COPE NOMINATION PROCEDURES FOR THE 2026 ELECTION

1. PURPOSE OF THE NOMINATION PROCESS

1.1 The COPE nomination process exists to empower Voting Members to make a meaningful and informed choice between a selection of highly competent candidates who can credibly, ethically, and collectively advance a political project aimed at transforming the City of Vancouver in the interests of the working class, tenants, students, families, and communities.

1.2 The nomination process is intended to:
a) advance the political project and values of COPE, as reflected in the COPE Candidate Values Statement;
b) produce slates of candidates capable of governing and campaigning as a team;
c) give members a genuine and informed choice between candidates;
d) ensure candidates are vetted, prepared, and electorally viable;
e) integrate all prospective candidates and their supporters into a unified team and campaign organization to advance the shared project of COPE.

2. AUTHORITY AND GOVERNANCE

2.1 The Election Planning Committee (“EPC”) is the primary body responsible for administering and stewarding the nomination process.

2.2 The EPC may delegate nomination race authorities to subcommittees of the EPC.

2.3 The Campaign Committee assumes authority over the 2026 campaign following the close of the nomination process.

2.4 The Ombudsteam of the Society serves as the procedural appeal body for nomination-related decisions, as provided in this Guide.

2.5 The EPC and/or Campaign Committee may issue rulings on emergent nomination matters within Appendix I (EPC Rulings), provided such rulings do not conflict with the COPE Constitution and bylaws, or the Local Elections Financing Act (LECFA.)

2.6 Candidates and their teams must send all questions, party correspondence, and request for required EPC rulings to the EPC and/or Campaign committee at *candidates@votecope.ca*

2.7 Candidates and their teams can inquire about making a complaint to the COPE Ombudsteam at *ombudsteam@copevancouver.ca*

2.8 The COPE EPC shall maintain an Appendix which will include additional binding clauses that are determined by the COPE EPC in response to emergent matters and candidate questions.

2.9 Nomination candidates are entitled to request clarification or rulings from the EPC on an emergent matter and get a response or ruling within 7 calendar days.

3. ELIGIBILITY, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND DEADLINES

3.1 All candidates must meet the eligibility requirements set out in PART 8 of the Constitution.

3.2 Nomination Conferences for City Council, School Board, and Park Board shall occur on May 11th at a location designated by the EPC.

3.3 Candidates must submit all required nomination paperwork 21 days prior to the nomination conference to be included on the ballot.

3.4 Candidates must meet fundraising deposit requirements 14 days prior to the nomination conference to be included on the ballot.

3.5 Failure to pass vetting and approval will result in ineligibility to seek nomination.

3.6 Failure to meet application or deposit deadlines results in automatic ineligibility unless a partial waiver is granted pursuant to Clauses 6.6 and/or 6.7.

3.7 Candidates may announce their candidacy for nomination on personal social media any time once they have completed an onboarding interview and received approval to do so from a representative of the EPC via e-mail.

3.8 COPE-side communications on the nomination race, including the nominee portal for members, officially opens, with party-side communications support featuring nominees, on February 8th.

a) Only candidates which have been vetted and approved by the EPC will be featured in COPE communications and get access to their share of nomination campaign resources.

b) Only candidates who meet their deposit deadline 21 days before the nomination meeting will be guaranteed full access to COPE's nomination candidate & communication support.

3.9 Candidates may incur some in-kind campaign expenses after their onboarding interview, including before vetting or fundraising is completed, if approved by a representative of the EPC via e-mail.

3.10 Candidates may freely incur all pre-approved nomination spending from Appendix I with notice to the EPC after being approved in the vetting process, and meeting their deposit requirements.

3.11 Mayoral deadlines, dates,and additional requirements are outlined in an additional set of guidelines, COPE Nomination Procedures for Mayor 2026.

4. VETTING AND APPROVAL

4.1 All candidates are subject to vetting and approval by the EPC. The purpose of vetting is to assess a candidate's fitness to advance the political project of COPE with integrity, accountability, and responsibility.

