

Sample written question form

Topic: _____ (e.g. taxation, education, health care)

Question to be asked: _____

Name (please print): _____

Please address this question to: _____

Election Information

Federal

The federal government's website is www.gc.ca.

Elections Canada's website is www.elections.ca.

This is a great site for finding information on your particular riding or electoral district. Go to the following:

- Maps Corner
 - Alberta

Provincial

The provincial government's website is www.alberta.ca.

Elections Alberta's website is www.electionsalberta.ab.ca.

This is a great site for finding information on your particular riding or electoral district. Go to the following:

- Maps

Municipal

For general information on municipal elections, please go to the provincial Department of Municipal Affairs website at

www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca . More information is also available by contacting your local municipality.



Your guide to hosting a Political Candidates' Forum

This guide is intended to serve as a template for hosting a candidates' forum at any level of government (municipal, provincial and federal).

Getting started...a checklist for your event

- Obtain board approval
- Set a date
 - Ensure you speak with all the candidates and set a mutually convenient date (or you may appear biased toward one candidate over another)
- Reserve a facility
 - Reserve a sound system and technician
- Secure volunteers
 - a. 1 moderator/chair
 - b. 2 timers
 - c. 2 ushers
- Secure a partnership
 - A non-partisan partner like the media (newspaper/radio/TV) would also ensure good media coverage
- Prepare a media release and advertising (with partner)
- Prepare an agenda and time schedule (with chair)
- Prepare the rules and regulations
- Prepare letters of invitation to the candidates, including:
 - a. The agenda
 - b. Rules and regulations
 - c. 5-6 prepared questions on "hot issues" (optional)
- Prepare "written question" forms
- Arrange for refreshments for a break (possibly sponsored)
- Prepare name tags and table name cards for each candidate
 - Prepare numbers for "speaking order" of candidates
- Ensure water and glasses are available for candidates
- Ensure tables are in foyer before and after for meet and greet
- You may also want decorations (optional)
 - a. Flowers for head table
 - b. Municipal, provincial or Canadian flag
 - c. Skirting for tables

Sample Agenda

- 6:45 p.m. Candidates present themselves to the chair to draw for "speaking order"
- 7:00 p.m. Call to order (ON TIME)
- 7:02 p.m. Chair's remarks and reading of the rules and regulations (welcome, thank you, intent)
- 7:10 p.m. Introduction of the candidates
Announce "speaking order"
- 7:15 p.m. Each participant is given 3-5 minutes for a presentation (this would vary depending upon the number of candidates)
e.g. 6 candidates \longrightarrow 6 x 5 minutes = 30 minutes
allow 1-2 minutes between candidates for applause and shifting of positions \longrightarrow 6 x 2 minutes = 12 minutes
Total 42 minutes
- 8:00 p.m. 15-minute break
- 8:15 p.m. Question-and-answer period
(determined by issues of the day and number of candidates)
- 8:45 p.m. Summary by candidates
6 x 1 minute = 6 minutes and
6 x 1 minute = 6 minutes shuffling
Total 12 minutes
- 8:57 p.m. Chair's concluding remarks
- 9:00 p.m. Adjournment (ON TIME)
If the candidates are in agreement, you may want to announce that the candidates will be available for a short while to answer any questions. **Do not abandon the candidates** — they may need to be "rescued" and you are hosting the event



Rules and Regulations

(Rules 8-15 should be read to audience before starting the forum, after the introductions are made.)

- 1) The chair for the forum will be _____ of _____ (name of business or position in Chamber).
- 2) The facility will be opened at 6:00 p.m. for the candidates and their campaign workers in order to provide enough time to get organized for handing out or setting up pamphlets and literature.
- 3) No signs may be posted in the room; nor attached to any walls, curtains, doors, etc.
- 4) The doors for the public will open at 6:30 p.m.
- 5) The candidates will present themselves to the chair at the head table promptly at 6:45 p.m. to draw for the "speaking order".
- 6) The forum will be called to order promptly at 7 p.m., and the doors to the room will be closed. Anyone arriving late will only be seated between speakers so as to keep the disruptions to a minimum. We will adjourn at 9 p.m.
- 7) The candidates will be seated alphabetically at the speakers' table, starting on the right, facing the audience. In the chair's opening remarks, candidates will be introduced in alphabetical order.
- 8) Candidates will have 3 (or 5) minutes to expand upon their political platform. The format of the presentation is at the discretion of the candidates. The timer will give a 20-second warning and ring a bell at the end of the allotted time. No candidate will be allowed more than their allotted time and the chair will ask the candidate to be seated.
- 9) During the question period, questions will be received from the floor in written or spoken form. The public will approach the microphone, identify themselves and address a question to one candidate. The ushers will read the written questions and address to one candidate. The chair will use his/her discretion in balancing written and spoken questions. In an attempt to keep equal response, each question directed at a candidate will be directed at another at the discretion of the chair.
- 10) The chair will rule out of order any question(s) deemed inappropriate, offensive and derogatory or, that would seem to attack the integrity of any candidate.
- 11) The chair will rule out of order any person who unreasonably attempts to use the question period as a platform for expressing a point-of-view on any issue.
- 12) Answers to questions will be limited to 2 minutes in order to maximize the number of questions that can be fielded in the time allotted. The question period will be limited to 30 minutes (60 minutes).
- 13) Candidates will each have 1 minute after the question period for a rebuttal or to summarize their platform.
- 14) The chair will have final jurisdiction in all matters.
- 15) For further information, contact the Chamber office at _____.