Withdrawal of Additional Nominations (Section 36)	14
5.16. Additional Nominations Equivalent to Number of Offices (Section 35(2) and 37(2))	14
5.17. Filling Vacancies (Section 37(4))	14
5.18. Death or Ineligibility of Candidate (Section 39)	14
5.19. Final Calculation of Campaign Expenses (Section 88.20 (13), (14) and (15)).....	15
6. Voters' List.....	15
6.1. Elector Qualification (Section 17 (2))	15
6.2. Persons Prohibited from Voting (Section 17 (3))	16
6.3. Preliminary List of Electors (PLE) (Section 19).....	16
6.4. Correction of Errors (Section 22).....	16
6.5. Certification of Electors' List (Section 23)	17
6.6. Requests for Copies of Electors' List (Section 23 (3), (4) and (5)).....	17



Alternative Voting Procedures

- 6.7. Access to the Electors' List (Section 88 (10) and (11))..... 17
- 6.8. Amendments to the Electors' List (Section 24 & 25)..... 17
- 6.9. Interim List of Changes (Section 27(1)) 18
- 6.10. Final List of Changes (Section 27(2))..... 18
- 7. Candidate Campaigning and Campaign Advertising 18
 - 7.1. Candidate Campaigning and Campaign Advertising (Section 88.3) 18
 - 7.2. Municipal Employee Communication with Candidates 19
 - 7.3. Campaigning and Campaign Advertising Municipally Owned/Leased Facilities 19
 - 7.4. Location of Election Signs 20
 - 7.5. Municipal Authority to Remove Advertisements (Section 88.7) 20
 - 7.6. Contributions to Registered Candidates (Section 88.8 (1) – (5)) 20
 - 7.7. Acceptance of Contributions (Section 88.8 (6)-(10))..... 21
 - 7.8. Maximum Contributions to Candidates (Section 88.9)..... 21
 - 7.9. Fundraising for Candidates (Section 88.10) 22
 - 7.10. What Constitutes a Contribution (Section 88.15) 22
 - 7.11. Restriction: Use of Own Money (Section 88.16) 23
 - 7.12. Campaign Account Loads (Section 88.17)..... 23
 - 7.13. What Constitutes an Expense (Section 88.19)..... 24
 - 7.14. Candidates Expenses (88.20)..... 25
- 8. Third Party Advertiser 26
 - 8.1. Third Party Advertiser Registrations 26
 - 8.2. Third Party Advertiser Financial Reporting 26
- 9. Candidates/Scrutineers 26
- 10. Election Personnel 27
 - 10.1. Clerk (Section 12(1))..... 27
 - 10.2. DRO's and Other Election Officials (Section 15)..... 28
- 11. Vote by Mail Procedure..... 28
 - 11.1. Authority..... 28
 - 11.2. Service Provider..... 28
 - 11.3. Mailing and Distribution of Voting Kits..... 28
 - 11.4. Voting Kit..... 29
 - 11.5. Form of Ballot..... 29
 - 11.6. Voting Instructions 29

Alternative Voting Procedures

11.7.	Ballot Return Stations	30
11.8.	Returned Voting Kits	30
11.9.	Replacement Voting Kit.....	31
11.10.	Handling and Processing of Voting Kits	31
11.11.	Incomplete and Rejection of Ballots/Ballot Secrecy Envelopes	33
11.12.	Security of the Ballot (White Ballot Secrecy Envelopes and Voting Kits) 34	
11.13.	Secrecy	34
11.14.	Requirement to Provide Proof of Identify	34
11.15.	Challenging Eligibility	34
11.16.	Electors Requiring Assistance	35
12.	Count Procedures	35
12.1.	Ballot Counting Centre	35
12.2.	Programming of the Vote Tabulator	35
12.3.	Testing of Vote Tabulators	35
12.4.	Procedures On Voting Day	36
12.5.	Procedure for Closing of a Vote Tabulator on Voting Day.....	41
12.6.	Failure of a Tabulator at 8:00 P.M. on Voting Day	42
12.7.	Retention of Election Records.....	42
13.	Notice of Results	43
13.1.	Notice of Results (Section 55 (3))	43
13.2.	Declaration (Section 55(4))	43
13.3.	Information to be made available (Section 55 (4.1))	43
14.	Recount.....	43
15.	Candidates Financial Filing	45
16.	Compliance Audit Committee.....	45
17.	Election Records	46
17.1.	Public Records Section (Section 88(5), (10), (11)).....	46
17.2.	Candidate’s Election Records	46
17.3.	Municipal Election Records (Section 88).....	47
18.	Accessibility.....	47
18.1.	Electors and Candidates with Disabilities (Section 12.1 (1))	47
18.2.	Plan re Barriers (Section 12.1 (2))	47
18.3.	Location – Accessibility (Section 45 (2))	47



Alternative Voting Procedures

- 18.4. Attendance on Electors with Disabilities (Section 45 (9)) 47
- 18.5. Electors Needing Assistance (Section 52 (1), (4)) 48
- 18.6. Report (Section 12.1 (3))..... 48
- 18.7. Other Resources 48
- 19. Emergencies 48
 - 19.1. Emergencies (Section 53)..... 48
- 20. Corrupt Practices 49
 - 20.2. Reporting Corrupt Practices 49
 - 20.3. Offences (Sections 89, 90)..... 50
 - 20.4. Penalties 50
 - 20.4.1. Elector (Section 90 (2))..... 50
 - 20.4.2. Candidate (Section 91 (1)) 51
 - 20.4.3. Individual (Section 94 (1))..... 51
 - 20.4.4. Trade Unions (Section 94 (2)) 51
 - 20.5. Mail Tampering – Criminal Offence and Prosecution 52

Alternative Voting Procedures

2. Definitions

In this procedure,

“**Act**” means the *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996, c.32, S.O. 1996, as amended.

“**Ballot**” means the paper used by a Voter to mark their vote or vote(s) for the office of mayor, councillor, and school board trustee (if applicable) in accordance with sections 41 and 41.2 the Act. For the purposes of the 2026 Municipal Election, the Ballot will be in composite form combining all offices to be elected on one paper.

“**Ballot Box**” means a locked or sealed apparatus in which Vote by Mail Kits are received and transferred to the Secure Room, Ballot Cabinet, Return Envelope Processing Station, Sorting Location and Tabulator Station.

“**Ballot Cabinet**” means the locked filing cabinet located in the Secure Room where returned Vote by Mail Kits are received and transferred to the Return Envelope Processing Station, Storing Location and Tabulator Station.

“**Ballot Return Station**” means a designated location where electors can drop off completed return envelopes directly into the care of the Clerk or designate rather than forwarding it by mail.

“**Ballot Counting Centre**” means the designated location where the ballots are counted.

“**Candidate**” means a person who has been nominated under Section 33 of the Act.

“**Certified Candidate**” means a candidate whose nomination has been certified by the Clerk under Section 35 of the Act.

“**Clerk**” means the Clerk of the municipality who is responsible for conducting municipal elections under the authority of the Act. All references to the Clerk for the purposes of this manual shall mean the Returning Officer (R.O.) for the 2026 Municipal Election. All references to Clerk’s designate shall mean the delegated duties of the R.O.

“**Close of Voting**” means the end of voting hours as prescribed in the Act which states that Polls shall remain open until 8:00 p.m. on Voting Day. In accordance with the Act, a Voter within the Poll at the Close of Voting is entitled to cast their Ballot.

Alternative Voting Procedures

“Corporation” means a firm that meets certain legal requirements to be recognized as having a legal existence, as an entity separate and distinct from its owners.

Corporations are owned by their stockholders (shareholders) who share in profits and losses generated through the firm's operations. A legal entity has legal capacity to enter into agreements or contracts, assume obligations, incur and pay debts, sue and be sued in its own right, and to be held responsible for its actions.

A Corporation may include a numbered company, a co-op, an incorporated company, an association, a partnership, a proprietorship (excludes sole proprietorship as it's not a legal entity), trust, etc. A legal entity cannot vote, only an individual (a person) can vote.

“Drop Box” means a locked receptacle located at the main doors to the Municipal Office. The purpose of the Drop Box is to receive and securely store return Vote by Mail envelopes delivered in person outside of regular business hours when the Municipal Office is closed to the public. Returned Vote by Mail envelopes will be removed from the secure drop box and deposited in the Ballot Cabinet.

“Election Campaign Advertisement” means an advertisement in any broadcast, print, electronic or other medium that has the purpose of promoting or supporting the election of a Candidate.

“Election Official” means the Clerk or other person(s) appointed in writing by the Clerk to carry out election duties under the Act. An Election Official can only carry out the tasks and duties as assigned in writing by the Clerk and must take the prescribed oath. [s.15]

“Marked Ballot” means a Ballot which has been marked upon by a Voter to cast a vote for the office of council, school board trustee, by-law or question.

“Memory Card” means a removable memory cartridge where all tabulated votes are stored.

“Municipal Office” means the Township of Puslinch administration building located at 7404 Wellington Road 34, Puslinch, Ontario.

“Normally Resident in Ontario” means the place in which an individual regularly returns if his or her presence is not continuous (sleep).

“Owner or Tenant” in relation to an election, means a person who is the owner or tenant shown on the assessment roll of land assessed under the Assessment Act and a non-residential tenant of land assessed under the Assessment Act,

Alternative Voting Procedures

whether or not the tenant is shown on the assessment roll, but does not include an owner or tenant of land who is entitled to use the land under a time share contract unless the person is entitled to use the land, on Voting Day, or for a period of six weeks or more during the calendar year in which Voting Day of the election is held

“Preliminary List of Electors” means a list of electors for the municipality compiled by the Elections Ontario and provided to the municipality by July 31st of an election year.

“Proof of Identification” means proof of identity and residence as prescribed in O. Reg. 304/13 of the Act.

“Regular Office Hours” means Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. from September 1 to June 30 of each year; and Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. from July 1 to August 31 of each year.

“Registered Third Party (Third Party Advertiser)” means an individual who is normally resident in Ontario, a corporation that carries on business in Ontario or a trade union that holds bargaining rights for employees in Ontario, and who’s Notice of Registration for Third Party Advertiser has been certified by the Clerk.

“Repair Station” means the location in the Ballot Counting Room where ballots that are unable to be scanned because of a technical defect or are torn during opening and can be duplicated in accordance with these rules and procedures.

“Restricted Period for Third Party Advertisements” begins on the earliest day that an individual, corporation or trade union is permitted to file a notice of registration as a registered third party and ends at the close of voting on Voting Day.

“Return Envelope Processing Station” means the station located in the Secure Room or Council Chamber of the Municipal Office and where the yellow outer return envelopes will be opened and the voter declaration forms will be processed, the electronic voter’s list will be updated and the secrecy envelopes placed in ballot boxes for secure storage.

“Returning Officer” means the official who is responsible for conducting the election and announcing the results of the election.

“Scrutineer” means an individual, appointed in writing by a certified candidate, to represent him or her during the voting process, or an individual appointed by Council, a local board or the Minister in relation to a by-law or question, or by an elector in the case of a recount.

Alternative Voting Procedures

“**Secure Room**” means the locked storage room in the Municipal Office. Access to the Secure Room is restricted to the Clerk and select Election Officials.

