A Quick Guide to the Election Finances Act
Ontario’s law governing election contributions changed in 2016. It is important that you understand these changes before you contribute to a political party.

The Ontario Election Finances Act (“the Act”) sets out who may contribute to political parties, candidates and constituency associations. The following guidelines are based on the Act and on materials produced by Elections Ontario.

Frequently Asked Questions
Who can make financial contributions?
Only individuals who are residents of Ontario may make contributions to political parties, candidates and constituency associations. Nomination contestants and candidates.

Trade Unions and Corporations may not make contributions and it is an offence to do so.

When can I make financial contributions?
The Act permits individuals to contribute different amounts depending on when the contributions are made. The Act sets out certain annual contribution limits. In addition, some additional contributions are permitted during the campaign period, which is defined as the period from the date when the election is called until three months after election day.

How much can I contribute?
You may make financial donations of your own funds to political parties and candidates up to the contribution limits set out below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Annual Limit</th>
<th>Campaign Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To Any One Registered Political Party</td>
<td>$1,200 total</td>
<td>NO extra amount over annual limit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Registered Constituency Associations and Nomination Contestants of Any One Registered Party</td>
<td>$1,200 total</td>
<td>NO extra amount over annual limit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Registered Candidates of Any One Registered Party</td>
<td>Not Permitted</td>
<td>$1,200 total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To All Registered Candidates Not Endorsed by a Registered Party</td>
<td>Not Permitted</td>
<td>$1,200 total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a Leadership Contestant</td>
<td>$1,200 total</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Amounts are for 2017 and will be indexed to inflation for future.

Can I accept funds from another person or organization in order to make a political contribution?
No. You may not accept funds from any other person, Trade Union or Corporation for the purpose of making a political contribution. Doing so is an offence under the Act.

How may I make a financial contribution?
Contributions that are under $25 may be made in cash. Contributions that are $25 or over must use a form of payment that includes the contributor’s name and account number (such as by cheque, debit card, credit card) or by money order.

Upon making a financial contribution to a political party, a constituency association, a nomination contestant, a candidate or a leadership contestant, you must certify that the funds you are donating belong to you.

Anonymous contributions cannot be accepted, except for amounts of less than $10 per person that are collected by “passing the hat” at meetings.
May I volunteer for a political campaign?
Yes, you may volunteer for a political campaign provided that you do so outside of your working hours. The Act specifies that any goods produced or services provided by volunteer labour that is provided free of charge and outside of a person’s working hours are not considered a contribution.

May I use my vacation time to volunteer for a political campaign?
Yes. Vacation is paid time off to which you are entitled. As such, your vacation time falls outside of your working hours and any time you spend volunteering while on vacation should not be considered a contribution under the Act.

Are advertisements that I run on behalf of a political campaign considered contributions?
Political advertising is considered a contribution if it promotes a registered party or candidate (for election or nomination), is done in coordination with them, and has a value of more than $100. If the advertisement meets these criteria it must be recorded as a contribution and it counts towards the candidate or party’s spending limit under the Act.

Communications to Unifor’s members are not considered political advertising under the Act. This means that member communications are not restricted.

May I contribute goods and services?
Donated goods and services valued at $100 or less may or may not be considered a contribution depending on the wishes of the person making the donation. Donations valued at $100 or more will be considered a contribution.

Donations of goods and services that are considered to be contributions under the Act must be recorded and acknowledged as such with a tax receipt.

How will contributions of goods and services be valued?
If you make a donation of a good or service that is considered to be a contribution under the Act, the value of that donation must be determined.

The good or service will be valued as the lowest amount charged for such goods and services in that market area at that time. For example, if you make a donation of letterhead and envelopes that would normally cost $220, it must be recorded as a contribution in that amount. If the letterhead and envelopes were provided for a reduced price of $100, the contribution would be the difference between the price paid ($100) and the normal selling price of the goods ($220). In that case, a donation of $120 must be recorded.

For more information: www.elections.on.ca