4.2 Vetting shall include, at minimum:
a) candidate self-disclosure regarding conflicts of interest, ideological hazards, past conduct, and potential reputational risk to COPE;
b) third-party criminal record checks and social media history reports;
c) reference checks and reputational surveys; and
d) a vetting interview with delegates of the EPC.

4.3 Candidates shall be given an opportunity to review and rebut adverse information that is shared or uncovered at their vetting interview.

4.4 Third-party reports are advisory and shall not be determinative on their own.

4.5 Withholding or misrepresenting material information during self-disclosure constitutes grounds for penalty or disqualification.

4.6 Vetting materials shall be accessible to the EPC, the Campaign Committee, and the Candidate Recommendation Advisory Body, except where highly sensitive personal matters may be retained by a designated subcommittee.

4.7 A candidate who is flagged as ineligible to run shall be informed at the earliest opportunity via e-mail, within 24 hours of the decision.

4.8 An incumbent elected candidate is considered vetted.

5. DISQUALIFICATION & PENALTIES

5.1 Candidates may be disqualified or face penalties for the following reasons:
a) violation of the Local Campaign Election Financing Act (LECFA) or Elections BC guidelines, or other laws that can create ethical or legal liability for COPE, incIluding but not limited to BC PIPA;
b) breach of the COPE Code of Conduct for Candidates, the COPE Code of Conduct, or the COPE Privacy Policy;

c) uncovered or disclosed past conduct that could reasonably cause reputational harm to COPE or other COPE candidates;
d) current or past conduct involving the abuse of power, exploitation of others, serious dishonesty, financial misconduct, or breaches of trust;
e) material values mismatches with COPE that impair the ability to campaign collectively; or
f) violations of nomination rules or candidate protocols

5.2 Penalties to nomination candidates for violations of nomination rules or the nominee code of conduct could include delays, losing access to nomination support for candidates, or being denied access to COPE candidate events on a temporary basis.

5.3 Disqualification or penalties during the nomination race must be ratified by the Election Planning Committee. Disqualifications after the nomination race is concluded must be ratified by the Campaign Committee.

5.4 Candidates who are disqualified or who face penalties will be informed by an e-mail memo from the Election Planning Committee within 24 hours of the decision.

5.5 Candidates may appeal a disqualification as a code of conduct complaint to the COPE Ombudsteam on procedural grounds if they believe the nomination guidelines were not applied fairly by the EPC. Upon appeal, all information regarding the candidate's vetting and history will be shared with the Ombudsteam for review.

a) The Ombudsteam will rule on whether the nomination procedures were followed correctly or whether unfair bias occurred.

b) Members of the Election Planning Committee may face internal consequences, including but not limited to exclusion from future vetting processes, if improper conduct occurs.

6. NOMINATION DEPOSITS AND FUNDRAISING

6.1 Candidates are required to fundraise nomination deposits as follows, from at least 20 individual donors:
a) Council: $3,000
b) School Board: $2,000
v) Park Board: $2,000

6.2 Deposits are non-refundable and recover the costs of financing a robust nomination race, party communications, vetting, administration, and election preparation.

6.3 Once the following is fundraised toward a required deposit, vetting may commence:
a) Council: $500
b) School Board: $500
c) Park Board: $500

6.4 Candidates may meet nomination deposit fundraising targets for a candidacy by fundraising for either or both Municipal and School Board campaigns.

6.5 Candidates who exceed the required deposit prior to nomination may receive a commendation from the EPC on their candidate profile.

6.6 The EPC may grant partial deposit waivers in cases of demonstrated personal hardship.

6.7 The EPC may fundraise toward candidate equity funds to provide partial deposit waivers to equity-seeking candidates, and must ensure deposit funding support for Indigenous candidates.

6.8 Political contributions received from developers, or people whose political activity or abuse of power could cause reputational harm to COPE, will be refunded to the donor and not counted towards the nomination deposit.

