
Good Government For Ontarians

October 27, 2009

The Good Government Act, 2009, introduced today, would, if passed, improve clarity, increase transparency and enhance accountability. Proposed legislative initiatives include amendments to the Juries Act, the Public Inquiries Act and the Municipal Elections Act.

Juries Act

Building on recommendations made this fall by the Information and Privacy Commissioner, Ontario is moving forward with proposed amendments to the Juries Act that would create a clear and transparent process for screening prospective jurors who are ineligible because of a prior criminal conviction. Proposed amendments would:

- Authorize criminal record checks to be conducted centrally through the Provincial Jury Centre
- Ensure juror eligibility is checked independently from court locations and that it is done according to strict confidentiality requirements
- Stipulate that the names of ineligible jurors would be replaced before lists were sent to court locations, so that information is never provided directly to any of the participants in court proceedings.

Public Inquiries Act

The new Public Inquires Act would, if passed, provide the government and commissioners with better tools to determine the scope and manage the cost and length of public inquiries.

Proposed changes would:

- Authorize a range of public inquiries with specific powers, procedures, rights and protections tailored to the specific circumstances
- Provide rules and requirements for completion dates
- Require future commissions to rely, where appropriate, on factual sources that promote efficiency, such as representative witnesses, agreed statements of facts, and existing records and reports
- Clarify the protections regarding other uses of witness testimony and provide more robust protections regarding employment reprisals.

Municipal Elections Act

Proposed amendments to the Municipal Elections Act would, if passed, strengthen the integrity of local elections and would:

- Move the election date forward to the fourth Monday of October, beginning October 25, 2010
- Create a new contribution limit of \$5,000 per contributor in each jurisdiction, in addition to the existing limit of \$750 per candidate
- Clarify campaign spending limits
- Eliminate the carrying forward of surplus campaign funds by candidates from one election to the next (current surpluses will be maintained for the next election)
- Improve the accuracy of voters' lists
- Require voters to provide proof of identity and residence
- Strengthen compliance and enforcement measures through firm deadlines for submitting financial statements and harmonized penalties.

Along with these proposed changes, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing will continue to review the municipal elections process and the Municipal Elections Act after every municipal election.

[Read more about proposed changes to the Municipal Elections Act.](#)

[Read more about Ontario's Good Government Act, 2009.](#)

Erin Moroz, Minister's Office, 416-326-1785
Brendan Crawley, Communications Branch, 416-326-2210

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