

2015 ELECTION CAMPAIGN KIT



**NATIONAL TRADE CONTRACTORS COALITION OF
CANADA**



Highlighting the importance of Prompt Payment in the 2015 Federal Election Campaign.

The National Trade Contractors Coalition of Canada (NTCCC) is implementing a 2015 election strategy which will capitalize on its engaged national membership to reach out to candidates from all parties. NTCCC has reached out to elected officials, staff, and bureaucrats in Ottawa and this pressure will be well supported by a grassroots effort during the campaign period. The coming federal election is a unique opportunity for members to ensure our future federal government leaders understand the negative economic impact of delayed payments in Canada's construction system and the effect this has on families and small businesses.

This is the first year that a federal election has been set by federal election law during a majority government and it is almost certain the federal parties will go to the polls on October 19th. This means that not only will the parties have a well-coordinated year building their election platforms and policy commitments, and a busy summer tour, but advocacy groups can also coordinate their efforts to push policy commitments prior to the election.

This toolkit will give you the information you need to ensure that your local candidates are informed of the importance of implementing Prompt Payment Legislation. The strategy builds on the idea that all politics is local and that candidates will be highly responsive to the interests of their future constituents, especially during a campaign.

Candidate outreach will be complemented by letters to party leaders and sharing information with platform developers in party offices. NTCCC will use these compounding initiatives to pressure decision-makers to include Prompt Payment Legislation in platforms and raise the profile of the issues when the House of Commons returns after the election.

Regardless of which party and candidate you will be voting for, the campaign period presents a great opportunity for you to demonstrate the many benefits of Prompt Payment Legislation to all local candidates. The polls have narrowed and it will be more important than ever that local members take an active role during the campaign because if elected (or re-elected), their local candidates will be the ones who can implement changes that support the construction industry.

NTCCC has established a solid platform for success because of our national scope and the energy of our members. Thousands of trade contractors and supporters nationwide have supported NTCCC petitions and campaigns. By getting more involved during the campaign you will be helping all trade contractors and we will assist you in seizing these opportunities. This kit will help to guide you in engaging local officials in the lead up to October 19th.

Getting Involved Locally

1. Obtain contact and background information on your candidates by visiting the party websites:

www.conservative.ca

www.liberal.ca

www.blocquebecois.org

www.ndp.ca

www.greenparty.ca

2. Arrange a meeting with local candidates to present NTCCC's priorities and to talk about the problem of delayed payment and benefits of Prompt Payment Legislation. Determine which issues you're comfortable explaining and focus on what problems you've seen in your experience.
3. Volunteer for a candidate in your riding. This can take as little as 2 hours a week, or as much time as you can afford.
4. Ways to volunteer. Go door to door with the candidate. Put up lawn signs. Volunteer at the campaign office. Offer in-kind services to the candidate.
5. Make an individual contribution to a political candidate, registered association, or a registered party.

** For details see **Federal Electoral Finance Rules** on page 5 in this kit**

6. Attend events that candidates have said they will be attending. To find out about upcoming events, contact your candidate's campaign office or keep informed from the local newspaper. You can also follow the candidates on social media, where many will post about their whereabouts as the campaign progresses.

Create your own event! Offer your assistance to political candidates to host an event discussing issues that are important to the community and your organisation (i.e.: Luncheon invitation for candidates to hear their positions on the construction industry, to meet local trade contractors, or a breakfast panel discussion).

7. Ask candidates who come to your door what their party is committed to do to show federal leadership on delayed payments in Canada.

KEY MESSAGES

Use the first thirty seconds of your interaction to introduce yourself. Tell the candidate who you are, where you live, where you work, how long you've been a member of the profession, and what your top priority for the discussion is. This is your elevator pitch.

Most candidates will know the basics of their party's commitments, but the full platforms of each party will likely not be finalized until the midst of the formal campaign period in September or early October. This gives members a lot of room over the summer months to encourage commitments that can be passed on to platform policy groups in Ottawa. It also means that your messages might resonate enough to generate commitments for action from these candidates that can be leveraged for action if they are elected.

It is important for candidates and returning MPs from all parties to know what the profession is all about and how your business represents the interests of your clients. The one page briefing note that accompanies this document outlines NTCCC's prompt payment argument for this election. The overarching message that needs to be conveyed is that delayed payments put pressure on the construction industry by leading to lost jobs, bankruptcies, fewer competitive bids on projects, and overall higher prices to customers, including on government tenders.

Each part of the argument builds toward the conclusion that Canada needs to adopt Prompt Payment Legislation. This outline shows that the federal government can show leadership to the provinces by adopting Prompt Payment Legislation that includes a prompt payment clause in federal contracts through Public Works and Government Services Canada and the Department of National Defence. You are encouraged to highlight local issues with payment delays to give examples of how it hurts your community. Discussing delayed payments in the local context is an important strategy to achieve success, and will create a more interesting dialogue between you and the candidate.

Logging commitments and feedback

Telling public officials what you care about is the essence of lobbying, but it is equally important to hear what they care about. An old adage in government relations is that you "lobby with your ears." For long-term success it is very important that you log and share information about the meetings and interactions you have. This sophisticated approach will help NTCCC in the months and years following the election to better develop messages and target specific public officials with specific proposals.

You will find a meeting feedback form here that can be submitted by fax, which will help staff immediately provide more information to candidates. This information will also be logged to ensure that future meetings with MPs are conducted as effectively as they possible can be. This will support relationship building and help NTCCC identify prompt payment champions.

ELECTORAL FINANCE RULES

Recent modifications to the *Canada Elections Act* have meant significant changes have been made regarding who can make political contributions and how much they are allowed to give.

Businesses

Corporations, small- and medium-sized businesses, trade unions, and unincorporated associations are not permitted to make political contributions. Please note that this restriction includes a prohibition on non-monetary contributions, such as the donation of goods or services.

Individuals

In any calendar year, individual Canadian citizens and permanent residents may contribute \$1,500 to each registered political party, and a total of \$1,500 to the various entities of each registered political party, including constituency associations, candidates, or individuals seeking a party's nomination. These amounts increase by \$25 on January 1st of each calendar year.

Individuals may also donate up to \$1,500 to the campaign of each non-affiliated or independent candidate and a total of \$1,500 annually to the various leadership contestants of a particular contest. These amounts increase by \$25 on January 1st of each calendar year.

It is important to note that limits are calculated annually, so any donations made earlier in the year will reduce what you are able to contribute during an election. It is the responsibility of the contributor to ensure that they do not exceed donation limits. Contributions of more than \$200 will be listed in Election Canada's electoral contribution database.

As an example, an individual would be allowed to make a \$600 donation to the Conservative riding association in Toronto Centre, give \$700 to the Conservative candidate in Ottawa South, and an additional \$200 to a Conservative nomination contestant in Halifax West. This individual would be unable to make further donations to Conservative candidates or riding associations during the year, but would still be able to donate up to \$1,500 directly to the Conservative party and make a similar series of donations to the other parties.

