

## ALL ELECTION PARTICIPANTS

### Authorisation of election matter

Unless otherwise stated, all references to legislation are to the *Electoral Act 1992 (EA)*. The information in this fact sheet does not replace legislation. If you are concerned about your circumstances, you should seek independent legal advice.

This fact sheet relates to any person who authors any material able or intended to influence an elector in relation to voting at an election or to otherwise affect the result of an election during a state election or by-election period.

Election matter is subject to a range of regulations which carry penalties for non-compliance.

### How-to-vote cards

How-to-vote cards have specific regulations covering their design, authorisation and distribution. A fact sheet covering these regulations will be available closer to the election.

### What is election matter?

Election matter means anything that can or intends to:

- influence an elector in relation to voting at an election

or

- affect the result of an election.

It includes, but is not limited to advertising via:

- radio
- television
- cinema
- social media
- internet
- email
- signs
- text message
- newspapers
- magazines
- billboards
- pamphlets
- flyers
- letters
- corflutes
- opinion polls or research

### Does the author of election material have to be named?

Any person who prints, publishes, distributes or broadcasts election material **during an election period** must ensure an authorisation is stated on the material.

Material can be authorised by any person.

The authorisation must show the **name** and **address** of the person authorising the material. It must be a physical address (typically the person's own residential address). This address must not be a post office box.

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#### More information

If you need more information relating to Funding, Disclosure and Compliance, please contact ECQ on 1300 881 665 or by emailing [fad@ecq.qld.gov.au](mailto:fad@ecq.qld.gov.au).



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## When is the election period?

The election period begins on the day after the writ for an election is issued and ends at 6pm on election day.

The ECQ does not regulate authorisation of election material outside of the election period.

## Examples of correct authorisations:

- On **written** material, an authorisation stating: '*Authorised by Bob Smith, 1 Queen Street, Brisbane*'.
  - The text must be of sufficient size to be clearly legible by a voter who wishes to read the authorisation in a way the material is intended to ordinarily be read, and must not be obstructed by other objects such as screws or stickers.
  - On a double-sided, printed item like a flyer, the authorisation only needs to be printed on one side.
- On a **television** advertisement, a visual and spoken authorisation at the end of the advertisement.
- On a **radio** advertisement, a spoken authorisation stating the authoriser's name and address at the end of the advertisement.
- On a **social media** profile or page, an authorisation should be placed in a prominent position on the page. For example, for a Facebook page set up for an election campaign, the authorisation should be stated clearly in the top banner, page details or by adding an impressum to the page.
- On a **social media post, digital advertisement or digital banner**, every post does not need to be authorised, but it is important to ensure that election material that can be shared, forwarded or reposted carries an authorisation.
  - An authorisation should be embedded in an image or video so that any subsequent viewer can identify the authoriser.
  - If the full text of the authorisation does not fit in a post or advertisement, a link to a website that clearly identifies the authoriser is acceptable.
- On a **website** or **app**, an authorisation should be placed on each webpage on a campaign-specific website. For a general website, the authorisation would only need to be placed on webpages containing election matter.
- In a **robocall** (unsolicited, automated telephone messaging), a spoken authorisation at the end of the call.
- In an **email**, the authorisation should be in the signature block.
- In a **text message**, if an authorisation cannot be included in the text message itself, it should clearly refer to another document or notice (so they can properly be considered one message) and contain a link to that second part of the message so it is easily accessible to the recipient. The second part of the message must contain the authorisation information.

## More information on state government elections

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## Election signage

The display of election signage next to local and state-controlled roads is regulated by the Department of Transport and Main Roads. Information on election signage and state-controlled roads can be obtained from the Department of Transport and Main Roads: [qld.gov.au/transport/safety/signs/election-signs](http://qld.gov.au/transport/safety/signs/election-signs).

Local councils determine the rules that apply to election signage and advertising devices (such as corflutes) next to local roads, private property and on some state-controlled roads in their area.

The ECQ is responsible for regulating the display of election signage around polling booths during the early voting period and on election day. Please refer to state government [Fact sheet 2 – Election signage at polling places](#) for further information.

All individuals and organisations planning to display election signage should make themselves aware of the rules relating to the quantity and placement of signs, and the timeframes during which they can be displayed.

If permissions are needed to display election signage, be sure to receive them before displaying any election signage.

There are significant penalties for non-compliance with election signage regulations including fines and prosecution.

## Record keeping requirements

All election participants must keep records of their election advertising. A **copy of the advertisement or election material must be kept** along with:

- a description of the audience to which the election material was distributed, published or broadcast
- if the distribution, publication or broadcast relates to an electoral district, the name of the electoral district.

A comprehensive review of records required to be kept from an election can be found in [Fact sheet 4 – Record keeping requirements](#). Records may be kept in paper or electronic form and must be kept for 5 years from the date the record is made.

## For further information

This fact sheet mainly refers to part 11 of the EA. The Act is available in full at [legislation.qld.gov.au](http://legislation.qld.gov.au). Participants in the electoral process should ensure they understand their obligations under the EA.



### RELATED FACT SHEETS

Fact sheet 2 – Election signage at polling places

Fact sheet 4 – Record keeping requirements

Fact sheets can be found on the [ECQ website](#).

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