“**Sorting Station**” means the secure location in which the Vote by Mail secrecy envelopes will be opened and prepared for tabulation. For the purpose of the 2026 Municipal Election, this location shall be the same location as the secure room.

“**Tabulator Station**” means the area designated by the Clerk for the tabulation of Ballots that were not tabulated in Poll. For the purpose of the 2026 Municipal Election, the Tabulator Station shall be the Municipal Council Chambers.

“**Third Party Advertisement**” means an advertisement in any broadcast, print, electronic or other medium that has the purpose of promoting, supporting or opposing a candidate, or a “yes” or “no” answer to a question on the ballot, but does not include an advertisement by or under the direction of a candidate, or an advertisement that incurs no expenses in relation to the advertisement, or an advertisement that is transmitted to employees, shareholders, or directors of the registered third party.

“**Trade Union**” means a trade union as defined in the *Labour Relations Act, 1995* or the Canada Labour Code (Canada) and includes a central, regional or district labour council in Ontario.

“**Time/Clock**” means the time as indicated on the Clerk’s Cellular Device.

“**Voting Place**” means the only location, both convenient and accessible to the electors, for the purpose of casting a printed ballot as established by the Clerk. There is no Voting Place where an alternative voting method has been approved by Council such as Telephone and Internet or Vote by Mail.

“**Voting Day**” means the final day on which the final vote is to be taken in an election and shall be Monday, October 26, 2026 with the close of voting to be at 8:00 p.m.

“**Voting Kit**” means the set of documents mailed to each elector at the elector’s mailing address on the Voters’ List to enable him or her to cast his or her vote.

“**Voters’ List**” means the list of eligible electors, as corrected by the Clerk, under the provisions of Section 22 of the Act.

“**Voting Period**” means the period in which an eligible elector may cast their vote.

Alternative Voting Procedures

“**Vote Tabulator**” means an apparatus that optically scans a specified area on the ballot to read the vote(s) and tabulate the results and includes an Audio Vote Tabulator.

3. Purpose

- 3.1. The Municipal Clerk is responsible for the conduct of municipal and school board elections in the Township of Puslinch (Township). In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act*, the Municipal Clerk must establish procedures any alternative voting methods and for the use of voting and vote counting equipment.
- 3.2. For the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election, the Township has contracted Election Systems and Software Canada, ULC for the provision of optical scan Vote Tabulators. This technology has a proven track record of reliability and has been used in municipal jurisdictions across Ontario and Canada.
- 3.3. Further, for the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election, The Township has contract DataFix for the provision of Vote by Mail as the alternative voting method for the election. Datafix and Vote by Mail as an alternative voting method has a proven track record of reliability and has been used in municipal jurisdictions across Ontario and Canada.

4. Application of Procedure

- 4.1. The Council of the Corporation of the Township of Puslinch enacted By-law 2025-082 authorizing the use of in-poll optical scanning Vote Tabulators and Voting by Mail for the 2026 Municipal Election.
- 4.2. Where this procedure does not provide for any matter, the matter shall be addressed in accordance with the principles of the Act. These principles are generally recognized as being:
 - 4.2.1. the secrecy and confidentiality of the voting process is paramount;
 - 4.2.2. the election shall be fair and non-bias;
 - 4.2.3. the election shall be accessible to the voters;
 - 4.2.4. the integrity of the process shall be maintained throughout the election;
 - 4.2.5. that there be certainty that the results of the election reflect the votes cast; and,
 - 4.2.6. that voters and candidates shall be treated fairly and consistently.

Alternative Voting Procedures

- 4.3. The Clerk may provide an Election Official with instructions and troubleshooting tips related to the operation of Vote Tabulators.
- 4.4. The Clerk may update these procedures as required, at the discretion of the Clerk. Any updates will be circulated to all candidates and be made available on the Township's election website.
- 4.5. If an emergency is declared by the Clerk in accordance with the Act, and it is necessary to amend these procedures as a result of the emergency, the Clerk will notify all candidates of the declared emergency as soon as is practical.

5. Nominations

5.1. Nomination Papers

- 5.1.1. The giving of notice (Section 32) for nominations shall be on the "Notice of Nomination for Office" and shall be placed, as a minimum, in a local newspaper(s) prior to May 1, 2026 and in one (1) conspicuous place in the municipality and on the municipal website.
- 5.1.2. "Nomination Papers" for the following offices will be available at the Clerk's Office from the first business day of May in 2026 to Thursday, August 20, 2026 during regular office hours, and between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Friday, August 21, 2026 (Nomination Day) and on the municipal website for the following offices:
 - (a) (1) Mayor
 - (b) (4) Councillor, At Large
 - (c) (1) County Councillor, Ward 7
- 5.1.3. Nomination papers for school boards must be obtained and filed at the appropriate Municipal Office (Returning Office) for the following offices:
 - (a) (1) School Board Trustee – English Public
 - (b) (1) School Board Trustee – English Separate
 - (c) (1) School Board Trustee – French Public
 - (d) (1) School Board Trustee – French Separate
- 5.1.4. Nominations must be on the prescribed form and are to be filed with the Clerk at the appropriate Municipal Office (Returning Office) in the following manner:
 - (a) in person or through an agent;
 - (b) during regular office hours at the Clerk's Office from the first;

Alternative Voting Procedures

- (c) business day in May of 2026 to Thursday, August 20, 2026 and between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Friday, August 21, 2026 (Nomination Day);
- (d) with the prescribed declaration by at least 25 persons endorsing the nomination who are eligible to vote in an election for an office within the municipality, if a regular election was held on the day that the person endorses the nomination;
- (e) with the prescribed statement of qualifications, signed by the person being nominated;
- (f) with the prescribed nomination filing fee of \$200.00 for Head of Council and \$100.00 for all other offices - the filing fee shall be paid by cash, debit card, certified cheque or money order payable to the municipality;
- (g) with proof of identity and residence as prescribed in O. Reg. 304/13, as amended;
- (h) no faxed or other electronically transmitted nomination paper will be accepted - original signatures are required.

5.1.5. If a person is present in the foyer of the Municipal Office on Nomination Day at 2:00 p.m. and has not yet filed a nomination, he or she may file the nomination as soon as possible after 2:00 p.m.

5.1.6. The Clerk shall administer the Declaration of Qualifications on the Nomination Paper and the “Declaration of Qualifications – Municipal Candidates” (or for the Clerk responsible for the School Board Elections), the “Declaration of Qualifications – School Board Candidates,” oath to the Candidate.

5.2. Estimated Maximum Campaign Expenses (Section 88.20(6))

5.2.1. The Clerk shall calculate the estimated maximum campaign expenses for each office on the “Estimated Maximum Campaign Expenses” and provide a copy to the candidate or his/her agent the day that the Nomination Paper is filed in accordance with Section 33.0.1 (1). The Clerk’s calculation is final.

5.3. Notice of Penalties (Section 33.1)

5.3.1. The Clerk shall, before Voting Day, provide a notice of penalties on the “Notice of Penalties” to the candidate or their agent.

5.4. Municipal Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)

5.4.1. Upon filing, nomination papers become part of the public record and shall be disclosed to members of the public upon request.

Alternative Voting Procedures

5.4.2. The candidate may sign the consent to release personal information authorizing the Clerk to release personal information to the public and media.

5.5. Unofficial List of Candidates

5.5.1. The Clerk shall provide notice of unofficial list of candidates by preparing and, at a minimum, posting in the Municipal Office and on the Municipal website an “Unofficial List of Candidates” which is updated as each Nomination Paper is filed.

5.6. Nomination Day – August 21, 2026 (Section 31)

5.6.1. Nomination Papers will be received at the Municipal Office between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Nomination Day.

5.6.2. The procedure for the handling of Nomination Papers on Nomination Day will be the same as above.

5.7. Certification of Nomination Papers (Section 35)

5.7.1. On or before Monday, August 24, 2026, at 4:00 p.m., the Clerk will do a review of each nomination received to determine qualification and if the nomination complies with the Act. Once satisfied the candidate is qualified, the Clerk will complete the “Certification by Clerk” section on “Nomination Paper.”

5.8. Rejection of Nomination Paper (Section 35(3), (4))

5.8.1. If the Candidate is not qualified to be nominated, or the nomination does not comply with the Act, the Clerk will reject the Nomination. A telephone call or email shall be made to the candidate informing him/her of the rejection, and a “Notice of ejection of Nominations” shall be sent, by Registered Mail, as soon as possible, to:

- (a) the person who sought to be nominated, and
- (b) by regular mail to all candidates for the office.

5.9. Withdrawal of Nomination Papers (Section 36)

5.9.1. Candidates may withdraw their Nomination by filing in person a withdrawal in writing on “Withdrawal of Nomination” with the Clerk before 2:00 p.m. on Nomination Day, Friday, August 21, 2026, if the person was nominated on or before Nomination Day; and before 2:00 p.m. on the Wednesday following Nomination Day, (August 26, 2026), if the person was nominated under Section 33(5) - Additional Nominations.

5.9.2. The withdrawal shall be noted on the “Unofficial List of Candidates.”



Alternative Voting Procedures

5.10. **Official List of Candidates**

5.10.1. The final list of certified candidates will be posted at the Municipal Office and, as a minimum, on the website on or before Friday August 28, 2026 using the “Official List of Certified Candidates.”

5.11. **Declaration of Election (Section 40)**

5.11.1. If after 4:00 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2026 the number of certified nominations filed for an office is more than the number of persons to be elected to the office, the Clerk shall declare an election to be conducted.

5.11.2. The Clerk shall give the electors notice of:

- (a) under clause 42(1)(b), (alternative voting methods), the manner in which electors may use the alternative voting method;
- (b) the dates and times of the voting period;
- (c) the location and hours of operation for the Ballot Return Station.

5.11.3. The Clerk shall post a “Notice of Election Information” as a minimum, in two conspicuous places within the municipality, on the municipal website and, where there is a publication having general circulation in the municipality, publish a notice once in the publication, advising of the voting method, when the voting kits will be mailed and other relevant information.

5.12. **Acclamations (Section 37(1))**

5.12.1. If after 4:00 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2026, the number of certified candidates for an office is the same as or less than the number to be elected, the Clerk shall immediately declare the candidate(s) elected by acclamation. The Clerk shall post a “Declaration of Acclamation to Office.”

5.13. **Fewer Number of Nomination Papers Than Offices (Section 33(5))**

5.13.1. If at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2026, the number of certified nominations filed for an office is less than the number of persons to be elected to the office, additional nominations may be filed between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 26, 2026. The Clerk shall post a “Notice of Additional Nominations” on the Township website and on the message board in the foyer at the Municipal Office advising that additional Nomination Papers may be filed for that office during the specified time. If at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 26, 2026, additional Nomination Papers have been filed, the procedure to certify or reject Nomination Papers shall be followed.

