

Press Release

02 April 2025

Elections Office Urges Compliance Amid Reports of Vote-Buying and Harassment

The Elections Office is urging all candidates, supporters, and voters to uphold the integrity of the electoral process following reports of vote-buying and voter harassment during the ongoing election period.

Recent allegations suggest that some candidates or their supporters may be offering gifts, food cards, appliances, or even money in exchange for votes. The Elections Office reminds the public that such practices are illegal under the Elections Act. Offering or accepting any form of inducement intended to influence voting decisions is a serious election offence.

Any voter who, either before or during an election, accepts, agrees to accept, or makes a deal to receive money, gifts, loans, jobs, or any other benefit — either for themselves or for someone else — in return for voting, agreeing to vote, not voting, or agreeing not to vote, is committing an offence under the Elections Act.

“These reports are deeply concerning,” stated Supervisor of Elections, Wesley Howell. “Illegal activities of this nature undermine public confidence in free and fair elections. We take these allegations seriously and will work closely with law enforcement to ensure compliance with election laws.”

Accepting gifts or benefits in return for voting a certain way is against the law. The right to vote is personal and sacred, and every voter should be able to make their decision freely, without coercion or undue influence. Voters deserve an environment where they can access information, critically assess candidates and issues, and engage in public discourse without pressure.

In addition to reports of vote-buying, the Elections Office has received complaints of aggressive canvassing and voter harassment. While voter engagement is an essential part of the democratic process, intimidation or undue pressure has no place in election activities. Voters must be able to make their choices in an atmosphere free from fear, harassment, or coercion. Any behaviour that threatens these fundamental freedoms may constitute an offence under the law.

Mr Howell continued, “We all have a role to play in protecting the integrity of our elections. By working together, we can ensure that the democratic process remains fair, transparent, and free from unlawful influence.”

While the reports received so far lack specific details, the Elections Office strongly encourages anyone with information about illegal election activities to report them to the police without delay. Reports can be made confidentially by calling 949-4222 and providing details such as the nature of the offence, those involved, and when and where it took place.

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