

ELECTION FUNDING CLAIMS

This fact sheet relates to candidates and registered political parties who contest State elections and by-elections.

Under part 11, division 4 of the *Electoral Act 1992*, eligible registered political parties and candidates in State elections, following an election, can apply for reimbursement of electoral expenditure for an election based on each first preference vote they receive. This is referred to as 'election funding'.

Eligibility

A registered political party is eligible to receive election funding if a candidate whom a party endorses receives at least 6% of the total number of formal first preference votes made in an election.

A candidate is eligible to receive election funding if the candidate receives at least 6% of the total number of formal first preference votes made in an election.

Amounts payable

The amount of election funding to be paid to eligible registered political parties and independent candidates is the lesser of the following:

- the current election funding rate for each first preference vote received by a candidate or
- the amount of electoral expenditure claimed by a candidate or by a registered political party and accepted by the ECQ.

For the **2020 State general election**, the election funding rate is \$1.651 for candidates and \$3.304 for registered political parties per eligible vote.

Electoral expenditure

Electoral expenditure, for the purpose of election funding, is expenditure incurred by a political party or candidate for the purposes of a campaign for the election whether or not the expenditure is incurred during the expenditure cap period for the election.

Such expenditure can include, but is not limited to:

- designing, producing, printing, broadcasting or publishing an advertisement or other election material
- producing or distributing any other material during an election that advocates a vote for or against a party, candidate, or issue
- carrying out an opinion poll or other research relating to the election.

Refer to [Fact sheet 5 - Definition of electoral expenditure](#) for more information.

Only claims for electoral expenditure accepted by the ECQ will be paid. Examples of what can and cannot be claimed are provided below.

Making a claim

To receive election funding, the party agent or candidate, or the non-endorsed candidate must:

- lodge a claim within 20 weeks after election day for which the electoral funding is sought
- make a claim by using the relevant form:
 - [Form QSG14A](#) (registered political parties) or
 - [Form QSG14B](#) (candidates).

The claim must state electoral expenditure incurred for an election, and for which funding is sought, for each item claimed and must include relevant supporting documentation.

What to include in a claim

Each item of electoral expenditure referred to in a claim must be accompanied by supporting documentation. **Electronic copies of all records are preferred.**

Tax invoices must be dated showing recipient details and a description of 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) a copy of the advertisement or election material must be included.

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 an item related to a campaign will not be paid.

Determining a claim

The ECQ will approve payment for election funding if the ECQ is satisfied that:

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

The ECQ will reject a claim if:

- the item is not electoral expenditure that was incurred by the registered political party or candidate for the election
- the item is not substantiated by supporting documentation which satisfies the ECQ
- the item exceeds the maximum entitlement.

Appealing a claim

If the ECQ refuses a claim, it will advise the candidate or party agent making the claim in writing and the reasons for rejection of the claim.

The agent of the party or candidate may apply in writing to the ECQ requesting the ECQ reconsider the item rejected and providing reasons for the application. 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 a party agent on behalf of a registered political party will be paid to the party.

A claim by an independent (non-endorsed) candidate will be paid to the candidate or their agent.

Payments are deposited into the party's or candidate's nominated bank account.

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 record may incur a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units (valued at \$2,669 as a 1 July 2020) for each offence.

Examples of what can be claimed:

- Newspaper advertising
- Radio advertising
- Graphic design for advertising
- Cost of producing advertising
- Cost of displaying advertising e.g. billboards, cinema
- Delivery costs for distributing election material
- Social media costs e.g. paying for post boosts
- Vehicle signage
- Printing costs for election material
- Banners and bunting
- Hardware for displaying election signage (e.g. A-frames, timber stakes) – must demonstrate how it is related to the election
- T-shirts and caps for campaign workers
- Campaign photography e.g. candidate headshots
- Market stall fees for campaigning
- Electorate maps
- Research/opinion poll-related costs
- Consultant fees (these are considered electoral expenditure, however, wages for campaign staff are not)
- Stationery, office supplies, printer consumables (within reason and only for campaign use)
- Printing of business cards (specifically for campaign)
- Petrol for vehicle used for campaigning
- Mobile phone usage/call costs, if it can be demonstrated costs were for campaign use. The cost of the handset, charger, battery, etc. cannot be claimed.
- Branded marquee for campaigning
- Catering for public campaigning event e.g. barbeque for constituents
- Office rent and utilities (but it must be a dedicated campaign office used specifically for the election (not a usual place of business or residence))
- Campaign website design, hosting fees, domain name
- Vehicle rental costs - if specifically for campaign use.

Examples of what cannot be claimed:

- Candidate nomination fees
- Gift cards, or expenses paid by gift cards
- 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
- Fines, late fees or administration fees
- Alcohol
- Thank you gifts for volunteer workers
- Newspapers or magazines
- Meals for candidates while campaigning
- Memberships, subscriptions, bank fees
- Dry-cleaning
- Tickets to non-election related events
- Gifts or donations
- Clothing (except for clothing that is directly related to the election e.g. branded, campaign t-shirts)
- Candidate or campaign launch event or party
- After-parties or celebrations after polling closes
- After polling day expenditures e.g. thank you cards for constituents
- Legal fees
- Insurance
- Costs for spouses, family members or guests who are participating in campaigning
- **Expenses already claimed for other elections**
- **Items that exceed the maximum entitlements**
- **Items that are not substantiated by supporting documentation**
- **Endorsed candidates cannot claim expenditure that is being claimed by their party.**