Alternative Voting Procedures

- 5.14. **Additional Nomination More than the Number of Offices Remaining (Section 33(5))**
- 5.14.1. If between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 26, 2026, there are more than a sufficient number of certified Nominations to fill the office(s), an election shall be conducted with the names of the persons who have filed certified Nomination Papers.
- 5.15. **Withdrawal of Additional Nominations (Section 36)**
- 5.15.1. Withdrawal of additional nominations must take place prior to 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 26, 2026. Follow the procedure in the Withdrawal of Nomination Paper section above.
- 5.16. **Additional Nominations Equivalent to Number of Offices (Section 35(2) and 37(2))**
- 5.16.1. If at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 27, 2026 there is a sufficient number of certified Nomination Papers filed to fill the office(s), the Clerk shall cause to be posted a “Declaration of Acclamation to Office - Additional Nominations.”
- 5.17. **Filling Vacancies (Section 37(4))**
- 5.17.1. If an office remains vacant after the declaration of candidates by acclamation under section 37 and the declaration of the election of candidates following the conduct of the election for offices on the Municipal Council, the following rules apply:
- (a) Insufficient Number to Form a Quorum – Municipal Council
If the number of candidates declared elected is insufficient to form a quorum of the Municipal Council, a by-election shall be held.
 - (b) Sufficient Number to Form a Quorum – Municipal Council
If the number of candidates declared elected is less than the number of positions for an office of the Municipal Council, but does form a quorum, Section 263 (1) (a) of the Municipal Act, 2001 shall apply.
- 5.18. **Death or Ineligibility of Candidate (Section 39)**
- 5.18.1. If a certified candidate dies or becomes ineligible before the close of voting; and
- (a) if the result would be one less candidate only and no acclamation, the candidate's name shall be omitted from the ballot. If the ballots are already printed, the Clerk shall at a minimum, post the notice of the death or ineligibility in a conspicuous place in every Ballot Return Station and the election shall proceed as if the deceased or ineligible candidate has not been nominated.

Alternative Voting Procedures

- (b) if the deceased candidate would have been acclaimed, the election to such office is void and a by-election for such office shall be held (Section 65(4)(1.)(v.)) provided that the sixty day (60) period starts as of the date of death or ineligibility).

5.18.2. No votes are to be counted for the candidate who has died or become ineligible.

5.19. **Final Calculation of Campaign Expenses (Section 88.20 (13), (14) and (15))**

5.19.1. The Clerk shall, after determining from the number of eligible electors from the Electors' List for each office, calculate the maximum amount of campaign expenses that each candidate may incur for that office and prepare a "Certificate of Maximum Campaign Expenses." The certificate shall be given to each candidate in the case of a regular election, on or before September 30, 2026; and in the case of a by-election, within 10 days after the Clerk makes the corrections under subparagraph 4 iii of subsection 65(4).

5.19.2. The number of electors to be used in this final calculation is to be the greater of the following:

- (a) the number determined from the Electors' List from the previous regular election, as it existed on September 15 in the year of the previous election, adjusted for changes under Section 24 and 25 that were approved as of that day;
- (b) the number determined from the Electors' List for the current election as it exists on September 15 in the year of the current election, adjusted for changes under Section 24 and 25 that were approved as of that day. [Section 88.20 (11)]

5.19.3. The Clerk's calculation is final and shall be made in accordance with the prescribed formula in O. Reg 101/97.

6. **Voters' List**

6.1. **Elector Qualification (Section 17 (2))**

6.1.1. A person is entitled to be an elector at an election held in a local municipality if, on Voting Day (October 26, 2026) he/she:

- (a) resides in the local municipality or is the owner or tenant of land in the local municipality, or the spouse of such owner or tenant;
- (b) is a Canadian citizen,
- (c) is at least 18 years old; and

Alternative Voting Procedures

(d) is not prohibited from voting under subsection 17(3) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 or otherwise, by law.

6.2. Persons Prohibited from Voting (Section 17 (3))

6.2.1. The following are prohibited from voting:

- (a) a person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment in a penal or correctional institution.
- (b) a corporation.
- (c) a person acting as executor or trustee or in any other representative capacity, except as a voting proxy in accordance with section 44.
- (d) a person who was convicted of the corrupt practice described in subsection 90 (3), if Voting Day in the current election is less than five years after Voting Day in the election in respect of which he or she was convicted.

6.3. Preliminary List of Electors (PLE) (Section 19)

6.3.1. The Preliminary List of Electors (PLE) supplied by the Elections Ontario shall be delivered to the Clerk by August 14, 2026.

6.3.2. The PLE shall contain the name and address of each person who is entitled to be an elector and any additional information the Clerk needs to determine for which offices each elector is entitled to vote, such as school support [Section 17 (4)].

6.3.3. The Clerk shall, to the best of his/her ability and legislative authority, ensure that an elector's name appears on the PLE for a local municipality only once [Section 17 (6)].

6.3.4. Where an elector qualifies at more than one municipal address in the municipality, the elector may vote only once for each office and the qualifying address to determine eligibility for voting shall be the elector's place of residence [Section 17 (7)].

6.3.5. It is possible for an elector's name to appear on the Electors' List of more than one municipality. That elector may be eligible to vote in both municipalities. For example, a person listed as a resident elector in one municipality and a non-resident elector in another municipality is entitled to vote in each, provided they are not voting for the same office more than once. For example, School Board votes must be cast in the municipality where the elector resides.

6.4. Correction of Errors (Section 22)

Alternative Voting Procedures

6.4.1. The Clerk shall correct any obvious errors in the PLE prior to September 1, 2026 and notify Elections Ontario. This notification can occur when the “Final List of Changes” to the Electors’ List is sent to Elections Ontario after the election (see the Final List of Changes section below). However, those changes affecting a ward and voting place designation, missing streets, buildings or subdivisions, should be forwarded to Elections Ontario in time for inclusion in the September Exceptions files that Elections Ontario provides. Notification to Elections Ontario should be sent in an email to the municipality’s Municipal Services Coordinator.

6.4.2. The Clerk may use any information that is in the municipality’s custody or control when correcting the PLE for obvious errors [Section 22 (2) and (3)].

6.5. Certification of Electors’ List (Section 23)

6.5.1. The corrected PLE becomes the Electors’ List once it is reproduced and identified with an “Electors’ List Cover Sheet” on or before September 1, 2026.

6.6. Requests for Copies of Electors’ List (Section 23 (3), (4) and (5))

6.6.1. Upon written request, but not until September 1, the Clerk shall give every candidate a copy of the part of the Electors’ List that contains the names of the electors who are entitled to vote for that office. Each candidate will be required to sign the “Declaration of Proper Use of the Electors’ List.”

6.7. Access to the Electors’ List (Section 88 (10) and (11))

6.7.1. The legislation states that the Electors’ List cannot be posted in a public place and can be used only for election purposes.

6.7.2. In accordance with MFIPPA, details about another person, other than the person an Election Official is speaking with, should not be provided, including whether or not the individual is on the Electors’ List.

6.8. Amendments to the Electors’ List (Section 24 & 25)

6.8.1. Application for Change of Own Name (Section 24)

(a) An elector may make an application to amend their information on the Electors’ List using the prescribed form “Application to Amend Electors’ List” and providing proof of identity and residence as prescribed in O. Reg. 304/13, between the 1st day of September, 2026 to the 25th day of October, 2026 during normal hours and on the 26th day of October until 8:00 p.m.

Alternative Voting Procedures

- (b) The “Elector – ID Requirements” may be posted at the Municipal Office or any other location where Amendments to the Electors’ List are made. In addition, it may be included in information packages, posted on the municipal website, etc.
- (c) An elector can no longer remove a family member’s name from the Electors’ List, except in the case of a deceased person.
- (d) If the elector does not appear in person, a certified copy showing proof of ID and proof of residence/occupancy is required.

6.8.2. Removal of Deceased Person’s Name (Section 25)

- (a) The Clerk may remove a person’s name from the Electors’ List up to 8:00 p.m. on October 26th, 2026 if the Clerk is satisfied the person has died.
- (b) A person may make an application requesting that a deceased person’s name be removed from the Electors’ List by using the form “Application for Removal of Deceased Person’s Name from the Electors List” and providing proof of identity and residence as prescribed in O. Reg. 304/13, between the 1st day of September, 2026 to the 25th day of October, 2026 during normal hours and on the 26th day of October until 8:00 p.m.

6.8.3. Number of Electors to Determine Candidate’ Expenses

- (a) On September 15th, 2026, the Clerk shall determine the total number of electors on the Electors’ List. This number will be necessary to calculate the “Estimated Maximum Campaign Expenses” and the “Certificate of Maximum Campaign Expenses” for the 2026 Municipal Election.

6.9. Interim List of Changes (Section 27(1))

- 6.9.1. The Clerk shall, during the period beginning on September 15th and ending on September 26th in the year of a regular election, prepare an “Interim List of Changes” to the Electors’ List. The Interim List of Changes shall be given to each person who received a copy of the Electors’ List and to each certified candidate.

6.10. Final List of Changes (Section 27(2))

- 6.10.1. The Final List of Changes shall be provided to the Chief Electoral Officer in accordance with their requirements by November 25, 2026 by DataFix upon the Clerk’s authorization.

7. Candidate Campaigning and Campaign Advertising

7.1. Candidate Campaigning and Campaign Advertising (Section 88.3)

Alternative Voting Procedures

- 7.1.1. Campaigning, including campaign advertising, is permitted no earlier than the filing of Nomination Papers by the Candidate unless otherwise stated in the local municipal by-law.
- 7.1.2. Candidate campaign advertising means an advertisement in any broadcast, print, electronic or other medium that has the purpose of promoting or supporting the election of a Candidate. Examples include lawn signs, brochures, posters, print, radio and electronic ads, etc.)
- 7.1.3. All candidate campaign advertising shall identify the Candidate by name, as it appears on the Nomination Form.
- 7.1.4. All Candidates shall provide the following information to a broadcaster or publisher in writing:
 - (a) the name of the Candidate.
 - (b) the name, business address and telephone number of the individual who deals with the broadcaster or publisher under the direction of the Candidate.
- 7.1.5. Information contained in/on all campaign material is the responsibility of the Candidate and any questions or concerns should be directed to the Candidate.

7.2. Municipal Employee Communication with Candidates

- 7.2.1. The primary contact person at the Township of Puslinch shall be the Clerk:

elections@puslinch.ca
7404 Wellington Road 34,
Puslinch, ON, N0B 2J0

- 7.2.2. The primary method of communication shall be email.
- 7.2.3. To allow for fairness and the communication of consistent information for candidates, the Clerk will respond in writing to inquiries and the response will either be shared to all candidates via email or information will be posted on the election pages on the Township website at www.puslinch.ca/2026election.

7.3. Campaigning and Campaign Advertising Municipally Owned/Leased Facilities

- 7.3.1. Election campaigning or the distribution/posting of election campaign advertising at municipally-owned or leased facilities is not permitted.

Alternative Voting Procedures

- 7.3.2. The use of corporate resources is not permitted by Candidates for election purposes (i.e. staff, electronic devices, supplies, candidate photos taken in/on municipal property, etc.)
- 7.3.3. For more information on the use of corporate resources during elections, please see the Township's Corporate Policy 2018-002 for the Use of Corporate Services during Elections.
- 7.3.4. Candidates are prohibited from verifying whether an elector appears on the Electors' List or not, to the elector or any other person. Such questions from electors should be directed to the Clerk or Election Official.

7.4. Location of Election Signs

- 7.4.1. The Township of Puslinch's Election Sign By-law regulates the placement of election signs on Township highways for the purpose of preventing hazards to vehicles and pedestrians. All election signage shall be in compliance with the provisions of this by-law.
- 7.4.2. Posters or similar campaign advertising that will be installed or affixed to poles belonging to Hydro One Network, Bell Canada or other public utilities will require the permission of these respective approving authorities.
- 7.4.3. The investigation or prosecution for any acts of vandalism to campaign advertising of the candidates should be referred to the local police force by the complainant. The municipality or any of its municipal servants, employees or agents will not be responsible.

