

# Conservatives to remit more than \$20K in fake membership fees to Receiver General

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The Conservative Party of Canada rejected 1,351 members deemed fraudulent following an investigation into vote rigging allegations by leadership candidate Kevin O Leary last week. But what happened to the money collected through those fees?

According to a party spokesman, the CPC will not be keeping those funds.

We'll be remitting the funds to the Receiver General, wrote CPC communications director Cory Hann in an email.

The move to review the membership came after Kevin O Leary's campaign team issued the following statement on Friday, March 17:

Yesterday I informed the Party about the very concerning vote rigging scheme my Campaign has uncovered. Backroom organizers are trying to buy the Leadership using prepaid credit cards to purchase phoney (sic) memberships, read the email to campaign supporters.

We have completed our review of the potential ineligible membership purchases and thank the EDA volunteers and cam-

paign workers that alerted us, said the party in a written response also issued last Friday.

Upon an expedited review, we found 1,351 memberships purchased through two IP addresses which were not purchased by those members. Those purchases were made anonymously through the Conservative Party of Canada website. The memberships purchased in contradiction to the published rules have been removed from our membership list, and are no longer eligible to vote, added the statement.

The CPC said investigation revealed it had received 1,233 prepaid credit card transactions through its website throughout the course of the last six months, adding roughly half of those membership purchases had been traced back to the two aforementioned IP addresses.

Since many of the memberships were purchased fraudulently through prepaid credit cards without peoples knowledge, the funds could not be refunded as would occur in a normal cancelled transaction.

So what happened to the money? Hann told The IFP all of the reported 1,351 fraudulent memberships were of the one-year variety costing \$15 each which



Ten of the 14 Conservative leadership hopefuls gathered in Burlington earlier this month for a Halton riding meet and greet.

Photo by Graeme Frisque

would have raised a total of \$20,265 for party coffers.

As a result of the recent revelations, the party will not keep those funds to avoid any

possible party financing issues, and will be remitting all monies collected through the fake memberships to the Receiver General of Canada.

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