Direction about Distribution & Display of How-to-Vote Cards and Other Election Material at Polling Booths

Version 1.0

Approval

[Signature]

Pat Vidgen
Electoral Commissioner

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Purpose

The Electoral Commissioner is empowered under s200I of the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 and s392I of the Electoral Act 1992 to give a Direction about how, where or when how-to-vote cards and/or other election material may be distributed or displayed at a polling booth.

Rationale

A Direction may be made if the Electoral Commissioner is satisfied that a Direction is necessary to facilitate the holding of the 2020 Quadrennial Election, and Currumbin and Bundamba by-elections, in a way that minimises serious risks to the health and safety of persons caused by the public health emergency involving COVID-19.

Direction

The Electoral Commissioner hereby issues the following Directions to all persons distributing a how-to-vote card and/or other election material:

- All such persons attending a polling booth must maintain hygiene standards, in accordance with Queensland Health guidelines;
- All such persons must not shake hands, or attempt to shake hands, with electors as they are entering or waiting to enter a polling booth;
- All such persons must maintain social distancing while near a polling booth by staying 1.5 metres away from other people;
- Candidates, political parties and other electoral participants must actively attempt to minimise the number of workers engaging in these activities at a polling booth; and
- Where available, candidates, political parties and other electoral participants should make use of alternate how-to-vote card and election material distribution methods, including static display, use of a common collection point, or electronic distribution to electors away from a polling booth.

ECQ staff will be actively monitoring compliance with this Direction. Failure to comply with this Direction carries a maximum penalty of 10 penalty units, currently valued at $1,334.50.

The Electoral Commissioner also has the power to issue further directions, in the event ECQ staff observe non-compliance. Further directions may include outright prohibition of campaign workers, as well as further restriction or banning of how-to-vote card and election material distribution.

Candidates, political parties and other electoral participants who have already self-regulated in excess of what is directed above are encouraged to continue with those arrangements.

All existing laws and regulations regarding canvassing for votes at a polling booth continue to apply, including those relating to exclusion zones.

Effective

This Direction has immediate effect and remains in place until close of polls on 28 March 2020, unless otherwise revised.