



Administration Office 1024 Hurlwood Lane, Severn
Mailing address PO Box 159, Orillia, Ontario L3V 6J3
Email info@severn.ca
Phone 705-325-2315

2026 Municipal Election Candidate Information Guide

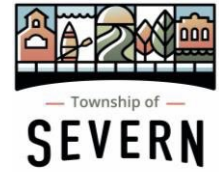


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Section A: Introduction

Thank you for your interest in serving the public as part of Municipal Council! Serving the public as an elected official requires a four-year commitment of considerable time and energy. You are getting ready to embark on a journey that will be both rewarding and frustrating. If you are a first-time candidate, you will find running for office to be a challenging and exciting experience. We hope that with this package, your trip through the election process will be made a little easier.

The **Municipal Elections Act, 1996** sets out in detail the requirements to be met by candidates for office. These requirements have been summarized for your convenience. We urge you to obtain your own copy of the Municipal Elections Act which can be downloaded from the **Province of Ontario e-Laws website**.

This package is provided for general information only and highlights certain legislation. It does not include all legal requirements. Candidates are responsible for ensuring they meet election financing rules and are eligible to vote and run for office.

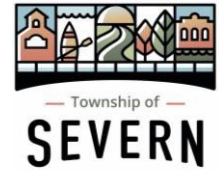
As this election year progresses, additional information will be available regarding the specifics of the election process. We will be providing you with this information as it becomes available. You are advised to read the enclosed material carefully. It is important that you are aware of your responsibilities as a candidate. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have.

Best wishes for a successful campaign.

Alison Gray, Director of Corporate Services/Clerk

Phone: 705-325-2315 x232

Email: agray@severn.ca



Section B: Frequently Asked Questions

Important dates

Date	Details
Thursday, April 23, 2026	Candidate Information Session 6:00 p.m.
Friday, May 1, 2026	Nominations may be filed
Friday, August 21, 2026	Nomination Day Nominations accepted from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Monday, August 24, 2026	Nominations to be certified or rejected by the Clerk List of Candidates posted by 4:00 p.m.
Tuesday, September 1, 2026	Revision Period commences for the Voters List
Monday, October 26, 2026	Election Day

What is the Term of Office?

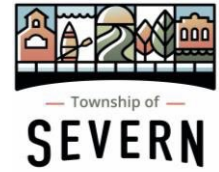
The term of the Township of Severn (Severn) Municipal Council will be four years, resulting in a term from November 15, 2026, and ending November 14, 2030.

Who can be a candidate?

Any person who is qualified to be a voter in Severn's 2026 Municipal Election is also eligible to be a candidate.

Candidates for the offices of Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor must be:

- a resident of Severn, or an owner or tenant of land in Severn, or the spouse or same sex partner of such an owner or tenant
- a Canadian citizen



- at least 18 years old
- not prohibited from voting by law

In addition, candidates for School Board Trustee must reside within the Board area and be a supporter of that Board.

Please note that if you were a candidate in the 2022 Municipal Election and failed to file a financial statement, you are ineligible to be elected or appointed to any office, until the 2030 Municipal Election.

What offices are to be elected?

The offices to be elected are:

- Mayor (one) (Note: member of Council for the County of Simcoe)
- Deputy Mayor (one)
- Councillor (one for each ward):
 - Ward 1
 - Ward 2
 - Ward 3
 - Ward 4
 - Ward 5
- School Board Trustee (one for each Board):
 - English Public
 - English Separate/Catholic
 - French Public
 - French Separate/Catholic

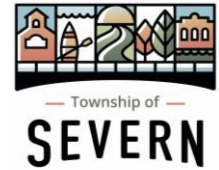
When can I file my nomination paperwork?

Individuals can file their nomination paperwork at the Township's Administrative Office ([1024 Hurlwood Lane](#)) beginning on **Friday, May 1, 2026** during regular business hours (Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.). The deadline to file your nomination paperwork is **Friday, August 21, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.**

Appointments are strongly recommended.