6.9 Nomination candidates and their representatives are responsible to follow all relevant campaign finance laws and regulations for municipal elections in BC, and must seek feedback from the EPC in advance wherever rules are unclear or not understood.

a) COPE must only accept contributions from individuals, not groups.

b) The total contributions to all nomination candidates combined, and COPE, must not exceed the yearly limits set by Elections BC.

c) An individual who donates volunteer services which align with their vocation or employment is making an in-kind contribution.

6.10 Candidates must collect donations in accordance with the COPE Nomination Race Finance Guide.

a) Online contributions must be primarily directed to candidate nomination fundraising pages on the COPE website.

b) In-person and in-kind contributions must be recorded nomination contribution records on approved COPE forms.

c) Candidates must not accept in-kind contributions which are not approved within a spending limit set by the EPC in Appendix I.

6.11 In-kind contributions towards nomination campaigns do not count towards the fundraising deposit, but they do count towards considerations of candidate fundraising strength shared with the Candidate Recommendation Advisory Body.

6.12 Candidates are among the most important fundraisers on campaigns, and all COPE candidates are expected to continue contributing to fundraising efforts through the nomination race and beyond.

7. COPE CANDIDATE RECOMMENDATION ADVISORY BODY

7.1 The EPC shall appoint a Candidate Recommendation Advisory Body consisting of five (5) to fifteen (15) individuals, including current or former COPE executive members, organizers, and campaign staff.

7.2 The delegated purpose of the Advisory Body is to assess candidates, surface strengths and concerns, and provide written, non-binding recommendations for the benefit of the membership.

7.3 The Advisory Body shall assess candidates based on:
a) alignment with COPE values;
b) ability to work collaboratively;
c) job readiness;
d) electability;
e) other strategic priorities directed by the COPE EPC.

7.4 Recommendations and candidate analysis shall be published to members via the COPE candidate portal and nomination materials.

7.5 The Advisory Body may recommend a candidate seek a nomination on a specific board, seek candidacy in an upcoming election, or seek a role elsewhere in the party.

7.6 The composition and procedures of the Candidate Recommendation Advisory Body shall be stored in a Terms of Reference approved by the Election Planning Committee which is made available to candidates.

8. CANDIDATE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 Candidates are participants in a collective political project and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that strengthens COPE and respects fellow candidates, members, and volunteers.

8.2 Candidates must comply with this Guide, the Constitution and By-Laws, the COPE Nominee Code of Conduct, the COPE Privacy Policy, and all applicable election law.

8.3 Candidates are reasonably responsible for the conduct of their designates, core supporters, and volunteers insofar as it relates to regulated aspects of the nomination process.

8.4 Nomination campaigns are COPE election communications.

a) External-facing nomination communications are stewarded by the EPC.
b) Internal-facing communications to members to solicit support are stewarded by individual nomination candidates and their teams.
c) External facing personal communications on social media or elsewhere that relate to held political opinions, demonstrations of values, and so on, are stewarded by the individual nomination candidate.
d) All nomination candidate communications, internal or personal, are subject to the COPE Nominee Code of Conduct.

8.5 Candidates seek nomination as individuals. Nomination slates and factional organizing by hcandidates and their teams that undermine collective unity are prohibited.

8.6 Informal peer collaboration and public positive statements about other candidates are permitted, but candidate co-endorsements are prohibited unless authorized by the EPC under certain conditions at a future date in the Appendix.

8.7 Outside endorsements from third parties are permitted during the nomination phase and may be reflected on nominee profiles.

8.8 Candidates may not incur nomination expenses unless approved as part of an equitable strategy by an EPC ruling. All nomination-related expenditures are regulated and must comply with Elections BC, including in-kind expenses.

8.9 COPE branding such as official fonts, colors, and design elements may only be used in EPC-approved materials.

8.10 Candidates may appoint a representative or campaign manager who will be included in EPC communications with the candidate and nomination race updates.

