



QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE: WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR INCUMBENT MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SEEKING RE-ELECTION

GENERAL PROVISIONS

When the Lieutenant Governor dissolves the Legislative Assembly and signs the writs of election, all Members of the Legislative Assembly cease to hold office.¹ For the purposes of this document, “election period” is the time from the date that a proclamation is issued dissolving the Legislative Assembly and issuance of the writs of election up to and including general voting day.

Election and campaign activities are not considered to be parliamentary functions. Incumbent Members should not use, for election or campaign activities, the funds, goods, services or office space and resources that are funded or provided by the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia.

USE OF THE TITLE “MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY” AND “MLA”

1. Incumbent Members should refrain from using the position identifier title “Member of the Legislative Assembly” and “MLA” during the election period, including in any print, online campaign materials, or advertisements. Incumbent Members may, however, state that they have served as the MLA for [Riding] from [Year-April 2017]. Incumbent Members should not actively identify themselves as being part of a party caucus at the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia.
2. The use of Hansard transcripts and videos for any political advertising, partisan activities, or electoral campaigns is prohibited. Once the Legislative Assembly has been dissolved, incumbent Members should remove any links to Hansard transcripts and videos from their websites. Incumbent Members should refrain from uploading or sharing Hansard videos on social media accounts and websites associated with a candidate’s election campaign during the election period.
3. It is recommended that incumbent Members place a sign at the office entrance such as, *“The Legislative Assembly is currently dissolved. This office will be closed (or provides limited services only) until after the provincial general election on May 9, 2017.”*
4. Incumbent Members should not use personalized Legislative Assembly stationery identifying them as a Member of the Legislative Assembly or MLA.

¹ Pursuant to the provisions of the provincial *Constitution Act*, a proclamation by the Lieutenant Governor to dissolve the Legislative Assembly formally discharges Members of their duties.

USE OF MLA, CAUCUS AND CONSTITUENCY OFFICE WEBSITES

1. MLA and caucus websites should be suspended during the election period. A redirect to a campaign website should not be made.
2. If the constituency office remains open to assist individual constituents during the election period and a constituency office website is required to support constituency services, the following steps should be taken:
 - Incumbent Members should display the following message for any website *“The Legislative Assembly is currently dissolved. This website will not be updated until after the general provincial election on May 9, 2017.”*
 - No new content should be added to the website.
 - Any partisan content and Hansard transcripts and videos should be removed.
3. A campaign website cannot incorporate the title MLA as an active or current position identifier in the domain name (e.g. www.NameMLA.ca).
4. Incumbent Members should not refer to themselves as a Member of the Legislative Assembly or MLA on their campaign website, other than to state that they have served as the MLA for [Riding] from [Year-April 2017].

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

1. MLA and constituency office social media accounts may be suspended or adapted during the election period. Should an Incumbent Member choose to use an existing social media account during the election period, the following steps should be taken:
 - Social media account usernames and handles used during the election period cannot retain the title MLA as an active or current position identifier (e.g. @NameMLA or @MLAName).
 - An existing MLA video sharing account (such as YouTube and Vimeo) maintained by an incumbent Member should not host campaign videos (such videos should be uploaded to another/campaign account). No new videos should be uploaded to the incumbent Member’s video sharing account during the election period.
 - Incumbent Members should not refer to themselves as a Member of the Legislative Assembly or MLA in any social media account profile, biography, or description, other than to state that they have served as the MLA for [Riding] from [Year-April 2017].
2. Hansard videos and transcripts should not be shared on any social media accounts during the election period.

These guidelines are generally consistent with practices in various jurisdictions in Canada, and are consistent with past practice in British Columbia, as applicable.

More detailed information for incumbent Members seeking re-election is available in the *Transition Guide for Members of the Legislative Assembly: 2017* at <http://members.leg.bc.ca>.