7.5. Municipal Authority to Remove Advertisements (Section 88.7)

- 7.5.1. If a municipality is satisfied that there has been a contravention of section 88.3 (candidates' election campaign advertisements), 88.4 (third party advertisements) or 88.5 (mandatory information in third party advertisements), the municipality may require a person who the municipality reasonably believes contravened the section or caused or permitted the contravention, or the owner or occupier of the land on which the contravention occurred, to remove the advertisement or discontinue the advertising.

7.6. Contributions to Registered Candidates (Section 88.8 (1) – (5))

- 7.6.1. A contribution shall not be made to or accepted by a person or an individual acting under the person's direction unless the person is a candidate.

Alternative Voting Procedures

7.6.2. A contribution made to or accepted by a candidate, or to an individual acting under the candidate's direction, shall only be made during the candidate's election campaign period.

7.6.3. Contributions shall only be made by the following:

- (a) An individual who is normally resident in Ontario;
- (b) The candidate and his or her spouse, subject to if the spouse of a candidate is not normally resident in Ontario, a candidate and his or her spouse may make contributions only to the candidate's election campaign.

7.6.4. The following shall not make a contribution:

- (a) A federal political party registered under the *Canada Elections Act* or any federal constituency association or registered candidate at a federal election endorsed by that party;
- (b) A provincial political party, constituency association, registered candidate or leadership contestant registered under *the Election Finances Act*;
- (c) A corporation that carries on business in Ontario;
- (d) A trade union that holds bargaining rights for employees in Ontario;
- (e) The Crown in right of Canada or Ontario, a municipality or local board.

7.7. Acceptance of Contributions (Section 88.8 (6)-(10))

7.7.1. A contribution shall not be made to or accepted by a person or an individual acting under the person's direction unless the person is a candidate.

7.7.2. A contribution may be accepted only from a person or entity that is entitled to make a contribution.

7.7.3. A contribution of money that exceeds \$25 shall not be contributed in the form of cash and shall be contributed in a manner that associates the contributor's name and account with the payment, or by money order signed by the contributor.

7.7.4. The listing of the phone number and email address and/or hyperlink to the candidate's website by the municipality or local board does not constitute a contribution to a candidate.

7.8. Maximum Contributions to Candidates (Section 88.9)

7.8.1. A contributor shall not make contributions exceeding a total of:

Alternative Voting Procedures

- (a) \$1,200 to any one candidate in an election;
- (b) Except if a person is a candidate for more than one office a contributor's total contributions to that candidate in respect of all the offices shall not exceed \$1,200;
- (c) \$5,000 to two or more candidates for office on the same council or local board;
- (d) Except if the candidate is contributing to the candidates own election campaign, then the maximum contributions do not apply;
- (e) Except if the contributor is the spouse of the candidate, then the maximum contributions do not apply.

7.8.2. The Clerk shall provide the "Contributions to Registered Candidates" form to the candidate at the time of filing.

7.9. Fundraising for Candidates (Section 88.10)

7.9.1. A fund-raising function shall not be held for a person who is not a candidate.

7.9.2. Fund-raising functions may only be held during the campaign period.

7.10. What Constitutes a Contribution (Section 88.15)

7.10.1. For the purposes of this Act, money, goods and services given to and accepted by a person for his or her election campaign, or given to and accepted by another person who is acting under the person's direction, are contributions.

7.10.2. Contributions:

In addition to the statement above [88.15 (1)]:

- (a) An amount charged for admission to a fund-raising function.
- (b) If goods and services are sold for more than their market value at a fund-raising function, the difference between the amount paid and the market value is the contribution amount.
However, if the amount received for the goods or services is \$25 or less, the amount is not a contribution.
- (c) If goods and services used in the person's election campaign or in relation to third party advertisements are purchased for less than their market value, the difference between the market value and the amount paid is the contribution amount.
- (d) Any unpaid but guaranteed balance in respect of a loan under section 88.17 (Campaign Account Loans).

7.10.3. Not Contributions:

In addition to the statement above [88.15 (1)]:

Alternative Voting Procedures

- (a) The value of services provided by voluntary unpaid labour.
- (b) The value of services provided voluntarily, under the direction of the person or the individual, corporation or trade union, by an employee whose compensation from all sources for providing the services does not exceed the compensation the employee would normally receive for the period the services are provided.
- (c) An amount of \$25 or less that is donated at a fund-raising function.
- (d) The amount received for goods and services sold at a fund-raising function, if the amount is \$25 or less.
- (e) The amount of a loan under section 88.17 (Campaign Account Loans).
- (f) For a person referred to in 88.15 (1), the value of political advertising provided without charge on a broadcasting undertaking as defined in section 2 of the Broadcasting Act (Canada), if,
 - i) it is provided in accordance with that Act and the regulations and guidelines made under it, and
 - ii) it is provided equally to all candidates for office on the particular council or local board.

7.10.4. **Value of Goods and Services:**

The value of goods and services provided as a contribution is:

- (a) if the contributor is in the business of supplying these goods and services, the lowest amount the contributor charges the general public in the same market area for similar goods and services provided at or about the same time;
- (b) if the contributor is not in the business of supplying these goods and services, the lowest amount a business providing similar goods or services charges the general public for them in the same market area at or about the same time.

7.11. **Restriction: Use of Own Money (Section 88.16)**

7.11.1. A contributor shall not make a contribution of money that does not belong to the contributor.

7.11.2. However, this does not apply to the personal representative of a deceased person whose will directs that a contribution be made to a named candidate or a registered third party, as the case may be, out of the funds of the estate.

7.12. **Campaign Account Loads (Section 88.17)**

7.12.1. A candidate and his or her spouse may obtain a loan only from a bank or other recognized lending institution in Ontario, to be paid directly into the candidate's campaign account. Only the candidate and his or her spouse may guarantee a loan.

Alternative Voting Procedures

7.13. **What Constitutes an Expense (Section 88.19)**

- 7.13.1. Costs incurred for goods or services by or under the direction of a person wholly or partly for use in his or her election campaign are expenses.
- 7.13.2. Without restricting the generality of 88.19 (1), the following amounts are expenses:
- (a) The replacement value of goods retained by the person, individual, corporation or trade union from any previous election in the municipality and used in the current election.
 - (b) The value of contributions of goods and services.
 - (c) Audit and accounting fees.
 - (d) Interest on loans under section 88.17.
 - (e) The cost of holding fund-raising functions.
 - (f) The cost of holding parties and making other expressions of appreciation after the close of voting.
 - (g) For a candidate, expenses relating to a recount or a proceeding under section 83 (controverted elections).
 - (h) Expenses relating to a compliance audit.
 - (i) Expenses that are incurred by a candidate with a disability or a registered third party who is an individual with a disability, are directly related to the disability, and would not have been incurred but for the election to which the expenses relate.
 - (j) The cost of election campaign advertisements (within the meaning of section 88.3) or third party advertisements, as the case may be.
- 7.13.3. For greater certainty, the cost of holding fund-raising functions does not include costs related to,
- (a) events or activities that are organized for such purposes as promoting public awareness of a candidate and at which the soliciting of contributions is incidental; or
 - (b) promotional materials in which the soliciting of contributions is incidental.
- 7.13.4. In the following circumstances, a candidate's expenses for the 2026 regular election that are described in 88.19 (3) paragraphs 7 and 8 may include his or her expenses as a candidate in the 2022 regular election for an office on the same council or local board:
- (a) The circumstances described in paragraph 4 of subsection 88.24 (1) (deficit).
 - (b) The circumstances described in paragraph 5 of subsection 88.24 (1) (expenses relating to a recount, etc.).

Alternative Voting Procedures

7.14. Candidates Expenses (88.20)

7.14.1. An expense shall not be incurred by or under the direction of a person unless he or she is a candidate.

7.14.2. Only during campaign period

(a) An expense shall not be incurred by or under the direction of a candidate outside his or her election campaign period.

7.14.3. Exception, auditor's report

(a) Despite 88.20 (2) (Only During Campaign Period), a candidate whose election campaign period ends as described in paragraph 2, 3 or 4 of subsection 88.24 (1) (Election Campaign Period for Candidates) may incur expenses related to the preparation of an auditor's report under section 88.25 (Candidates' Financial Statements, etc.) after the campaign period has ended.

(b) For greater certainty, expenses, including audit and accounting fees, related to the preparation of an auditor's report after the campaign period has ended constitute campaign expenses.

7.14.4. Who may incur expense

(a) An expense may only be incurred by a candidate or an individual acting under the candidate's direction.

7.14.5. Maximum Amount

(a) During the period that begins on the day a Candidate is nominated and ends on Voting Day, his or her expenses shall not exceed an amount calculated in accordance with the prescribed formula.

(b) A Candidate shall be provided with the maximum campaign expenses amount upon filing of his or her Nomination Papers (see Nominations section of this manual).

7.14.6. Maximum amount for parties, etc., after Voting Day

(a) The expenses of a candidate that are for the holding of parties and making other expressions of appreciation after the close of voting shall not exceed an amount calculated in accordance with the prescribed formula.

(b) The formula that is prescribed, must be written so that the amount calculated under it varies based on the maximum amount determined under 88.20 (6) (Maximum Amount) for the office for which the candidate is nominated.

Alternative Voting Procedures

8. Third Party Advertiser

8.1. Third Party Advertiser Registrations

8.1.1. In accordance with Section 88.6 of the Act, eligible third-party advertisers may file a notice of registration with the Clerk in the prescribed form and with a declaration of qualification. Registrations can be filed starting with the opening of the nomination period on the first business day in May until the Friday before Voting Day when the Clerk's Office is open which is October 23, 2026 until 4:30 pm.

8.2. Third Party Advertiser Financial Reporting

8.2.1. In accordance with Section 88.29 of the Act, a registered third party shall file with the Clerk of the municipality in which he, she or it registered, a financial statement and auditor's report, each in the prescribed form, reflecting the registered third party's campaign finances in relation to third party advertisements, on or before 2:00 p.m. on December 31 in the year of the election.

9. Candidates/Scrutineers

9.1.1. Candidates may appoint scrutineers in writing to represent them at the Ballot Return Station, Return Envelope Processing Station or Ballot Counting Centre.

9.1.2. Scrutineers must show their written appointment form to election officials upon entry and upon request in accordance with Section 16(6) of the Act.

9.1.3. Election officials are responsible for the conduct of the Ballot Return Station, Return Envelope Processing Station and Ballot Counting Centre and no candidate or scrutineer has a right to interfere with an election official in the discharge of his/her duties.

9.1.4. If a scrutineer or candidate is found to be obstructive in any way, he or she will be removed by an election official.

9.1.5. Scrutineers are permitted to inspect, without touching, the ballots, the electors' list and all other papers, forms and documents relating to the vote, election officials laptops, tabulators, but not so as to delay the opening or operation of a Ballot Return Station, Return Envelope Processing Station or Ballot Counting Centre.

