

THIRD PARTIES

How-to-vote (HTV) cards

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

This fact sheet relates to third parties intending to distribute how-to-vote (HTV) cards for a local government election or by-election. For more information about third parties, please see [Fact sheet 31 – Funding and disclosure overview for third parties](#).

What is a how-to-vote card?

A HTV card is a card, flyer or pamphlet that does any of the following:

- contains a full or partial representation (or intended representation) of a ballot paper
- if optional preferential voting applies, either –
 - lists the names of any or all candidates with numbers indicating an order of voting preference against the names of any or all of the candidates
 - directs or encourages the casting of preference votes, other than a first preference vote
- if first-past-the-post voting applies – directs or encourages the casting of a vote for the number of candidates equal to the number of candidates to be elected.

Materials with phrases like 'Vote 1' or 'Put them last' are also considered HTV cards for elections using optional preferential voting or by-elections that use first-past-the-post voting.

You can find more information about the different voting systems on [our website](#).

 EXAMPLES

The following are HTV cards for an election that uses optional preferential voting:

- a card showing a ballot paper numbered with preferences
- a flyer that says 'Vote 1 Team Logan'
- a pamphlet that says 'Put the Gold Party Last'

What are the requirements for how-to-vote cards?

To distribute a HTV card during an **election period**, you must ensure the HTV card:

- is properly authorised
- is not misleading
- does not induce someone to cast an informal vote.

The **election period** starts the day notice of the election is issued and ends at 6pm on election day.

The ECQ does not regulate HTV cards distributed outside of the election period.

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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.



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What are the authorisation requirements?

All HTV cards must be authorised.

The authorisation must:

- state the name and address of the person who authorised the card
- appear on every printed side of the material
- be prominent and legible
- have a font size of at least:
 - 10 point if the card is A6 or smaller
 - 14 point if the card is larger than A6 up to A3 size (e.g. DL, A5, A4)
 - 20 point if the card is larger than A3.

It is common for text to reduce in size during printing. To avoid any issues with your authorisation, the ECQ strongly recommends using a font size that is larger than the minimum requirements.

Double-sided HTV cards must be authorised on both sides.

Any person may authorise a HTV card for a third party.

The address used in the authorisation can be the person's own residential or business address, or a post office box. The authoriser must be contactable at the address.

It is against the law to distribute a HTV card with no authorisation or a false authorisation.

EXAMPLES

- Authorised by Mary Tyler, 1/100 Queen St, Brisbane.
- Authorised by G. Smith, Organisation XYZ, PO Box 123, Port Douglas.

What is considered 'misleading'?

A third party must not distribute a HTV card if it is likely to mislead an elector about the ways of voting or induce them to cast an informal vote.

For example, a HTV card is misleading if it:

- contains incorrect voting instructions
- misspells the names of candidates, groups or political parties
- lists the names of candidates out of ballot paper order
- includes duplicate or missing preference numbers
- if first-past-the-post voting applies – does not clearly direct the elector to vote for the required number of candidates.

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.

Do how-to-vote cards need to be approved?

HTV cards for third parties do **not** need to be lodged with the ECQ for approval. However, we may confiscate and issue fines for HTV cards that do not meet the above requirements.

HTV cards for candidates, groups of candidates and registered political parties do require ECQ's approval before they can be distributed. For more details, see [Fact sheet 5](#).

For further information

This fact sheet mainly refers to part 9, division 3 of the LGEA. The Act is available in full at legislation.qld.gov.au. Participants in the electoral process should ensure they understand their obligations under the LGEA.



RELATED FACT SHEETS

Fact sheet 5 – How-to-vote cards for candidates, groups and registered political parties

Fact sheet 31 – Funding and disclosure overview for third parties

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

More information

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