8.11 Approved candidacies in good standing must be shared with the membership through formal COPE channels (e-mail list and nominations portal) by the EPC.

8.12 Nomination candidates may use personal social media to promote themselves and their values, provided that:
a) they do not use COPE branding without authorization or speak on behalf of COPE;
b) they do not incur campaign expenses or run paid advertising;
c) their conduct complies with the COPE Nominee Code of Conduct and COPE Privacy Policy.

8.13 Nomination candidates may mobilize volunteers and contact supporters through personal (non-party) contact lists as they see fit, provided that:
a) they comply with relevant privacy law;
b) they do not incur election expenses unless authorized by a ruling of the EPC which approves funds on an equitable basis.

8.14 Any expenditure related to a nomination campaign constitutes a regulated nomination expense and all nomination candidates must receive EPC approval and ruling before incurring them.

8.15 The EPC will maintain and update a table in Appendix I of nomination campaign spending limits, including in-kind limits, and allowable nomination expenses by category.

8.16 Candidates are asked to participate in the affairs of COPE during the nomination process. Opportunities for participation include:

a) Mobilizations
b) Issues Meetings
c) Street Outreach and Canvassing
d) Phone Banking

e) Fundraiser Events
f) Participation in Committees
g) Other identified party priorities.

8.17 Details on available participation opportunities must be included in Appendix I, and offered to candidates on a basis which is equitable rather than preferential.

8.19 Candidates who participate actively in COPE prior to the nomination vote may receive a commendation from the EPC on their candidate profile.

9. COMMUNICATIONS, ACCESS TO MEMBERSHIP, AND EVENTS

9.1 For privacy and logistical reasons in a field with many candidates, nomination candidates will not receive independent access to the full COPE membership list.

9.2 Candidates will be provided with EPC-managed means to contact individuals who donate to them, sign up as members in support of them, or pledge support through their nomination page via e-mail.

9.3 The frequency of communications is regulated by the EPC to prevent excessive use of party lists.

9.4 Candidates may request access to phone numbers of non-member supporters of their campaign, for the purpose of signing them up as COPE members and donors.

9.5 Candidates may host low-cost meetings funded by small in-kind contributions such as organizing meetings, pub nights, or house meetings, provided they are reported and disclosed to the EPC, and within the in-kind limits approved by the EPC in Appendix I.

9.9 Nomination Candidates may not hold personal rallies or fundraisers advertised to the public, or incur significant expenses during the nomination period unless on terms that are approved equitably to all candidates by a ruling of the EPC in Appendix I.

9.10 Candidates may be given access to the names of their sign-ups, donors and supporters, and fundraising totals, upon request.

10. BALLOTING AND VOTE COUNTING

10.1 Nomination ballots are non-ranked ballots.

~~10.2 Each Voting Member shall cast a ballot containing an equal number of votes as there are available nomination slots. Plumping is prohibited.~~ *(Members overrode this provision at the January 31st Special General meeting, rejecting a by-law amendment to enable it.)*

10.3 Ballots with more ~~or fewer~~ votes than available slots shall be counted as spoiled.

10.4 A candidate must secure at least fifty percent (50%) of valid ballots cast to secure a nomination slot.

10.5 Where fewer candidates meet the threshold than available slots, additional voting rounds shall be conducted.

10.6 Between rounds, candidates may withdraw and may endorse other remaining candidates when they do so.

10.7 Where a tie occurs for the final slot between candidates meeting the threshold, a runoff election shall be conducted.

10.8 Ballots shall be counted by Executive-appointed tellers with candidate-appointed observers present.

10.9 Balloting shall be conducted in accordance with the equity provisions of the COPE Constitution and By-Laws.

11. DATA ACCESS AND PRIVACY

11.1 All Nomination Candidates and their volunteers must agree to the COPE Privacy Policy before accessing member data.

11.2 Candidates shall not access, export, retain, or reuse COPE data beyond authorized purposes.

11.3 Data misuse constitutes a serious violation and may result in sanctions including disqualification from the nomination race or expulsion from COPE.