9.1.6. To protect the secrecy of the vote, candidates and scrutineers will not be permitted to examine the marked ballots or to object to ballots or

Alternative Voting Procedures

the counting of votes on a ballot as the ballots are being fed into the Vote Tabulator by the Election Official or to interfere in any way with the administration of voting procedures as provided for in subsections 47(5)(e), 47(5)(f), 54(4), and 55(5) of the Act as modified by Schedule 2 of the Regulation.

- 9.1.7. The Clerk shall make available at the Sorting and Tabulator Station adequate accommodation for each Candidate who intends to view the tabulation of votes and who, at least seven days before Voting Day, notifies the Clerk in writing of their intention.
- 9.1.8. Candidates must show their personal identification to the Election Official(s) upon entering a Ballot Return Station, Return Envelope Processing Station and Ballot Counting Centre. Candidates or scrutineers must wear identification provided by the Clerk.
- 9.1.9. Pursuant to Section 42(4) of the Act, only one scrutineer per vote tabulator will be permitted in the Ballot Counting Centre to be a witness at a time. If a candidate or another scrutineer working on behalf of the same candidate enters the Ballot Counting Centre, the prior scrutineer shall be required to leave.
- 9.1.10. Candidates themselves are only permitted to be in a Ballot Return Station for the purposes of delivering their yellow return envelope in the capacity of a witness for their own campaign. Outside of this, no candidate shall be allowed to have more than one scrutineer in a Return Envelope Processing Station or Ballot Counting Centre at one time.
- 9.1.11. Scrutineers shall provide any necessary supplies themselves, as sitting directly at the tables provided for election officials is not permitted.
- 9.1.12. Scrutineers are not allowed to enter a voting screen at a Ballot Return Station or to be in a position to witness how an elector marks their ballot.
- 9.1.13. Candidates/srutineers shall not be allowed to enter the Ballot Counting Center after the close of vote counting.

10. Election Personnel

10.1. Clerk (Section 12(1))

- 10.1.1. The Clerk who is responsible for conducting an election may provide for any matter or procedure that:

Alternative Voting Procedures

- (a) Is not other provided for in an Act or regulation; and,
- (b) In the Clerk's Opinion is necessary or desirable for conducting the election

10.2. **DRO's and Other Election Officials (Section 15)**

- 10.2.1. When it is necessary to conduct an election, the Clerk shall appoint a Deputy Returning Officer and may appoint any other election officials for the election and for any recount that the Clerk considers are required.
- 10.2.2. The Clerk may delegate to a Deputy Returning Officer or other election official any of the Clerk's power or duties in relation to the election as he or she considers necessary. The Clerk may continue to exercise the delegated powers and duties despite the delegation. The delegation shall be in writing.
- 10.2.3. There shall be a substitute qualified person appointed to attend to the election details in the event the Clerk is unable to be present to conduct procedures on Voting Day.

11. **Vote by Mail Procedure**

11.1. **Authority**

- 11.1.1. On October 29th, 2025, the Township of Puslinch By-law 2025-082 was passed authorizing vote by mail voting and the use of vote counting tabulators.
- 11.1.2. Section 42(5) further states that when a by-law authorizing the use of an alternative voting method is in effect, Sections 43 (advance vote) and 44 (voting proxies) apply only if the by-law so specifies. The Township of Puslinch By-law 2025-082 authorizing the use of an alternative voting method is silent on these issues, and therefore Sections 43 and 44 are not applicable.

11.2. **Service Provider**

- 11.2.1. The service provider for vote by mail is DataFix.

11.3. **Mailing and Distribution of Voting Kits**

- 11.3.1. Voting kits will be mailed to electors on Electors' List from the Township's service provider (DataFix) during the week of September 24 to September 29, 2026.

Alternative Voting Procedures

11.3.2. Thereafter, the Clerk shall at the time of adding an elector to the Electors' List, deliver to the elector or cause to be obtained by the elector, a voting kit.

11.4. **Voting Kit**

11.4.1. A Voting Kit shall consist of:

- (a) A voting Instruction Sheet
- (b) An elector Declaration Form
- (c) A composite Ballot
- (d) An inner Ballot Secrecy Envelope
- (e) An outer Return Envelope with prepaid postage
- (f) Such other necessary material as determined by the Clerk

11.5. **Form of Ballot**

11.5.1. Where there is an election for more than one office, the form of ballot will be a "Composite Ballot"

11.5.2. Five ballot types shall be utilized consisting of English/Public, French/Public, English/Separate, French/Separate and Non-Resident. The number of different types of ballots may be reduced if there is an acclamation for a school board.

11.5.3. There shall appear on the ballot to the right of each candidate's name, a box () designated for the marking of the ballot.

11.5.4. Subsection 11.5.3 applies with necessary modifications to ballots for by-laws and questions.

11.6. **Voting Instructions**

11.6.1. Upon receipt of the Voting Kit, the elector is required to follow the instructions provided for within the voting kit:

- (a) Read the instruction sheet.
- (b) Complete the ballot. Place the completed ballot in the white ballot secrecy envelope and seal the white secrecy envelope.
- (c) Sign the declaration form and place it in the yellow return envelope, without sealing the yellow envelope yet.
- (d) Place the white secrecy envelope into the yellow return envelope. The signed declaration should already be inside the yellow return envelope.
- (e) Ensure that the return address is visible in the window of the yellow return envelope.
- (f) Mail the pre-paid, yellow return envelope by October 15, 2026, OR hand-deliver your yellow return envelope to the Municipal Office by

Alternative Voting Procedures

8:00 p.m. on October 26, 2026, or to other specified Ballot Return Stations during specified dates and times.

(g) Note: The postage paid envelope can only be used for mail originating within Canada.

11.7. **Ballot Return Stations**

11.7.1. For the purposes of a vote by mail election, a voting place is not required. Alternatively, Ballot Return Stations will be established to assist electors with the voting process and to make additions, deletions and corrections to the Electors' List and to provide assistance and clarification on the election process. Voting screens will be made available in Ballot Return Stations for electors wishing to complete their voting kits at a designated Ballot Return Station.

11.7.2. For the time period from the date that voting kits are mailed to electors from the Township's service provider until 8:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2026, the Municipal Office shall serve as a Ballot Return Station for electors wishing to deliver or have delivered their return envelope directly to the Clerk.

11.7.3. The Clerk shall determine the location of any other Ballot Return Stations and shall communicate the times, dates and locations accordingly.

11.7.4. The Clerk shall ensure that the Ballot Return Stations are accessible.

11.7.5. Electors who are in a Ballot Return Station at the time of closure will be permitted to deposit their Return Envelopes in the Drop Box provided for this purpose.

11.7.6. No campaign material will be allowed within a Ballot Return Station or on the grounds of the Ballot Return Station.

11.8. **Returned Voting Kits**

11.8.1. If Voting Kits are returned undelivered to the Municipal Office, they shall be sorted alphabetically and stored securely yet separately from completed, returned voting kits. Before issuing a new Voting Kit to an elector who is already on the Electors' list, identification will be verified and these Voting Kits will be searched should an elector present himself/herself at the Municipal Office and report he/she had not received a Voting Kit in the mail.

11.8.2. In cases where there is an amendment to the elector information (e.g. school board support), if an elector after receiving a voting kit wishes to amend the Electors' List and requires a different ballot, the original

Alternative Voting Procedures

voting kit with the ballot intact must be submitted to the Clerk prior to a new ballot kit being issued.

11.9. Replacement Voting Kit

11.9.1. If an eligible elector, whose name appears on the Electors' List, does not receive a Voting Kit, or if the Voting Kit is damaged, lost or destroyed, a Replacement Voting Kit may be issued. The elector may attend at the Municipal Office or designated Ballot Return Station to obtain a Replacement Voting Kit. The Clerk or designated Election Official will confirm the eligibility of the elector, have the elector take the appropriate oath and a new Voting Kit will be issued. Electors must satisfy identification requirements, and it shall be documented that the elector was issued a new Voting Kit. Electors may complete their voting kit, containing their ballot, immediately or retain it for completion at a later time.

11.10. Handling and Processing of Voting Kits

11.10.1. Access to the Secure Room will be restricted commencing (approximately Friday, September 18, 2026) in advance of the receipt of the first return envelope until 120 days after the declaration of the voting results as prescribed in the Act.

11.10.2. The final day to deposit the yellow return envelopes in the mail to ensure delivery to the Clerk is October 15, 2026. Following this date, electors will be directed to hand deliver their yellow Return Envelope to the Municipal Office. Hand delivered returns may be made until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, October 26, 2026. Completed voting kits, containing ballots, received after 8:00 p.m. will not be counted and will be time and date stamped.

11.10.3. Starting September 24, 2026, designated election officials will pick up yellow return envelopes from the Township Mailbox, on a daily basis up to and including October 26, 2026 at 8:00 p.m.

11.10.4. As of September 24, 2026, the night drop box at the front entrance to the Municipal Office shall be secured and accessed only by election officials until the end of voting on October 26, 2026 at 8:00 p.m. This box shall be checked daily by election officials, and the number of yellow return envelopes shall be documented and said envelopes shall be included within the total of yellow return envelopes received and documented per day. All envelopes will be time and date stamped at the time they are collected.

11.10.5. Upon receiving the prepaid yellow return envelopes by mail or at the Ballot Return Station, the Clerk or designate shall place the return

Alternative Voting Procedures

envelopes into the locked Election Cabinet until the designated time to process the return envelopes. At the designated time, the return envelopes will be processed according with section 11.10.8.

- 11.10.6. At the end of each day, the Clerk or designate shall affix a seal, preventing any Ballots from being put into or removed from the Election Cabinet. Upon the seal, the Clerk or Assistant Returning Officer will place the date and their initials. The sealed Election Cabinet will remain in the Secure Room under the control of the Clerk and the Assistant Returning Officer(s). The seal will be accompanied by a log noting this process each day it is completed.
- 11.10.7. Each morning during Regular Office Hours, the Clerk or designate shall inspect the seals on the Election Cabinet to ensure that they are intact. The Clerk or designate, in the presence of another Election Official shall break the seal on the Election Cabinet for use during the day only to deposit yellow return envelopes.
- 11.10.8. The opening and processing of yellow return envelopes will begin each day during Regular Business Hours starting October 9, 2026 at 3:00 p.m. until October 26, 2026 in the Secure Room at the Municipal Office:
 - (a) The designated election officials will remove the sealed, white Ballot Secrecy Envelope and Elector Declaration Form from the yellow Return Envelopes.
 - (b) The designated election official will use the information on the declaration form to strike the name of the elector off of the Electors' List. Striking the name of an elector off of the Electors' List is the confirmation that this elector has voted.
 - (c) If, upon opening the return envelope, the Ballot secrecy envelope has not been sealed, the Clerk or Assistant Returning Officer may immediately seal the envelope without examining the Ballot.
 - (d) If, upon opening the return envelope where a signed voter declaration is present and the Ballot is not in a secrecy envelope, the Clerk or Assistant Returning Officer may immediately insert the Ballot into a secrecy envelope without examining the Ballot.
 - (e) White Ballot Secrecy Envelopes, containing completed ballots, will be placed in sealed ballot boxes in a secured room and will not be counted until after 11:00 a.m. on October 26, 2026. The number of Ballot Secrecy Envelopes entered into the ballot box each day will be recorded. At the end of each daily processing, the Clerk or designated official shall affix a seal to each of the ballot boxes, containing ballots within sealed, white secrecy envelopes, initial the

Alternative Voting Procedures

seal and place the sealed ballot boxes in a secure room at the Municipal Office.

