

## ELECTION FUNDING CLAIMS

This fact sheet relates to candidates and registered political parties who contest a State election **after the 2020 State general election**. All references to legislation are to the *Electoral Act 1992*. The information in this fact sheet does not replace legislation. If you are concerned about your obligations, you should seek independent legal advice.

Eligible registered political parties and candidates in State elections can apply for the reimbursement of their electoral expenditure. This is referred to as 'election funding' and is calculated based on first preference votes received.

### Eligibility

A candidate is eligible to receive election funding if they receive at least 4% of the total number of formal first preference votes in their electoral district.<sup>1</sup>

A registered political party is eligible to receive election funding if a candidate who it endorsed for the election receives at least 4% of the total number of formal first preference votes in their electoral district.<sup>2</sup>

### Amounts payable

The amount of election funding that will be paid to eligible candidates and registered political parties will be **the lesser of** the following:

- the election funding rate multiplied by each first preference vote received by eligible candidates, or
- the amount of electoral expenditure claimed that is accepted by the ECQ.

### Election funding rates

The election funding rates state elections and by-elections held during the 2023/24 financial year are:

- \$3.223 for candidates per formal first preference vote, and
- \$6.445 for registered political parties per formal first preference vote for each eligible candidate.

Election funding rates are recalculated on 1 July each year.

### Electoral expenditure

Election funding can only be claimed for expenses which are considered electoral expenditure.

Refer to [Fact Sheet 8](#) for information about what is and is not electoral expenditure.

Claimable expenditure can be incurred at any time. However, a direct relationship showing how the expenditure relates to a campaign purpose for the election must be demonstrated.

Goods which are purchased for the intention of being on-sold as merchandise (e.g. to raise funds for a political party) are not considered to be for a campaign purpose so far as making an election funding claim is concerned.

### Making a claim

To submit a claim for election funding, the party's agent, candidate, or candidate's agent must lodge the claim within 20 weeks after election day by completing the relevant form:

- [Form QSG14A](#) (political parties), or
- [Form QSG14B](#) (candidates).

### What to include in a claim

The electoral expenditure for which funding is being sought must be itemised in the claim. Each claimed item must be supported by documentation. **Electronic copies of all records are preferred.**

Tax invoices must be dated, show the recipient details and include a description of

<sup>1</sup> See section 224

<sup>2</sup> See section 223

the goods or services provided. Purchase orders and order requisitions will not be accepted.

Claims for expenditure for the production, distribution, or publishing/broadcasting of advertisements and election material (e.g. newspaper advertisements, flyers, and pamphlets) must include a copy of the advertisement or election material.

All supporting documentation must be legible and clearly specify which item of expenditure it refers to. Claims for items where there is no clear link or explanation of how the item related to an election will **not** be accepted.

### **Determining a claim**

The ECQ will generally approve a claim if:

- the claim is for electoral expenditure, and
- the electoral expenditure was incurred for the election, and
- the registered political party or candidate is entitled to the claim.

The ECQ will generally reject a claim if the item:

- claimed does not meet the definition of electoral expenditure, or
- is not electoral expenditure that was incurred by the registered political party or candidate for the election, or
- is not substantiated by supporting documentation which satisfies the ECQ, or
- exceeds the maximum entitlement.

### **Seeking a review of a claim outcome**

If the ECQ refuses a claim, the candidate or party agent making the claim will be advised of the outcome in writing, as well as the reasons why the claim was refused.

The agent of the party or candidate may apply in writing to request the ECQ reconsider a rejected item. Applications must be made within 28 days after the candidate or agent is notified the claim is rejected.

### **Reconsideration of a claim**

The ECQ will reconsider a claim and provide the party agent or candidate with a notice stating the decision on the reconsideration and the reasons for the decision.

### **Receiving a payment**

A claim by an independent candidate will be paid to the candidate's State campaign account.

A claim by an agent of a registered political party will be paid to the party's State campaign account.

A claim by an endorsed candidate will be paid to the candidate's State campaign account unless the candidate has directed the ECQ to make the payment to the registered political party. Payment directions are optional and may be made when the candidate's dedicated State campaign bank account details are provided to the ECQ.

### **Record keeping**

Records in relation to a claim for election funding must be kept and made available to the ECQ for inspection for five years. Failure to keep relevant election records may incur a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units for each offence.

Refer to [Fact Sheet 21](#) for further information about record keeping requirements.

### Examples of what can be claimed as electoral expenditure:

- Newspaper advertising.
- Radio advertising.
- Television advertising.
- Social media advertising e.g., paying for post boosts.
- Graphic design for campaign advertising.
- Cost of producing advertising.
- Cost of displaying advertising e.g., billboards, cinema.
- Printing costs for election material.
- Delivery costs for distributing election material.
- Vehicle signage.
- Campaign banners and bunting.
- Printing of candidate business cards (if specifically for campaign).
- Campaign website design, hosting fees, domain name.
- Campaign photography e.g., candidate headshots for use in advertising.
- Election-specific clothing, including branded T-shirts and caps for campaign workers.
- Branded marquee or shade structure.
- Stakes (e.g. for road signage).
- Research/opinion poll-related costs.
- Provision of data or fees for consultants for a contracted service that is related to one of the activities listed above. (Note that consultant fees are considered electoral expenditure, however, wages for campaign staff are not).

### Examples of what cannot be claimed as electoral expenditure:

- Minor consumables (e.g. screws, washers, zip ties, etc.)
- Candidate nomination fees.
- Political party memberships and fees.
- Coffee, snacks, food, and drinks.
- Alcohol.
- Gifts or donations.
- Memberships, subscriptions, bank fees.
- Goods or merchandise purchased for the intention of on-selling for fundraising purposes.

- Gift cards, or expenses paid by gift cards.
- Stationery, office supplies, printer consumables.
- Lease of PO box.
- Penalties, fines, late fees, or administration fees.
- Wages for campaign workers.
- Legal fees.
- Insurance.
- Non-branded clothing.
- Dry cleaning.
- Mobile phone usage/call costs.
- Newspapers or magazines.
- Capital expenditure e.g., purchase of cars, trailers, phone handsets and accessories, eskies, microphones, bikes, fixtures/modifications to cars/bikes, drones, cameras, office equipment and office furniture.
- IT equipment - laptops, printers, hard drives, and other accessories.
- Thank you-gifts for volunteer workers.
- Office rent and utilities.
- Market stall fees for campaigning.
- Tickets to non-election related events.
- Candidate or campaign launch event or party.
- Meals while campaigning.
- Catering for public campaigning event e.g., barbeque for constituents.
- Costs for spouses, family members or guests who are participating in campaigning.
- After-parties or celebrations after polling closes.
- After polling day expenditures e.g., thank you cards for constituents.
- Expenses already claimed for other elections.
- Items that exceed the maximum entitlements.
- Items that are not substantiated by supporting documentation.
- Endorsed candidates cannot claim for the same expenditure that is being claimed by their party.