Is it possible to file your nomination online?

No. Candidates must file their nomination paperwork in person or by an agent.



What do I need to file my nomination paperwork?

The nomination paperwork must be completed in full and filed in person by the candidate or their agent and include:

- identification suitable to the Clerk
- Nomination Paper (Form 1)
- 25 endorsement signatures on the prescribed form (Form 2) from people who are eligible to vote in the Township
- application filing fee:
 - \$200 for Mayor/Head of Council
 - \$100 for all other offices (Deputy Mayor and Ward Councillors)

How does a candidate choose which ward to run in? Do you have to live in the ward you are running for?

A candidate can run for office in the ward of their choice. You do not have to live in the same ward you are running in; however, you do have to vote from the address at which you reside.

For example, if you live in Ward 2, but are running in Ward 3, you must vote in Ward 2. A Ward Map is included in this guide as Appendix A.

What are the responsibilities of these offices?

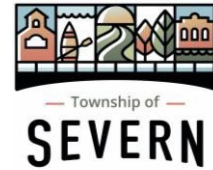
The **Mayor** is responsible for providing leadership, acting as a spokesperson to the public, working with other levels of government, and holding a seat on the Council of the County of Simcoe.

The **Deputy Mayor** is responsible for providing leadership with the Mayor, acting as a spokesperson to the public.

Each **Ward Councillor** is responsible for representing their ward on Council and as a member of Council needs to work together with the other members as the primary decision-making body for the Township.

Per Section 224 of the **Municipal Act, 2001**, the role of Council is:

- (a) to represent the public and to consider the well-being and interests of the municipality;



- (b) to develop and evaluate the policies and programs of the municipality;
- (c) to determine which services the municipality provides;
- (d) to ensure that administrative policies, practices and procedures and controllership policies, practices and procedures are in place to implement the decisions of council;
- (d.1) to ensure the accountability and transparency of the operations of the municipality, including the activities of the senior management of the municipality;
- (e) to maintain the financial integrity of the municipality; and
- (f) to carry out the duties of council under this or any other Act.

Per Section 225 of the **Municipal Act, 2001, the role of Head of Council** (Mayor) is:

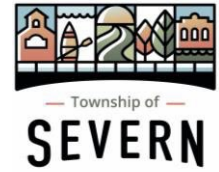
- (a) to act as chief executive officer of the municipality;
- (b) to preside over council meetings so that its business can be carried out efficiently and effectively;
- (c) to provide leadership to the council;
- (c.1) without limiting clause (c), to provide information and recommendations to the council with respect to the role of council described in clauses 224 (d) and (d.1);
- (d) to represent the municipality at official functions; and
- (e) to carry out the duties of the head of council under this or any other Act.

Additional information on the role of a municipal council member may be obtained from **The Ontario Municipal Councillor's Guide**.

What about Strong Mayor Powers?

The Head of Council (Mayor) has additional powers and duties, known as Strong Mayor powers and duties. Additional information related to these powers may be found in **The Ontario Municipal Councillor's Guide - Chapter 10: Strong mayor powers and duties**.

Some powers relate to advancing provincial priorities, budget, and various



administrative authorities including appointing a chief administrative officer, organizational structure, etc.

It should be noted that in the absence of the Mayor, Strong Mayor Powers are not assumed by the Deputy Mayor.

What is the time commitment if I am elected?

A Councillor can expect to devote time for a minimum of two meetings per month along with various duties on outside committees as appointed by Council.

Meetings are held generally during the day with some evening meetings.

Time commitments would include:

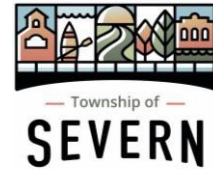
- Council meetings (first Wednesday and third Wednesday of every month)
- community Events (e.g., ceremonies, parades, etc.)
- telephone calls, emails, and contact with constituents
- reading and research time

For reference, the 2026 Township of Severn Council and Committees schedule has been included at the end of this package. The annual meeting schedule is subject to change to accommodate Council attendance at conferences and the seasonal closure in December.