- (f) The Clerk or Designate will date stamp the voter declaration form and file by date. Upon request, voter declaration forms that have been processed will be made available for Candidates or their Scrutineers to review or update their Voters' Lists, if desired.
- (g) If a candidate or scrutineer wishes to use his/her own seal, it shall be shown to an Election Official for approval before being placed on the ballot box. The seal must be a self-adhesive tape type and may not in any way identify the candidate so as to be construed as "election campaigning".

11.10.9. With regard to any yellow return envelopes received prior to October 9, 2026, the amount will be documented by the Clerk or designate and the yellow return envelopes will be secured Election Cabinet designated by the Clerk, and accessed only by election officials, until return envelope processing on October 9, 2026.

11.11. **Incomplete and Rejection of Ballots/Ballot Secrecy Envelopes**

11.11.1. In addition to rejecting cast ballots for violations of the Act, the following conditions will also cause a ballot to be considered rejected if:

- (a) Upon opening the outer yellow return envelope, there is no Elector Declaration Form (see 'g' below for related procedure);
- (b) Upon opening the outer yellow return envelope, there is a different number of Ballot Secrecy Envelopes to Elector Declaration Forms;
- (c) There are identifiable marks on the sealed, white Ballot Secrecy Envelope or the Ballot;
- (d) Upon opening the sealed, white Ballot Secrecy Envelope at the Counting Centre, the envelope contains more than one ballot; and,
- (e) Upon opening the sealed, white Ballot Secrecy Envelope at the Counting Centre, the envelope contains a ballot which has not been marked; it will be counted as a Ballot Used but Unmarked by Elector.
- (f) The Declaration form is not signed by the elector. Where it is found by election officials that an outer return envelope contains an unsigned Elector Declaration Form and where a telephone number can be obtained, the elector will be contacted once and asked to attend the Municipal Office to sign the declaration up to and including October 26, 2026 at 8:00 p.m.
- (g) If there is no declaration form in the yellow Return Envelope, the Clerk or designated election official, where there is reasonable grounds to do so, may open the secrecy envelope to see whether a declaration form was inadvertently placed in the secrecy envelope

Alternative Voting Procedures

with the ballot. If the secrecy envelope is opened, the Clerk or designate shall ensure that the secrecy of the electors' intention is maintained at all times. If upon opening the secrecy envelope a signed declaration form is found, the electors' name will be crossed off the Electors' List, the secrecy envelope immediately sealed, and the Clerk or designate shall initial the envelope and mark as having been opened for the purpose of removing the declaration form. If a declaration form is not found in the secrecy envelope or one is found that is not signed, the envelope will be rejected and shall be appropriately marked as such and initialed by the Clerk or designate.

11.12. **Security of the Ballot (White Ballot Secrecy Envelopes and Voting Kits)**

11.12.1. Ballots will be printed under the supervision of the vendor and the number of ballots printed will be forwarded to the Clerk.

11.12.2. Ballots contained within white secrecy envelopes and voting kits will be stored under the supervision of the Clerk and designed election officials in a Secured Room designated by the Clerk, and accessed only by election officials, at all times until the date of destruction of election records as set out within the Act.

11.13. **Secrecy**

11.13.1. All complaints regarding any and/or all breaches of secrecy shall be documented by the Election Official as well as questions and answers of the complainant and, if deemed appropriate, the Clerk shall submit same to the Police for further investigation and prosecution.

11.14. **Requirement to Provide Proof of Identify**

11.14.1. All eligible electors will be required to provide proof of identity and residence in order to obtain a voting kit at the Municipal Office or Ballot Return Station. The type of identification is prescribed in O. Reg. 304/13 and includes but is not limited to an Ontario Driver's Licence and an Ontario Health Card. An elector on the Electors' List without identification may make a statutory declaration "Oath of Qualification."

11.15. **Challenging Eligibility**

11.15.1. If a candidate or scrutineer challenges the right of a person to vote, the Election Official must document the objection. The election official may also challenge an individual on his/her own initiative if he/she has reason to believe the person is not entitled to vote. In either case, the challenged individual must then take the "Oath of Qualification." If he/she refuses, a ballot must be refused and the

Alternative Voting Procedures

words "refused to affirm" or "refused to be sworn" must be documented on the Elector's List.

11.16. **Electors Requiring Assistance**

11.16.1. The Election Official may permit an elector who needs assistance in voting to have such assistance as the Election Official considers necessary.

12. **Count Procedures**

12.1. **Ballot Counting Centre**

12.1.1. The vote tabulator(s) shall be located at the Ballot Counting Centre.

12.1.2. The Ballot Counting Centre shall be located in the Council Chambers of the Township of Puslinch Municipal Office at 7404 Wellington Road 34.

12.1.3. The Township shall utilize Vote Tabulators (Model DS200 Scanner) from Election Systems & Software Canada, ULC.

12.2. **Programming of the Vote Tabulator**

12.2.1. Prior to Voting Day the Vote Tabulators shall be programmed so that a printed record of the number of votes cast for each candidate and for the answer to any by-law or question can be produced.

12.2.2. The vote tabulator shall be programmed so that ballots that are damaged or defective or have been marked in such a way that they cannot be properly processed by a vote tabulator are returned by the machine to the Deputy Returning Officer.

12.3. **Testing of Vote Tabulators**

12.3.1. Prior to Voting Day, the Clerk shall test the Vote Tabulators to ensure that they will accurately count the votes cast for all candidates, by-laws or questions.

12.3.2. When testing the Vote Tabulator, adequate safeguards shall be taken to ensure that the system or any part of it that is used for processing and tabulating votes is isolated from all other applications or programs and that no remote devices are capable of gaining access to the Vote Tabulator.

12.3.3. The test shall be conducted by:

Alternative Voting Procedures

- (a) Checking that the battery charge, time settings, LCD display, system memory, printer, ports and scanners are all functioning properly
- (b) loading the Vote Tabulator memory card(s) into the Vote Tabulator(s); and
- (c) producing a zero tape to confirm that no votes are stored in the Vote Tabulator memory card;
- (d) logic and accuracy testing by tabulating a pre-audited group of ballots including ballots that fall into each of the categories of ballots described in section 5.1.3 and ballots on which are recorded a predetermined number of valid votes for each candidate and on any by-law or question;
- (e) comparing the output of the tabulation against the pre-audited results; and,
- (f) re-setting to zero all Vote Tabulators and demonstrate they are zero by printing a zero tape.

12.3.4. If the Clerk detects any error in the test, the cause of the error shall be determined and corrected and the test repeated until an errorless test is achieved and certified by the Clerk.

12.3.5. The Clerk shall, at the conclusion of the test, seal the memory card in the Vote Tabulator and retain any programs, test materials and documentation in the same manner as is provided in the Act for the keeping of election records.

12.3.6. The Clerk shall retain and may have access to the pre-audited group of ballots referred to above, the result tapes that were produced during the test and all other materials used in the programming of the Vote Tabulators.

12.3.7. The Clerk shall, at the successful completion of the test, secure the vote tabulators in the secured election vault.

12.4. **Procedures On Voting Day**

12.4.1. The Clerk shall assign a Deputy Returning Officer or their designate at the Ballot Counting Centre who shall be responsible for the operation of the vote tabulators including receiving ballots and feeding ballots in the tabulator.

12.4.2. The Ballot Count Centre will be located in the Council Chambers of the Township of Puslinch Municipal Office at 7404 Wellington Road 34. Only the Municipal Clerk, designated election officials, certified

Alternative Voting Procedures

candidates and appointed scrutineers will be permitted to remain in the Ballot Counting Centre.

12.4.3. The Ballot Return Station at the Municipal Office will be closed at 8:00 p.m. on October 26, 2026 and only designated election officials will be allowed to enter thereafter. All voters who are within the Ballot Return Station will be permitted to turn in their vote by mail kit. The Election Official(s) shall close the doors to Ballot Return Station at the Municipal Office so that no other voters may enter. When all voters have dropped off their vote by mail kits and have left the building, an Election Official shall announce “Voting has ended.”

12.4.4. Candidates and scrutineers will be permitted in designated areas only. Cell phones and/or other electronic equipment will not be permitted other than for designated election officials. Candidates and scrutineers shall not interfere with the vote count in any manner. Should they do so, they shall be required to leave the facility when so requested by a designated election official.

12.4.5. No campaign material will be allowed within or upon the property occupied by the Municipal Office and any other Ballot Return Station.

12.4.6. Proper handling of ballot procedures shall be enforced to ensure that each ballot is tracked, stored, and subjected to quality control to ensure that:

- (a) each ballot is scanned once;
- (b) each scan can be successfully processed for intent;
- (c) no ballot is double scanned; and,
- (d) spoiled ballots are removed or managed before entering the database.

12.4.7. With regard to the Ballot Counting Centre, the election process shall have the following stations:

Station	Details
Sorting Station	<p>(a) A letter opener is used to open the Secrecy Envelopes. The envelopes are bundled and delivered by the runner to the Ballot Extraction Station for removal of the ballot.</p> <p>(b) Election Officials manually extract the ballot from the</p>

Alternative Voting Procedures

	<p>Secrecy Envelope, unfold the ballot, and place in a pile for delivery to the Tabulator Station.</p> <p>(c) Ballots that are ripped, torn, or otherwise unable to be scanned shall be delivered to the “Repair Station” at the Ballot Count Centre.</p>
Repair Station	<p>(a) Ballots that are unable to be scanned because of physical or technical defect are duplicated at the Repair Station. The duplicated ballot is then scanned as per normal procedures.</p>

Station	Details
Tabulator Station	<p>(a) The ballots are scanned in batches, and the image processor reads each image to determine voter intent.</p> <p>(b) Batches of scanned ballots are saved to the memory card of the tabulator to be entered manually into the reporting form.</p> <p>(c) Scanned ballots are placed in ballot boxes.</p> <p>As each ballot box is filled, it is sealed and will be transferred to a Secure Room in accordance with the Act.</p>

12.4.8. Shortly before 11:00 a.m., on October 26, 2026 (Voting Day), the sealed ballot boxes stored in the Secured Room at the Municipal Office, which were received and processed from October 9, 2026 through October 23, 2026, shall be delivered by the Municipal Clerk, or designate, to the Ballot Counting Centre for processing and counting.

