

GUIDE TO ELECTORAL DISCLOSURE OBLIGATIONS

This fact sheet relates to candidates, groups of candidates, registered political parties, associated entities, third party campaigners and donors involved in local government elections.

Note for 2020 local government quadrennial elections

New legislation relating to the disclosure requirements for campaign donations and electoral expenditure commence on 20 January 2020. Announced candidates, sitting councillors, registered political parties, associated entities and third party campaigners will be required to lodge transitional disclosure returns in within 14 days of the new legislation commencing. Specific requirements apply to all electoral participants during the transitional period. Refer to [Transitional Disclosure Returns](#) for more information.

Under the *Local Government Electoral Act 2011*, all participants involved in running or supporting a campaign for a local government election have obligations to disclose political donations (gifts or loans) and/or campaign expenditure. The regulations ensure there is transparency in political campaigning and helps to maintain the integrity of the election process.

Below is a summary of the obligations of each group in relation to electoral disclosure requirements: (1) candidate and groups of candidates; (2) political donors, (3) registered political parties (including associated entities), and (4) third party campaigners.

For definitions and more information about these requirements, refer to [Disclosure of political donations](#) and [Disclosure of electoral expenditure](#).

1. Local candidates and groups of candidates

What	Requirement	When	Disclosure Period
Receiving a gift or loan	Candidates receiving gifts or loans of \$500 or more from a single entity during the candidate's disclosure period are required to give a real-time return, in addition to their election summary return	<p>Real-time return: Within 7 business days of receipt</p> <p>In the last 7 business days prior to election day: Within 24 hours of receipt</p> <p>Election summary return: Within 15 weeks after election day</p>	<p>For a candidate who has contested a local government election within the last 5 years: Start: 30 days after election day for the last election which the candidate contested. End: 30 days after election day for the election.</p> <p>For a candidate who has not contested a local government election within the last 5 years:</p>
Electoral expenditure incurred	Candidates who incur electoral expenditure of \$500 or more during their disclosure period are required to complete a disclosure return on the expenditure gift in real-time and an election summary return	<p>Real-time return: Within 7 business days of expenditure</p> <p>In the last 7 business days prior to election day: Within 24 hours of the expenditure being incurred</p> <p>Election summary return: Within 15 weeks after election day</p>	<p>Start: The day the candidate announces their intention to contest the election, is endorsed by their party, or nominates for the election (whichever is earlier). End: 30 days after election day for the election.</p> <p>Groups of candidates: Start: 30 days after election day for the most recently held quadrennial election. End: 30 days after election day for the current election.</p>

2. Political donors

What	Requirement	When	Disclosure Period
Gift made to candidate or group of candidates	Donors are required to give a return once the \$500 threshold has been reached during the disclosure period.	Within 7 business days.	Start: 30 days after election day for the last quadrennial election End: 30 days after election day for the election
Gift made to a registered political party	Donors are required to give a return once the \$500 threshold has been reached during the disclosure period.	Within 7 business days.	Donor disclosure period: Start: 30 days after election day for the last quadrennial election End: 30 days after election day for the election
Gift made to another third party (including third party campaigners)	Donors are required to give a return once the \$500 threshold has been reached during the donor's disclosure period.	Within 7 business days.	Start: 30 days after election day for the last quadrennial election End: 30 days after election day for the election.

3. Registered political parties (including associated entities)

What	Requirement	When	Disclosure Period
Receiving a gift or loan	Registered political parties receiving gifts or loans of \$1,000 or more from a single entity during a reporting period are required to give a real-time return, as well as their bi-annual periodic return.	Real-time return: Within 7 business days of receipt. Bi-annual periodic return: Within 8 weeks of the end of each period	Period 1: 1 January to 30 June each year Period 2: 1 July to 31 December each year
Electoral expenditure incurred	Registered political parties who incur electoral expenditure for local government election purposes of \$500 or more during their disclosure period are required to give a real-time return about the expenditure.	Real-time return: Within 7 business days of expenditure. In the last 7 business days prior to election day: Within 24 hours of the expenditure being incurred Election summary return: Within 15 weeks after election day.	Start: 30 days after election day for the last quadrennial election End: 30 days after election day for the election.

4. Third party campaigners

What	Requirement	When	Disclosure Period
Expenditure for political activity in support of the campaign for a candidate, group of candidates, registered political party or another third party donor or campaigner	If a third party incurs political expenditure (including making gifts) of \$500 or more during their disclosure period, a return about the expenditure must be given in real-time, and at the conclusion of the election.	<p>Real-time return: Within 7 business days of expenditure.</p> <p>Election summary return: Within 15 weeks after election day</p>	<p>Start: 30 days after election day for the last quadrennial election</p> <p>End: 30 days after election day for the election</p>
Gifts (donations) received that enabled expenditure for political activity	If a third party incurs political expenditure of \$500 or more during their disclosure period and received a gift that was used either wholly or in part to enable the expenditure, a return about the gift must be given in real-time and at the conclusion of the election.	<p>Real-time return: Within 7 business days of the gift being used to incur political expenditure.</p> <p>Election summary return: Within 15 weeks after election day</p>	<p>Start: 30 days after election day for the most recently held quadrennial election</p> <p>End: 30 days after election day for the current election.</p>