In addition to attending regular Council and Committee meetings, members are required to attend meetings of other committees to which they are appointed.

These committees are established for a specific purpose and currently include the following:

- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Coldwater Business Improvement Area (BIA)
- Coldwater Mill Heritage Foundation
- Committee of Adjustment
- Culture and Recreation Advisory Committee
- Economic Development Advisory Committee
- Orillia and District Agricultural Society Board
- Orillia and District Chamber of Commerce
- Orillia and Lake Country Tourism Board
- Orillia and Area Physician Recruitment Committee
- Severn Township Public Library Board
- Orillia Public Library Board



- Couchiching OPP Detachment Board
- Severn Sound Environmental Association Board
- Southeast Georgian Bay Chamber of Commerce (SEGBAY) Board

How do I find out what is currently going on at Council and Committee meetings? How do I get agendas?

You can access our Council and Committee meetings **online** or watch them on the Township's **YouTube** channel. Agendas are also published on our **Council portal** and you can **subscribe** to receive an email every time an agenda is published.

Severn provides all meeting materials electronically via email and members are expected to use their Township-provided computer to access meeting agendas. Further, all members are expected to check their Township email regularly as it is the primary means of communication.

How much do the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors get paid?

The 2026 salaries are:

- Mayor \$50,169.16
- Deputy Mayor \$34,317.95
- Councillor \$29,020.04

The Mayor receives a salary and expense allowance from the County of Simcoe.

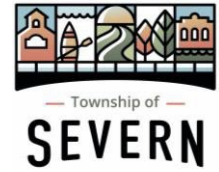
Council members are provided with a monthly internet allowance of \$25 and an annual mileage allowance. In addition to their annual remuneration, members receive per diem payments should they attend conferences, seminars, or meetings for boards and committees they have been appointed to.

Can I withdraw my nomination?

Yes. The last day to withdraw a nomination is Friday, August 21, 2026 by 2:00 p.m.

Can I change what office or ward I'm running for?

Yes, you can change the office (Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Ward Councillor) or ward you are running for up to Friday, August 21, 2026 by 2:00 p.m.



When is the Council Inauguration Ceremony?

The Council Inauguration Ceremony will be held on Wednesday, November 25, 2026.

This is a Special Council Meeting to swear the new Council into office. The meeting is open to the public and family and friends of new Council members are encouraged to attend.

How do I contact the Clerk's Department?

For more information on all election matters, please contact the Clerk or Deputy Clerk.

Alison Gray

Director of Corporate Services/Clerk

Phone: 705-325-2315 x232

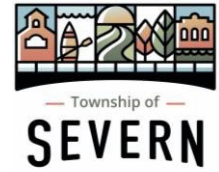
Email: agray@severn.ca

Michael Mayer

Deputy Clerk

Phone: 705-325-2315 x279

Email: mmayer@severn.ca



Section C: General Election Information

Use of Township logo and corporate resources

Use of any corporate Township logo, crest, or images by candidates on signs, brochures, social media, websites, or any other election-related material is **strictly prohibited**.

Candidates are permitted to use Township facilities for campaign activities provided all rental fees are paid. Campaign materials are only permitted to be displayed in the rented portion of a facility during the rental period. Materials cannot be displayed at any other time on municipal facilities or property.

Please reference the **Use of Municipal Resources Municipal Elections Policy** included in your candidate package for clarification regarding the use of other municipal resources and facilities.

Enumeration

New for 2026 will be the provision of the Preliminary List of Electors by **Elections Ontario** which contains the names and addresses and school support of each person who meets the qualifications of an elector. In prior municipal elections, the list was provided by MPAC (Municipal Property Assessment Corporation).

Electors can check whether they are on the list through the **Elections Ontario Register to Vote** webpage.

The Voters List will be available to candidates on September 1, 2026, on request. Candidates are only provided with access to a copy of the part of the Voters List that contains the name of electors who are entitled to vote for the office for which they have filed nomination papers.

