

Elections

Effective Date: March 26, 2025

Approved by: NSPHA Interim CEO



1. Purpose

The Elections Policy provides guidance to staff, tenants and stakeholders on elections activities on public housing property, in accordance with Nova Scotia's and Canada's *Elections Acts* and any other applicable legislation, by-laws or NSPHA policies.

2. Scope

The Elections Policy applies to:

- Placement of election signs on public housing properties during an election
- Campaigning activities by a political candidate or their representatives during an election in public housing buildings
- Polling stations in public housing buildings

3. Policy

A. The Election Period

The Elections Policy applies during an election period, defined as:

- i. For municipal elections, the election period includes the four weeks immediately preceding ordinary polling day.
- ii. For provincial and federal elections, the election period commences the day that the election writ is issued and ends on voting day.
- iii. For by-elections, the election period commences when the by-election is called and ends on voting day.

B. Election Signs

- i. Tenants are permitted to display election signs within their leased space, including in the windows of their unit, so long as no changes

or alterations are made to the unit without prior written approval from NSPHA.

- ii. Election signs are not permitted in common areas, including shared lawns / green spaces, common rooms, laundry rooms, hallways, fences, light poles or other property or structures outside of the tenant's leased space.
- iii. Signs should be placed safely and securely. No signs should impede emergency access or pose a hazard to public safety. Any sign that is causing a safety concern must be removed immediately by the tenant.
- iv. No signs should interfere with access to common spaces or other units. Any sign that is interfering with the ability of other tenants or NSPHA staff to access or occupy the property must be removed immediately by the tenant.
- v. All signs must comply with municipal bylaws, as applicable.

C. Campaigning

- i. Candidates and their representatives are entitled to campaign in public housing buildings during the election period. NSPHA will allow election officials, candidates and their representatives reasonable access to public housing buildings during the election period.
- ii. Campaigning refers to any activity undertaken by or for a candidate, political party or ballot question, meant to gain support during the election period.
- iii. To ensure building security, election officials, candidates and their representatives must provide government-issued identification and display that identification to gain access to public housing buildings.

D. Polling Stations

- i. During an election period, elections officials may request to locate polling stations in public housing buildings. Such requests should be directed to the District Office and must be approved by the District Director.
- ii. Polling stations will only be permitted in a public housing building if:
 - a. The polling station is in a common room that allows direct access for voters to enter and exit without passing through hallways of the residence or gaining access to any private spaces.
 - b. The polling station does not pose a risk to the safety or security of NSPHA tenants or staff.
 - c. Elections officials will provide security for the polling station.
 - d. Adequate parking is available.

E. Enforcement and Violations

- i. NSPHA will monitor elections activities, including the placement of signs, to ensure compliance with this policy.
- ii. NSPHA will contact the candidate to remove signs from common or prohibited areas, or NSPHA staff may remove signs from common or prohibited areas.
- iii. Any dispute over sign placement or any other elections activities will be resolved with the Property Manager or Client Service Supervisor, with the goal of maintaining respect for tenants' rights while ensuring community safety.

4. Policy History

4.1 Effective Date

This policy came into effect on March 26, 2025.