

## CANDIDATES

## Nominating as a candidate for local government elections

Unless otherwise stated, all references to legislation are to the *Local Government Electoral Act 2011*. The information in this fact sheet does not replace legislation. If you are concerned about your circumstances, you should seek independent legal advice.

This fact sheet relates to the nomination process for local government elections in Queensland.

The Electoral Commission of Queensland (ECQ) manages the candidate nomination process for local government elections.

In Queensland, you can be nominated as:

- an individual
- a member of a group of candidates
- an endorsed candidate of a registered political party.

**Note:** You can choose to stand for election as a councillor or as mayor – but not for both.

### When to lodge a nomination

The nomination period commences once the Notice of Election is issued by the ECQ. This will be published on the ECQ's website.

Nominations must be lodged before **midday** on the last day of the nomination period. The date and time of the close of nominations are published in the Notice of Election.

### How to lodge a nomination

Nominations are lodged with the Returning Officer, who is the ECQ's representative in each local government area. Contact details for Returning Officers and their office locations are available on the ECQ's website following the publication of the Notice of Election.

Nominations for candidates (including candidates who are members of a group) must be lodged on the approved nomination form, which can be accessed via the ECQ's [Self Service Portal](#).

Completed nomination forms can be lodged with the Returning Officer responsible for the local government area being contested, or the ECQ's head office, in person or by post.

The completed form and the \$250 nomination fee must be received by the Returning Officer or the ECQ before **midday** on the day nominations close.

If a candidate is endorsed by a registered political party, the registered officer of the political party is responsible for lodging the candidate's nomination form directly with the ECQ's head office. In this case, the candidate must ensure that all required information is provided to the party's registered officer in advance of the nomination process.

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#### More information

If you need more information relating to Funding, Disclosure and Compliance, please contact ECQ on 1300 881 665 or by emailing [fad@ecq.qld.gov.au](mailto:fad@ecq.qld.gov.au).



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## Things to do before submitting a nomination form:

### MANDATORY COUNCILLOR TRAINING

All candidates are required to complete a free online training course with the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (DSDILGP) within the 6-month period prior to nominating for a quadrennial election or by-election.

The mandatory training must be completed within 6 months prior to nominating for every election. If a candidate completed the training prior to the 2024 local government elections and decides to run again in a by-election, they will need to retake the training and receive a new reference number before nominating for the by-election.

[So you want to be a councillor?](#), the mandatory councillor training for local government elections, is available at DSDILGP. The link can also be found on the ECQ's website under Election Participants. The training will take about 90 minutes to complete and has both audio and video components.

Upon completing the training, the candidate will receive a certificate of completion. This certificate must be downloaded and saved as the nomination form will ask for the certificate's reference number as proof of completion.

### DEDICATED CAMPAIGN BANK ACCOUNT

Candidates must open a dedicated bank account and provide the details of the bank account on the nomination form.

Candidates who are members of a group of candidates are required to have one dedicated campaign bank account for the group. Account details for the group's dedicated account must be provided on each candidate's nomination form.

For further information detailing how to properly use the dedicated campaign bank account during the election, please refer to [Fact sheets 17, 22 and 27](#). Strict penalties apply for failing to comply.

### DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

Details of a candidate's personal and material interests and affiliations must be declared on the nomination form. Candidates should prepare the following information in advance of nominating:

- any membership of a registered political party or trade or professional organisation held by the candidate within the 12 months prior to nominating
- whether the candidate, or a close associate of the candidate, has a contractual arrangement<sup>1</sup> with the council being contested
- whether the candidate, or a close associate of the candidate, is engaged in a contractual process<sup>2</sup> with the council being contested
- whether the candidate, or a close associate of the candidate, has made any applications or representations about particular applications (which are yet to be decided) to the council being contested.

For the purposes of candidate nominations, a person is a close associate of a candidate if the person is one of the following:

- a spouse of the candidate

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<sup>1</sup> See definition of contractual arrangement, schedule 1, LGEA.

<sup>2</sup> See definition of contractual process, schedule 1, LGEA .

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- a partner in a partnership with the candidate
- an entity for which the candidate is an executive officer or board member.

## PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION

Generally, all information provided in a nomination form will be published on the ECQ's website until the conclusion of the election. Some information will be held by the ECQ as part of the nomination process but **will not be disclosed** to the public:

- residential address of a candidate who is a silent elector
- residential address of close associates named on a candidate's nomination form
- residential address of a person who is an elector nominating a candidate
- details of the dedicated campaign bank account, including BSB and account number, name of account and financial institution, of the candidate or group of candidates.

## ENDORSEMENT

Candidates who are not endorsed by a registered political party must be nominated by:

- at least 6 electors (i.e., persons enrolled on the electoral roll) who live within the local government area (for undivided councils), or
- at least 6 electors who live within the division or ward of the local government area being contested (for divided councils).

This includes candidates who are contesting the election as a member of a group of candidates. The credentials of electors nominating a candidate are checked against the electoral roll. The ECQ recommends that candidates submit nominations from more than 6 electors in case one or more of their nominators are not eligible electors.

A candidate endorsed by a registered political party must be nominated by the party's registered officer. Party-endorsed candidates are required to sign a Consent and Declaration Form to consent to their nomination. The Consent and Declaration Form can be obtained from the registered officer of the political party or from the ECQ and should be provided to the party's registered officer by each candidate in advance of nomination.

## FORMING A GROUP OF CANDIDATES

Two or more candidates who wish to form a group to collectively campaign must register as a group with the ECQ before engaging in any group campaign activities. A group may apply to register at any time up to the day before election day, but if a group applies for registration before the close of nominations, the group's name will appear next to the candidates' names on the ballot paper.

Applications for registration must include the details of the group's dedicated campaign bank account, appoint an agent for the group and contain signatures from all proposed group members. For more details, please see [Fact sheet 22 – Group registration process](#).

## NOMINATION DEPOSIT

A deposit of \$250 must be lodged with the Returning Officer by each candidate at the time of nomination. Deposits can be paid by cash, electronic funds transfer (EFT), bank cheque or BPoint through the ECQ's [Self Service Portal](#).

Nomination deposits are refunded to candidates who are successfully elected or who receive more than 4% of the total number of formal votes.

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## LATE OR INCOMPLETE NOMINATIONS

Candidate nominations cannot be accepted until all requirements have been met. It is strongly recommended that candidates plan to complete these steps well in advance of nominating to ensure that the deadline for close of nominations can be met. Nominations must be submitted before the close of the nomination period. Late or incomplete nominations cannot be accepted.

## After nominating

Once the nomination process has been completed, the Returning Officer for the local government area will provide candidates with certification of their nomination and will publish details of the ballot draw to be held.

For political party-endorsed candidates, registered officers will be provided with the candidate nomination certifications.

A notice of nominations will be published on the ECQ's website.



### RELATED FACT SHEETS

Fact sheet 1 – Eligibility to become a candidate

Fact sheet 8 – Record keeping requirements

Fact sheet 17 – Dedicated campaign bank accounts for candidates

Fact sheet 23 – Dedicated campaign bank accounts for groups of candidates

Fact sheet 28 – Dedicated campaign bank accounts for registered political parties

Fact sheets can be found on the [ECQ website](#).

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