Revision to the Voters List

Applications for revisions, changes and additions to the Voters List will be accepted by the Clerk starting on September 1, 2026, and ending at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day (October 26, 2026) at the Township's Administration Office.



2026 Election method

Severn is utilizing a hybrid voting method which will allow electors to vote in-person (paper ballot with tabulator or tablet) or online. Additional information on the voting method, including detailed election procedures, will be made available for electors and candidates throughout 2026.

Form of ballots

The municipality uses a fully composite ballot. Each elector receives one ballot, which contains all ballots for every office for which they are entitled to vote.

Voting dates and locations

All eligible electors will receive a Voter Information Letter that will give them information on as to how to vote online or in-person.

Online Voting

Thursday, October 15 through to Election Day on Monday, October 26, 2026.

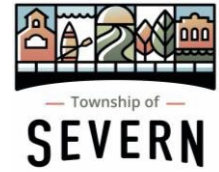
In-Person Voting

Advance Voting (for all offices, all wards)

Date	Location	Time
Saturday, October 17	Township Administration Office	12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Tuesday, October 20	Coldwater Community Centre	2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Friday, October 23	Washago Community Centre	2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Election Day (October 26) Voting (ward-specific voting locations)

Ward	Location	Time
Wards 1 and 2	Coldwater Community Centre	10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Ward 3	Township Administration Office	10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Wards 4 and 5	Washago Community Centre	10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.



Proxy voting

As Severn is providing an alternative voting method there will be **no proxy votes**.

Certification of Nominations by Clerk

Section 35 of the **Municipal Elections Act, 1996** states:

- 1) The Clerk shall examine each nomination that has been filed, in accordance with the following timetable:
 - i. All nominations filed on or before Nomination Day shall be examined before 4:00 p.m. on the Monday following Nomination Day.
 - ii. All additional nominations filed under subsection 33(5) shall be examined before 4:00 p.m. on the Thursday following Nomination Day.
- 2) If satisfied that a person is qualified to be nominated and that the nomination complies with this Act (Municipal Elections Act, 1996), the Clerk shall certify the nomination by signing the nomination paper.
- 3) If not satisfied that a person is qualified to be nominated or that the nomination complies with this Act, the Clerk shall reject the nomination.
- 4) When the Clerk rejects a nomination, he or she shall, as soon as possible, give notice of the fact to the person who sought to be nominated and to all candidates for the office.
- 5) The Clerk's decision to certify or reject a nomination is final.

Note: It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure they meet all the qualifications and file the proper nomination paperwork. Each candidate should contact the Clerk to verify that their Nomination Forms are in order.

Section D: Election Financial Responsibilities

The **Municipal Elections Act, 1996** imposes limitations on the expenses for candidates in municipal elections and also imposes requirements on the candidate to report the contributions received and the funds expended.

Detailed information on campaign finances, reporting, contributions, and expenses may be found within the Province of Ontario Candidate Information Guide (expected release in April 2026). Candidates are encouraged to reference the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 for the exact details.

When may a candidate conduct fundraising and incur campaign expenses?

The candidate may incur campaign expenses and may accept donations starting on the day they file their Nomination Form.

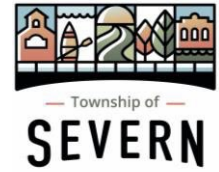
What limits are there on campaign spending?

A preliminary maximum campaign expense limit will be provided to the candidate when the nomination is filed. These limits are calculated using a base amount multiplied by the number of eligible electors for each office.

For reference only, the 2022 maximum spending limits were:

Mayor	\$19,938.90
Deputy Mayor	\$17,438.90
Ward 1 Councillor	\$7,333.25
Ward 2 Councillor	\$7,302.65
Ward 3 Councillor	\$8,196.00
Ward 4 Councillor	\$7,391.05
Ward 5 Councillor	\$7,215.95

An Interim Certificate of Maximum Expenses will be issued upon filing of nominations.