Alternative Voting Procedures

- 12.4.9. The Deputy Returning Officer or designate, responsible for the Vote Tabulator shall, in the presence of other Election Officials and all candidates/scrutineers present, cause the Vote Tabulator to print a copy of all totals on the memory card one hour or less before the opening of the voting location, confirming zero totals.
- 12.4.10. The Deputy Returning Officer or designate, responsible shall verify that the heading at the top of the tape lists the Ballot Counting Centre. If the totals are zero for all candidates, by-laws or questions, the Deputy Returning Officer shall post the first zero tape on a wall in the Ballot Counting Centre and print a second (duplicate) zero tape. The Deputy Returning Officer shall ensure that the second zero printout remains affixed to the Vote Tabulator until the results are printed by the Vote Tabulator after the close of counting.
- 12.4.11. If the totals are not zero for all candidates, by-laws or questions, the Deputy Returning Officer shall immediately notify the Clerk. Vote counting shall halt until the Vote Tabulator is made operational, or a decision is made to proceed with only a single Vote Tabulator, or the decision is made manual count.
- 12.4.12. At various intervals throughout the day on October 26, 2026, or at the discretion of the Municipal Clerk or designate, and at the close of voting at 8:00 p.m., ballots processed at the Ballot Return Station shall also be delivered by the Municipal Clerk, or designate, to the Ballot Counting Centre for processing and counting.
- 12.4.13. The following steps inclusively are repeated until all ballots cast have been processed:
 - (a) At the Ballot Counting Centre, Election Officials shall open the sealed ballot box(es) and the secrecy envelopes shall be opened through the use of a letter opener. The opened envelopes are set aside in bundles to be picked up by the Runner for delivery to the Ballot Extraction Station.
 - (b) The Runner shall deliver the opened secrecy envelopes, in bundles of approximately 25, to each Election Official at the Ballot Extraction Station.
 - (c) The Election Official(s), upon receipt of the opened ballot secrecy envelopes, will manually extract the ballot from the secrecy envelope, unfold and flatten the ballot, and place the ballots in piles of 25 for pick-up by the Runner. The envelope is set aside in a separate pile.
 - (d) In the event a ballot is accidentally slit by the envelope opener or in the event that a ballot extracted from an envelope is damaged in

Alternative Voting Procedures

such a manner that it obviously cannot be scanned (e.g. torn, ripped, crumpled) the Election Official shall re-insert the ballot back into the envelope and set it aside for the Runner to deliver to the Repair Station.

- (e) The Runner shall regularly attend each Election Official at the Ballot Extraction Station to collect the flattened ballots and deliver them to the Tabulator Station, and shall collect any damaged ballots and deliver them to the Repair Station.

12.4.14. Upon receiving a batch of ballots to be scanned, the designate at the Tabulator Station shall, assign a batch number and each batch will contain 25 ballots.

12.4.15. The Election Official scans the batch of ballots and the image processor read each image to determine voter intent. If there are no misreads, the tabulator counter is reviewed to ensure each scanned image has been read correctly. As well, the processor will report the count of the first and last ballot scanned and this information is verified against the first and last ballot in that batch to ensure accurate operation of the processor. The details of the scan for the batch are recorded by the Election Official on the Scan Batch Control Sheet.

12.4.16. In the case of a technically damaged or defective ballot, the image processor will report a misread, cease scanning, and report the location of the ballot for removal. The damaged/defective ballot shall be isolated for action by the Clerk, or designate (either a second attempt at scanning or delivered to the Repair Station by the Runner).

12.4.17. Upon receipt of the technically damaged or defective ballot, the designate shall, using a new unused ballot, prepare a replacement ballot by marking the new ballot with the same marks contained in the designated voting spaces on the technically damaged or defective ballot, and the replacement ballot shall be clearly labeled "replacement" and given a serial number which shall also be recorded on the bottom edge of the back of the ballot of the technically damaged or defective ballot (e.g., Replacement #1, Defective #1, Replacement #2, Defective #2, etc.). The annotations on the Replacement ballot must be recorded only on the bottom edge of the back of the ballot.

12.4.18. The replacement ballot shall be delivered by the Runner to the Ballot Extraction Station to be included in a batch for scanning.

Alternative Voting Procedures

- 12.4.19. The defective ballot is placed in a “Defective Ballots” or “Replacement Ballots” envelope.
- 12.4.20. If a ballot is rejected by the Vote Tabulator because it is not a Township of Puslinch ballot, the ballot shall not be tabulated and shall be placed in the envelope marked “Rejected ballots”.
- 12.4.21. The Runner shall regularly collect the empty secrecy envelopes and place them into a designated box.
- 12.4.22. The Deputy Returning Officer will complete a final statement in duplicate recording the number of:
- (a) ballots received from the Clerk,
 - (b) ballots counted by the Vote Tabulator,
 - (c) cancelled ballots,
 - (d) declined ballots,
 - (e) defective-rejected ballots, and,
 - (f) unused ballots.
- 12.4.23. The Deputy Returning Officer or designate will place the original copy of the final statement in the appropriate envelope.
- 12.4.24. The Deputy Returning Officer or designate will place the duplicate copy of the final statement, the Voters’ List and the certificate and receipt of ballots, in the appropriate envelope and seal the envelope;
- 12.4.25. All scanned ballot electronically tabulated will be uploaded to the results page, and validated by the Municipal Clerk or designate. As soon as possible after 8:00 p.m., on October 26, 2026. The unofficial results will be posted to the Township’s website.
- 12.4.26. Once the results have been certified by the Municipal Clerk, or designate, they will become the official results.
- 12.4.27. In the case of a defective tabulator or an error message on the tabulator, the Clerk or designate shall follow the instructions within the Operator Manual, provided by the service provider.
- 12.5. Procedure for Closing of a Vote Tabulator on Voting Day**
- 12.5.1. The Clerk or designate will close the tabulator by following the Operator Manual for the tabulators provided by the Township’s service provider.

Alternative Voting Procedures

- 12.5.2. Following the end of the count, the Clerk or designate will secure the Vote Tabulator against receiving any more ballots using the security key with the sensor. The close option will be selected, generating instructions for the Deputy Returning Officer.
 - 12.5.3. The Deputy Returning Officer will print two copies of the results tape from the Vote Tabulator indicating the votes given for each candidate, and if applicable, the votes given for and against any by-law or question.
 - 12.5.4. The Deputy Returning Officer will remove the two copies of the results tape from the Vote Tabulator and sign the certificate portion of the two copies along with any candidates or scrutineers who are present and wish to sign.
 - 12.5.5. The Deputy Returning Officer will place the first copy of the results tape that includes the zero total printout, any interrupt messages and votes in the statement envelope provided. The Deputy Returning Officer will post the second copy of the results tape in the Ballot Counting Centre for any candidates or scrutineers to view.
 - 12.5.6. The printed results tally from the tabulator(s) will be provided to the clerk to be entered into the election results report template and then placed in an envelope and stored in the Secure Room until scanned to be saved on the Township's Cloud Server.
- 12.6. Failure of a Tabulator at 8:00 P.M. on Voting Day**
- 12.6.1. If, at 8:00 p.m. on Voting Day, the Clerk is of the opinion that it is impractical to obtain the results of the vote from the vote tabulator, he or she may direct that all the votes cast in the election be counted manually as per the provisions of the Act, governing the counting of votes. Or the Clerk may direct that the ballots be counted by a new vote tabulator at the Ballot Counting Centre.
- 12.7. Retention of Election Records**
- 12.7.1. The Clerk shall, at the completion of the count, retain the ballot boxes and election materials in the same manner as provided for in the Act for the keeping of ballots.
 - 12.7.2. The Clerk shall retain and may have access to the pre-audited group of ballots referred to above and other materials used in the programming of the vote tabulators.
 - 12.7.3. The Clerk shall not alter or make changes to the materials referred to above.

Alternative Voting Procedures

13. Notice of Results

13.1. Notice of Results (Section 55 (3))

13.1.1. The unofficial results of each candidate by category of office, as applicable, shall be made available by the Clerk as soon as practical after 8:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2026, Voting Day, posted on the door of the Municipal Office located 7404 Wellington Road 34 and the Clerk shall post the same Unofficial Results on the municipality's website at www.puslinch.ca/2026election.

13.1.2. The Clerk shall send each school board's election results to the respective Clerk handling the school board election as soon as possible after the close of voting on Voting Day.

13.2. Declaration (Section 55(4))

13.2.1. As soon as possible after Voting Day, the Clerk shall declare the Official Results using the "Declaration of Election Results" and post the results at the Municipal Office and on the municipal website.

13.2.2. Separately, the Clerk responsible for school board elections shall provide the respective school board results to each Clerk using the "Declaration of Election Results."

13.3. Information to be made available (Section 55 (4.1))

13.3.1. As soon as possible after Voting Day, the clerk shall make the following information available at no charge for viewing by the public on a website or in another electronic format:

- (a) The number of votes for each candidate.
- (b) The number of declined and rejected ballots.
- (c) The number of votes for the affirmative or negative on a by-law or question.

14. Recount

14.1. In the event of a tied vote for two or more candidates, votes on a by-law for the affirmative and negative are equal or the votes for two or more answers to a question are equal, the Clerk shall hold a recount.

14.2. The recount shall be held within 15 days after the Clerk's declaration of the results of the election.

Alternative Voting Procedures

- 14.3. In accordance with Section 60 of the Act, if a recount of votes is held, the votes shall be counted in the same manner with the same vote tabulators that were used on Voting Day.
- 14.4. All vote tabulators to be used in the recount shall be the same tabulators used in the regular election.
- 14.5. The Clerk shall attend the recount and bring the ballot boxes, vote tabulators, statement envelopes and all documents that, in the opinion of the City Clerk, are relevant to the recount.
- 14.6. The procedure at the recount shall be as follows:
 - (a) A zero count report will be generated to ensure that no votes are recorded for any candidate.
 - (b) After each tabulator has completed the processing of ballots, a results tally report will be generated.
 - (c) Statistics on the results tally report relating to offices that are not subject to the recount, will be severed by an election official to ensure that the recount is in compliance with the direction of the resolution or order regarding the recount.
 - (d) To obtain the final election results, the Clerk or designate will use the tabulator counts to produce the election report.
- 14.7. The Clerk or designated election officials will seal and secure the tabulators.
- 14.8. The Clerk or designated election officials will process ballots and tabulate the results as follows:
 - (a) Ballot boxes will be opened by breaking the seals one box at a time for each vote tabulator in use. Subsequent ballot boxes will be opened in the same manner only after the preceding ballots have been processed and the ballots returned to and sealed inside their original ballot transfer box.
 - (b) Ballots will be inserted into the vote tabulators face down. Candidates and other observers present during the audit will not be permitted to examine ballots as they are processed through the vote tabulators, and will not be permitted to dispute the validity of any ballot or how the votes on any ballot are counted by the tabulators.
 - (c) In the event of that a ballot is torn or otherwise not accepted by a vote tabulator, where there are marks on the ballot in the designated voting space(s) the following procedure will be followed:
 - i) the ballot will be marked "spoiled/replaced";

Alternative Voting Procedures

- ii) replacement ballot will be prepared in full view of any candidates or scrutineers present by marking a new ballot with the same marks made on the original ballot, and the replacement ballot shall be clearly labeled “replacement” and given a serial number which shall also be recorded on the spoiled ballot;
- iii) a replacement ballot will be substituted for the spoiled ballot and fed into the vote tabulator; and,
- iv) the spoiled ballot will be placed in the appropriate envelope.

14.9. At the conclusion of the recount, the Clerk will announce the results of the recount and provide a copy of the final recount report to each candidate for the office of the position that was recounted.

14.10. A recount shall not be conducted in any other manner or using any other procedure unless otherwise ordered and specified by a judge.

15. Candidates Financial Filing

15.1. Candidates are responsible for all financial aspects of their own election campaign. The provisions relative to the financial responsibilities are found under Sections 88.8 to 88.32.

15.2. A candidate shall file with the Clerk a financial statement in accordance with the legislation reflecting the candidate’s election campaign finances.