11.4 Candidates may be required to attest to the integrity of data used in their campaign.

12. MEMBER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

12.1 Voting Members in good standing may attend Nominating Conferences, hear candidate presentations, access candidate information, and vote by secret ballot.

12.2 Members are entitled to fair, transparent, and orderly nomination procedures.

12.3 Members must conduct themselves respectfully and shall not harass candidates, spread misinformation, or interfere with administration.

12.4 Members may support candidates through endorsements, volunteering, and advocacy, in compliance with this Guide.

12.5 Members who are not seeking nomination or an appointed representative of a candidate may freely endorse candidates and promote those endorsements on social media, provided no election expenses are incurred.

12.6 Members may not produce 3rd party promotional materials for candidates or slates that incur expenses, including in-kind expenses.

12.7 Members who violate the Code of Conduct or this Guide may face disciplinary action within COPE.

13. POST-NOMINATION OBLIGATIONS

13.1 Candidates who do not receive the nomination are expected to support the collective campaign and respect the results of the race.

13.2 Nominated candidates are expected to participate fully in shared messaging, fundraising, organizing, and campaigning.

13.3 Nominated candidates who seriously violate the Code of Conduct after nomination, or threaten to bring COPE into disrepute, may be removed from the ballot and campaign by the Campaign Committee.

14. CANDIDATE COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT

14.1 COPE is a collective political project, and the Party commits to supporting candidates in communicating effectively as part of that collective effort.

14.2 The EPC, Campaign Committee, and party staff will provide guidance to candidates on identifying personal key messages, articulating their political priorities, and situating their candidacy within the broader COPE campaign narrative.

14.3 Candidates will be offered support in the production of a nomination video, including a budget, access to party video support, and guidance on content, tone, and accessibility.

14.4 Candidates will be offered support in drafting a stump speech suitable for nomination events, panels, and public forums.

14.5 Candidates will be offered support in creating branded, EPC-approved social media sharables that align with COPE messaging and visual standards.

15. PARTY EVENTS DURING THE NOMINATION PERIOD

15.1 Nomination candidates and their teams may participate in the planning and execution of COPE party events during the nomination process designed to mobilize supporters and advance the Party’s political project

15.2 COPE Party Events shall have guidelines which limit the scope and format of campaigning allowed at them, but offer all candidates the same opportunities to campaign and participate.

15.3 The EPC retains final authority over event format, access, and standards.

15.4 Guidelines for approved campaigning at party events where campaigning is permitted will be stored below in Appendix I.

16. CANDIDATE MOTIONS AND ORGANIZING

16.1 Candidates are invited to draft and submit motion(s) to the party related to the role they are seeking, articulating priorities, values, or strategic direction. These motions will be shared with the Candidate Advisory Panel, and may be shared with the Political Action Committees that support COPE's elected candidates.

16.2 Candidates are encouraged to participate actively in party organizing as volunteers, including participation in committees, outreach, fundraising, issue campaigns, and volunteer mobilization in COPE.

16.3 Candidate motions and organizing contributions will be reflected on nomination profiles and may inform the assessments and recommendations of the Candidate Recommendation Advisory Body.

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Appendix I - COPE Nomination Procedures

A. EXPENSE PROCEDURES

1. **Basic In-Kind Expenditures**

    1.1. COPE candidates are pre-approved to spend up to $500 in reportable in-kind donations for supplies (clipboards, pens, envelopes, sign-up sheets) and food for volunteers

2. **In-Kind Expenditures Procedure**

    2.1. Candidates who want to incur an in-kind expense for their campaign must request approval from the EPC.

    2.2. Candidates must be informed of what types of in-kind expenses have been approved for other candidates.

2.3. Candidates must be allowed in-kind expenses according to equitable criteria.

3. **Campaign Events Procedures**

3.1. Candidates may apply to the EPC, either individually or with multiple candidates or organizers, to host events under the following categories:

3.1.1. Membership engagement event - engaging COPE membership and supporters and agitating towards action with COPE to elect a socialist city government.