A Certificate of Maximum Campaign Spending Limits will be issued to candidates by September 30, 2026.

Note: In 2025, a Ward Boundary Review was conducted that resulted in changes to Wards 3, 4, and 5, which will impact the final maximum campaign expense limits.

A letter has been enclosed in this package for candidates to take to their banking institution to assist in the creation of their campaign bank account (Appendix B).

Financial reporting requirements

On or before **March 30, 2027**, each candidate shall file the necessary financial reports with the Clerk.

Compliance audits

Per Section 88.33 of the **Municipal Elections Act, 1996** any elector may apply to the Clerk of the municipality or the secretary of a local board, in writing, for a compliance audit of the campaign of any candidate within 90 days of the filing of the financial reports of the candidate.

Within ten days after receiving the application, the Clerk of the municipality or the secretary of the local board shall forward the application to the compliance audit committee. Upon receipt, within 30 days, the committee shall consider the application and decide whether it should be granted or rejected.

Section F: Election Signs

Severn has rules and regulations regarding the use and placement of election signs within the municipality. A copy of Severn's **Election Sign By-law (No. 2022-02)** is included in the Nomination Package for reference.

For candidates seeking to place signs along County of Simcoe roads you will want to reference the **County of Simcoe Sign By-law No. 6756** (County Road 16 & 17).

When can signs go up?

Signs may not be erected more than 60 days prior to Election Day (for 2026 this is **Thursday, August 27, 2026**).

A sign deposit of \$200.00 must be received prior to any signs being erected. If signs are erected without a deposit, they will be removed by the Township's By-law Enforcement Officers.

This deposit will be refunded after the election, following the removal of all signs. See Section 5 of the Election Sign By-law for additional information.

When do I have to have my signs removed?

All election signs must be removed from all property **within 48 hours after Election Day**. Failure to remove signs will result in a candidate waiving their right to a refund of their deposit.

Section G: Prohibition of Canvassing in Voting Places

Electioneering or campaigning in any nature is strictly prohibited and is not permitted on any premises used as a voting place. The premise includes the entire building and the property on which it is located including the parking lot.

Section 48 of the **Municipal Elections Act, 1996** provides as follows:

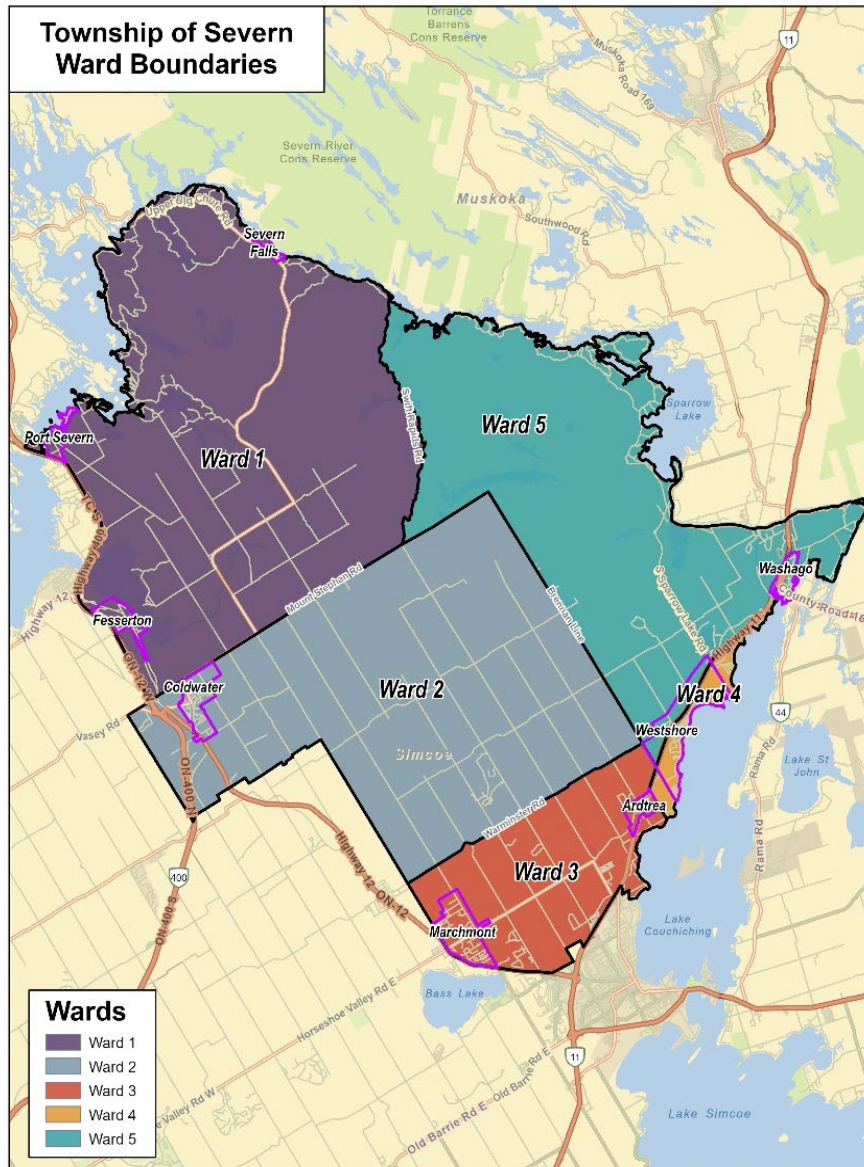
- 1) While an elector is in a voting place, no person shall attempt, directly or indirectly, to influence how the elector votes.
- 2) Without limiting the generality of subsection (1), no person shall display a candidate's election campaign material or literature in a voting place.
- 3) For the purpose of this section, 'voting place' includes any place in the immediate vicinity of the voting place designated by the Clerk.

Deputy Returning Officers and Election Officials will be instructed to remove any election campaign material or literature of any nature.

The decision of the Deputy Returning Officer is final.

For reference, campaign materials include, but are not limited to t-shirts, buttons, flyers, hats, magnetic vehicle signs, etc.

Appendix A: 2026 Ward Map



Appendix B: Letter to Banking Institution



Administration Office 1024 Hurlwood Lane, Severn
Mailing address PO Box 159, Orillia, Ontario L3V 6J3
Email info@severn.ca
Phone 705-325-2315

January 13, 2026

Financial Institution

To Whom it May Concern,

Re: Candidate Bank Account – 2026 Municipal Election

A candidate running in the 2026 Municipal Election is required under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* to open an account in the name of their campaign (i.e. John Doe's Campaign).

The Act does not contain any prohibition against a municipal candidate being a signing officer on the campaign account, nor does it require the candidate to have a chief financial officer, as is the case with provincial or federal candidates.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach me at agray@severn.ca or 705-325-2315 x 232.

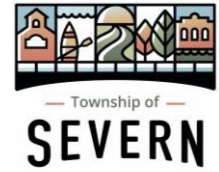
Regards,

Alison Gray

Alison Gray, BAH, CMO, AOMC
Director of Corporate Services/Clerk

severn.ca





Appendix C: 2026 Council and Committee Schedule

2026

Council & Committee Calendar

January						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February						
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March						
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April						
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May						
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31						

June						
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28	29	30				

July						
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August						
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October						
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31						

November						
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29	30					

December						
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- Special Council
 - Culture & Recreation Advisory Comm
 - EDAC
 - Inaugural Council Meeting
 - Budget Council
 - Council
 - Committee of Adjustment
 - Council Orientation
- THIS SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

Notes: 2nd August Council Meeting adjusted due to AMO, October 15-26 Election/Voting Op
 November 14 - End of Current Council Term, November 15 - 1st day of New Council Term
Conferences:
 ROMA - January 18-20, OGRA - Mar 29-Apr 1, OSUM Apr 29-May 1, AMO - August 16-19