

Fundraising Rules Change in Ontario

On Thursday, December 2, Ontario MPPs voted unanimously to pass the Elections Finances Law Amendment Act 2016. The Act creates new rules about 1) who can make contributions 2) how much can be contributed and 3) places restrictions on attendance at fundraisers for politicians and their staff.

The key changes as outlined by the provincial government announcement on Thursday include:

- Banning MPPs, candidates, party leaders, nomination contestants, leadership contestants and many political staff from attending political fundraising events.
- Banning corporations, unions and other groups not affiliated with political parties from making political donations,
- Reducing the total amount individuals can donate by almost 90 per cent -- from \$33,250 to a maximum of \$3,600 in an election year.

On Thursday, the Toronto Star also highlighted the new per vote and riding subsidy for parties. Under the changes, registered constituency associations for parties that received at least 2 per cent of the vote in the most recent election would each divide \$25,000 per year based on the ballots their candidates received.

This is in addition to the yearly \$2.71-per-vote-subsidy the major parties will receive beginning next month.

The rules will come into effect as of January 1, 2017.