3.1.2. Fundraising and/or membership drive event - which is intended to fundraise for COPE and sign up COPE members.

3.2. The EPC will give approval on an event-by-event basis. Event applications must contain the following information:

3.2.1. Event Name

3.2.2. Event Location and Time(s)

3.2.3. Identified organizers and core volunteers.

3.2.4. Target Attendance

3.2.5. Budget and Projected Revenue

3.2.6. Requests for COPE financial or staff support, merchandise, and so on, if required.

3.3. Only events which meet COPE priorities and are approved by the EPC Events Organizer may go forward.

B. COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURES

4. Social Media Procedures

4.1. Candidates are approved to produce their own social media materials using the COPE nomination design guide. The guidelines are suggestions for the purposes of showing group coherence and professionalism.

4.1.1. Candidates may also use custom fonts, or additional colors in their design materials in communication with Nomination Organizers.

4.2. Nomination communications should not use the color red, or the COPE fonts (Exo 2, Merriweather)

4.3. Candidates may make their own campaign videos and materials, in communication with the COPE Nomination Communications organizer.

4.4. Candidates must not post campaign materials rejected by the EPC or Nomination Comms organizer, and must remove campaign materials at the request of the COPE EPC.

5. **Leaflet/Materials Procedures**

5.1. Nomination candidates may produce simple leaflets for the purposes of events, organizing, and sign-ups.

5.2. Nomination leaflets must contain the COPE authorization line, and be approved by nomination organizers.

5.3. Nomination leaflets must follow the COPE nomination branding guide and be paid for as an in-kind expense.

6. **Media Procedures**

6.1. Nomination candidates may represent themselves as candidates seeking nomination in media appearances, but must clear all scheduled media appearances with the COPE EPC and/or Nomination Comms organizer.

7. **E-mails to COPE members**

7.1. A COPE nomination candidate is entitled to be included in at least 2 COPE e-mails to the whole COPE membership list:
- 7.1.1. An announcement e-mail which includes multiple candidates and their core message.
- 7.1.2. An e-mail which summarizes the candidates in advance of the vote.
- 7.1.3. Other e-mails may be offered on an equitable basis.

7.2. COPE Nomination candidates may send an e-mail to their membership sign up list up to three times, spaced at least 7 days apart:
- 7.2.1. A welcome e-mail.
- 7.2.2. An update e-mail.
- 7.2.3. A closing e-mail, in the days leading up to the vote.

B. ANNOUNCEMENT PROCEDURES

1. **Picking a board**

a. Candidates may declare the roles they are seeking when they announce their campaign (ie. “Seeking COPE Nomination for Parks Board”), or they may opt to not specify, and say they are “Seeking COPE Nomination.”

b. Candidates who declare they are seeking a particular seat must remain committed to that seat after declaring it, and may not hop boards.

c. Candidates who do not declare the role they are seeking when they announce their candidacy must declare their candidacy clearly by the paperwork deadline before the nomination vote.

2. **Advisory Board Recommendations**

a. If the COPE Candidate Advisory Body recommends that a candidate changes what role they are seeking, the candidate may change what board they are seeking at that time. Otherwise a locked in candidate must stay locked in.

3. **Cross-endorsements**

a. A nomination candidate who drops out in advance of the nomination vote in a show of solidarity for the team (ie. “people’s primary”) is entitled to one public endorsement of another candidate remaining in the race in advance of the nomination vote.

b. Candidates may do one-cross endorsement for each board they are not seeking nomination on in their closing e-mail to their personal list, boosting up candidates who they are not in direct competition with.

Table 1. Nomination Budgets

2026 COPE Nomination Race Spending Limits	
Budget	**Allowable expenditures**
● Basic In-kind: **$500**	● Supplies (clipboards, pens, envelopes, sign-up sheets) ● Food for volunteers

(Last updated 2026/01/26)