



Electoral Commission

QUEENSLAND

Dear candidate

The Electoral Commission of Queensland (ECQ) recently wrote to you with an important update about the forthcoming elections. We wanted to provide some further information today in light of the [Queensland Premier's National Cabinet Update](#). As per our previous advice, we also encourage you to keep an eye on our website, the [media section](#) and social media pages in particular, for other regular updates on important information.

Bans on indoor gatherings of more than 100 people for non-essential purposes and active queue management at polling places

- The National Cabinet has announced bans on indoor gatherings of more than 100 people for non-essential purposes and indicated that these will be enforced in Queensland.
- In line with previous advice, the forthcoming elections are considered essential. Indoor gatherings associated with them, such as vote casting and vote counting, are therefore considered to be occurring for an essential purpose.
- Nevertheless, the ECQ will be taking a cautious approach given this rapidly evolving situation and will be attempting to ensure that at no one time in any one enclosed polling place will there be more than 100 people. We seek your cooperation to help us achieve this.
- Our Returning Officers will be working with their polling booth supervisors to put related measures in place as soon as possible. This will include active queue management at early voting centres, based on the expectation that some queues may be longer given the lower number of people allowed inside a polling place at any one time.
- In that regard, the ECQ will be enhancing the number of staff at a majority of early voting centres. You will start to see these 'queue management teams' commencing very soon in some locations, with progressively more centres being staffed as we move deeper into the early voting period. We will advise you of these exact locations ASAP.

- These measures will complement the existing social distancing measures that are in place and evolving rapidly, and we ask that you continue to observe those recommendations, especially if engaging with electors who are waiting in queues to enter a polling place. This includes maintaining distances of 1.5 metres and applying appropriate hygiene practices, including no handshaking, a measure we recommend in [2020 Local Government Elections - COVID-19 Protection Measures](#).

How-to-vote cards and election material

- There has been demonstrable effort from candidates across the state to acknowledge and respond to the need to limit the number of campaign workers at polling booths, and to minimise the traditional physical contact associated with handing out how-to-vote cards and other election material.
- The ECQ thanks you for your support for these measures and encourages this to continue, and notes that approved how-to vote cards are and will continue to be added to candidates' records on the ECQ website.
- Regarding election material (i.e. non how-to-vote card material), the ECQ recently undertook to investigate the provision of a platform to assist candidates who have election material but do not have how-to-vote cards.
- The ECQ has determined that due to the resources required and the risks associated with providing such a platform, and the free and readily available alternative means of candidates publishing and displaying such material online to electors (e.g. social media sites, campaign websites), that it is not in a position to do this.

Priority times and assistance for elderly electors

- As you will know from the ECQ's statements to date (e.g. refer to [2020 Local Government Elections - COVID-19 Protection Measures](#)) and from [Queensland Health information](#), elderly people appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill due to COVID-19.
- It is already standard ECQ practice to bring to the front of a queue anyone who is elderly, pregnant or appears to have difficulty standing. This will continue, with a specific focus on ensuring that elderly electors receive priority treatment.
- In that regard, the ECQ has followed other recent social practice where a specific time period has been set aside in the morning for elderly citizens. As per our [Daily Update from 17 March 2020](#), the ECQ will be encouraging electors that are more vulnerable to COVID-19, including Queenslanders aged 60 and over, to vote early between 9am and 11am each day.

We ask again for your patience, understanding and support as we implement these important measures. If you would like to discuss any of the above further, please contact your Returning Officer or the ECQ on 1300 881 665.

Regards
Electoral Commission of Queensland



www.ecq.qld.gov.au



1300 881 665



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