

STATE CAMPAIGN BANK ACCOUNTS

Under Queensland's *Electoral Act 1992*, candidates, political parties and registered third parties are required to establish a dedicated State campaign bank account with a bank or other financial institution; and use it for all transactions relating to a State election campaign.

Dedicated campaign bank account details must be provided to the ECQ. This provides the transparency and accountability needed to ensure accurate tracking of financial transactions related to a State election for which caps on electoral expenditure apply.

Who is required to have a dedicated State campaign bank account?

- Independent candidates for a State election
- Candidates who are endorsed by a registered political party for a State election
- Registered political parties, and
- Registered third parties (including third parties who incur more than \$6,000 in electoral expenditure and are required to register).

An **associated entity** of a candidate or a registered political party is required to use the dedicated State campaign account of the candidate or registered political party for all political donations and electoral expenditure relating to a State election. Refer to [Fact sheet 13 - Information for associated entities](#) for more information.

A **registered third party** is an individual or entity that incurs more than \$6,000 in electoral expenditure towards a State election within the election's capped expenditure period. They are required to register with the ECQ, including providing the details of their dedicated campaign bank account. Refer to [Fact sheet 12 - Third party registration process](#) for more information.

When to open a dedicated State campaign bank account

The dedicated account must be established:

- by a candidate - when they indicate their intention to stand for State election, or incur any amount of electoral expenditure towards their campaign,
- by a political party - when the party becomes registered in Queensland,
- by a third party - when they incur \$6,000 cumulative total of electoral expenditure for a State election and are required to register with the ECQ, or they are registered with the ECQ.

The dedicated bank account cannot be closed until all disclosure and reporting obligations relating to the election have been fulfilled.

Candidates, registered political parties and registered third parties who regularly participate in Queensland State elections, may maintain the same bank account for successive elections. A new account does not have to be opened and closed for each election event; however, all disclosure, reporting and audit requirements must be met in full for each election.

When to notify the ECQ of bank account details

The ECQ must be notified of the dedicated campaign account details within 5 business days of a candidate, political party or registered third party becoming a participant in the election. Account details can be provided to the ECQ by completing [Form QSG16 - Notification of State campaign bank account details](#).

Should any of the dedicated campaign account details change at any time, the ECQ must be notified within 5 business days. The details can be amended by

completing [Form QSG16 - Notification of State campaign bank account details](#).

Note: Transitional arrangement for the 2020 State general election

On commencement of the new provisions under the *Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2020* on 1 August 2020, candidates and registered political parties have **14 days** to provide their dedicated campaign account details to the ECQ.

How to use a State campaign bank account

Electoral expenditure incurred by, or for, a participant in an election must be paid for from their dedicated State campaign bank account.

For the 2020 State general election, participants can deposit money from another account, gifts, loans and other proceeds into their dedicated campaign account.

New requirements relating to amounts permitted to be paid into a State campaign account and donation caps will commence from 1 July 2022.

Reporting and compliance

Election participants are required to lodge a copy of the bank statement for their dedicated State campaign accounts with their election summary returns after the election. The statements provided to the ECQ must cover the period that:

- starts when the first item of electoral expenditure is incurred for the election or the start of the capped expenditure period, whichever is the earlier date, and
- ends on the day before the election summary return is lodged with the ECQ.

For details about disclosure obligations, refer to:

- [Fact sheet 3 - Disclosure of gifts and loans received](#) and
- [Fact sheet 6 - Disclosure of electoral expenditure](#).

Registered political parties are also required to provide the ECQ with bank statements covering the relevant reporting period when lodging their 6-monthly periodic returns.

How long must a State campaign bank account be maintained?

The participant must maintain the State campaign bank account until all election obligations for the participant for the relevant capped expenditure period have been met by the participant or their agent and the ECQ notified.

Any remaining funds in the campaign account may be disbursed or held in the account for a future election campaign. All statements and records relating to a dedicated State campaign bank account must be kept, and made available to the ECQ on request, for a period of **5 years after the record is made**.

Offences and penalties related to State campaign bank accounts

- Not maintaining a dedicated campaign bank account until election obligations have been met: Maximum penalty - 200 penalty units (see section 215)
- Not keeping appropriate records, or not making available to the ECQ on request, a record relating to a political donation: Maximum penalty - 20 penalty units (see part 11, division 12A).

(As of 1 July 2020, one penalty unit is \$133.45).