15.3. Financial statements are still required from candidates who have withdrawn their nomination.

15.4. In accordance with Section 88.25 of the Act, a candidate shall file with the Clerk with whom the nomination was filed a financial statement and auditor’s report, each in the prescribed form, reflecting the candidate’s election campaign finances on or before 2 p.m. on December 31 in the year of the election.

16. Compliance Audit Committee

16.1. Every municipality is required to appoint a Compliance Audit Committee. The purpose of this Committee is to receive and review any applications that may be received by an eligible elector who believes that a Candidate has contravened the Act relating to campaign finances.

Alternative Voting Procedures

- 16.2. Candidates should familiarize themselves with the campaign finance requirements and penalty provisions under the Act for themselves or any contributor to their campaign.
- 16.3. The Township of Puslinch has partnered with the County of Wellington and its member municipalities to establish one, joint Compliance Audit Committee to act on behalf of each of the municipalities.

17. Election Records

17.1. Public Records Section (Section 88(5), (10), (11))

17.1.1. Despite anything in the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), documents and materials filed with or prepared by the Clerk or any other election official under the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 are public records, and until their destruction, may be inspected by any person at the Clerk's Office at a time when the office is open.

17.1.2. Restrictions

(a) No person shall use information obtained from public records described above, except for election purposes.

17.1.3. Access to Elector's List

- (a) The Electors' List shall not be posted in a public place and can be used only for election purposes.
- (b) Due to MFIPPA, details about another person, other than the person an Election Official is speaking with, should not be provided, including whether or not the individual is on the Electors' List.

17.2. Candidate's Election Records

17.2.1. Use of online, electronic and paper versions of the Electors' List, Interim List of Changes to the Electors' List, Elector Participation Status reports and all other information containing personal elector information shall be protected by the Candidate and shall not be used for any purpose other than the 2026 Municipal Election. All Elector information obtained by the Candidate during the 2026 Municipal Election shall be destroyed by the Candidate after the election, either by returning same to the Clerk for destruction with other election material or by deleting it completely from the candidate's computer hardware. If records are shared by the candidates with others (campaign workers) an oath administered by the Candidate, similar to the one taken by the Candidate shall be administered and all shared records shall also be protected and destroyed.

Alternative Voting Procedures

17.3. **Municipal Election Records (Section 88)**

17.3.1. **Destruction of Records**

- (a) After 120 days from declaring the results of the election under Section 55, the Clerk shall destroy the ballots in the presence of two witnesses. The Clerk may also destroy any other documents and materials related to the election except those listed below under the Retention of Records section of the manual.

17.3.2. **Retention of Records**

- (a) The ballots and any other documents or materials shall not be destroyed if:
- i) a court orders that they be retained; or
 - ii) a recount has been commenced and not finally disposed of.
- (b) In addition, documents filed under Sections 88.25 (candidates' financial statements, etc.), 88.29 (financial statements, etc. of registered third parties) and 88.32 (return of surplus for subsequent expenses) until the members of the council or local board elected at the next regular election have taken office.

18. **Accessibility**

18.1. **Electors and Candidates with Disabilities (Section 12.1 (1))**

- 18.1.1. The Clerk shall have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities.

18.2. **Plan re Barriers (Section 12.1 (2))**

- 18.2.1. The Clerk shall prepare a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the plan available to the public before Voting Day in a regular election.

18.3. **Location – Accessibility (Section 45 (2))**

- 18.3.1. In establishing the locations of Ballot Return Stations, the Clerk shall ensure that each Ballot Return Station is accessible to electors with disabilities.

18.4. **Attendance on Electors with Disabilities (Section 45 (9))**

- 18.4.1. To allow an elector with a disability to vote, an Election Official shall attend on the elector anywhere within the area designated for voting.

Alternative Voting Procedures

18.5. **Electors Needing Assistance (Section 52 (1), (4))**

- 18.5.1. The Election Official may permit an elector who needs assistance in voting to have such assistance as the Election Official considers necessary.

18.6. **Report (Section 12.1 (3))**

- 18.6.1. Within 90 days after Voting Day in a regular election but no later than Friday, January 22, 2027, the Clerk shall submit a report to council about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that effect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the report available to the public.

18.7. **Other Resources**

- 18.7.1. AMCTO Municipal Election Manual 2026
- 18.7.2. Ontario Candidate's Guide to Accessible Elections
- 18.7.3. Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, O. Reg 191/11
- 18.7.4. Municipally approved Accessibility Policies and Procedures

19. **Emergencies**

19.1. **Emergencies (Section 53)**

- 19.1.1. The Clerk may declare an emergency if he/she is of the opinion that circumstances have arisen that are likely to prevent the election being conducted in accordance with this Act.
- 19.1.2. On declaring an emergency, the Clerk shall make such arrangements as he/she considers advisable for the conduct of the election.
- 19.1.3. The arrangements made by the Clerk, if they are consistent with the principles of this Act, prevail over anything in this Act and the regulations made under it.
- 19.1.4. The emergency continues until the Clerk declares that it has ended.
- 19.1.5. If made in good faith, the Clerk's declaration of emergency and arrangements shall not be reviewed or set aside on account of unreasonableness or supposed unreasonableness.
- 19.1.6. It shall be the policy that in the event of an emergency, as determined by the Clerk, that the Clerk shall to the best of their ability provide notice of such emergency. All information pertaining to the emergency shall be posted at the Township Municipal Office,

Alternative Voting Procedures

communicated posted to the Township website and social media accounts and to any local radio stations, if possible.

- 19.1.7. If required, the Clerk may consider alternate options for the following:
- (a) reporting results
 - (b) notification of electors
 - (c) Election Officials
 - (d) voting period [ex. delay of Voting Day, extension of voting hours or day(s)]
 - (e) Alternate Ballot Return Station
 - (f) Alternative Count Location
 - (g) Any other alternate facility required.

20. Corrupt Practices

20.1. No person shall, directly or indirectly:

- 20.1.1. offer, give, lend, or promise or agree to give or lend any valuable consideration, in connection with the exercise or the non-exercise of an electors vote;
- 20.1.2. advance, pay or caused to be paid money intending that it be used to commit an offence referred to in the bullet above, or knowing that it will be used to repay money used in that way;
- 20.1.3. give, procure or promise or agree to procure an office or employment in connection with the exercise or non-exercise of an elector's vote;
- 20.1.4. apply for, accept or agree to accept any valuable consideration or office or employment in connection with the exercise or non-exercise of elector's vote;
- 20.1.5. give, procure or promise or agree to procure an office or employment to induce a person to become a candidate, refrain from becoming a candidate or withdraw his or her candidacy;
- 20.1.6. offer, give, lend, or promise or agree to give or lend any valuable consideration in order to induce a person to become a candidate, refrain from becoming a candidate or withdraw his or her candidacy.

20.2. Reporting Corrupt Practices

- 20.2.1. All valid complaints or knowledge of an offence shall be reported immediately to the Police for investigation of corrupt practices.
- 20.2.2. In addition, although many provisions of the Act also deal with voting places, ballots and ballot boxes, etc. the same must be used interchangeably with the alternative forms of voting since the principles of the Act must be maintained and is therefore enforceable and subject to penalties.

20.2.3. As such, the Clerk has agreed to the following:

Alternative Voting Procedures

- (a) that all complaints about actions which may contravene the provisions of the Act, either verbally or written, will be reviewed by the Clerk and, if viewed by the Clerk to be valid and not frivolous, will be reported to the Police.
- (b) the most senior officer of the Police will be advised that all such valid complaints will be turned over to his/her office for further investigation.

20.3. **Offences (Sections 89, 90)**

20.3.1. A person is guilty of an offence if he or she:

- (a) votes without being entitled to do so;
- (b) votes more times than this Act allows;
- (c) votes in a Voting Place in which he or she is not entitled to vote;
- (d) induces or procures a person to vote when that person is not entitled to do so;
- (e) before or during an election, publishes a false statement of a candidate's withdrawal;
- (f) furnishes false or misleading information to a person whom this Act authorizes to obtain information;
- (g) without authority, supplies a ballot to anyone;
- (h) delivers to the DRO to be placed in a ballot box a paper other than the ballot the DRO gave him/her;
- (i) at an election, takes, opens or otherwise deals with a ballot, ballot box, or a book or package of ballots without having authority to do so;
- (j) no person(s) shall solicit a Voting kit / Ballot from an eligible elector;
- (k) a person who contravenes any provision of the Act or a regulation under the Act or a by-law passed by a municipality under the Act;
- (l) attempts to do something described above.

20.3.2. The following are guilty of an offence that constitutes a corrupt practice:

- (a) A Deputy Returning Officer or other Election Official who knowingly miscounts the votes or knowingly prepares a false statement of the votes;
- (b) A Deputy Returning Officer who knowingly places in a ballot box a paper that purports to be, is not, a ballot capable of being used as such at an election;
- (c) A Clerk or other Election Official who willfully fails to perform a duty imposed by the Act.

20.4. **Penalties**

20.4.1. **Elector (Section 90 (2))**

- (a) An offence described above under Corrupt Practices [Section 90 (3)] constitutes a corrupt practice and a person who commits it is,

Alternative Voting Procedures

on conviction, disqualified from voting at an election until the next regular election has taken place after the election to which the offence relates, in addition to being liable to any other penalty provided for in the Act.

20.4.2. **Candidate (Section 91 (1))**

(a) If a person is convicted of a corrupt practice under the Act, or of an offence under the Criminal Code (Canada) in connection with an act or omission that relates to an election to which the Act applies, then, in addition to any other penalty provided for in the Act:

- i) any office to which the person was elected is forfeited and becomes vacant; and
- ii) the person is ineligible to be nominated for or elected or appoint to, any office until the next two regular elections have taken place after the election to which the offence relates.

(b) However, if the presiding judge finds that the person committed the corrupt practice or offence under the Criminal Code (Canada) without any intent of causing or contributing to a false outcome of the election, clause b) does not apply.

20.4.3. **Individual (Section 94 (1))**

(a) An individual who is convicted of an offence is liable to the following penalties in addition to any other penalty provided for:

- i) for any offence, a fine not more than \$25,000;
- ii) for any offence other than a corrupt practice, the penalties described in Subsection 88.23 (2) – Effect of Default by Candidate and 88.27 (1) – Effect of Default by Registered Third Party.
- iii) for an offence under Section 90 (Corrupt Practices: Certain Offences Committed Knowingly), imprisonment for a term of not more than 6 (six) months;
- iv) for any offence that the presiding judge finds that the individual committed knowingly, imprisonment for a term of not more than 6 (six) months.

20.4.4. **Trade Unions (Section 94 (2))**

(a) A corporation or trade union that is convicted of an offence is liable to a fine of not more than \$50,000 in addition to any other penalty provided for.



Alternative Voting Procedures

20.5. **Mail Tampering – Criminal Offence and Prosecution**

- 20.5.1. Notification of the voting process and how electors can vote will be provided in the Elector Information Letter, Voting kit, Elector Notification Card to electors by first class mail.
- 20.5.2. The Criminal Code of Canada states that tampering with the mail of an individual is a criminal offence and a person(s) found guilty is liable to a term of imprisonment not exceeding ten (10) years.
- 20.5.3. As such and in order to ensure the integrity and confidence of the voting process for all electors and the candidates, the Clerk has agreed that all complaints about actions which may contravene the provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada with respect to mail tampering, either verbally or written will be reported to the Police.