

GUIDE TO NOMINATING AS A CANDIDATE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION

This fact sheet relates to candidates and groups of candidates contesting local government elections and by-elections.

The Electoral Commission of Queensland (ECQ) manages the candidate nomination process for local government elections.

In Queensland, you can nominate as:

- an individual
- a member of a group of candidates
- an endorsed candidate of a registered political party.

Note: You can choose to stand for election as a councillor or as mayor - but not for both. **Dual candidacy** is not permitted.

When to lodge a nomination

The nomination period commences once the **Notice of Election** is issued by the ECQ. This will be published on the ECQ's website.

Nominations must be lodged before **midday** on the last day of the nomination period. Details on dates and times of when nominations close are published in the Notice of Election.

How to lodge a nomination

Nominations are lodged with the Returning Officer, who is the ECQ's representative in each local government area. Contact details for Returning Officers and their office locations are advised following the publication of the Notice of Election.

Nominations for candidates (including candidates who are members of a group) must be lodged on the approved nomination form, which can be accessed via:

- the ECQ Candidate [Self-Service Portal](#)
- downloaded from the [ECQ website](#) or
- obtained from the Returning Officer.

Completed nomination forms can be submitted online via the Candidate Self-Service Portal or can be lodged with the Returning Officer responsible for the local government area being contested, or the ECQ head office, in person or by post.

The completed form must be received by the Returning Officer or the ECQ before **midday** on the day nominations close, along with the \$250 nomination fee.

If a candidate is endorsed by a political party registered in Queensland, the Registered Officer of the political party is responsible for lodging the candidate's nomination form directly with the ECQ head office in Brisbane. In this case, the candidate must ensure that all required information is provided to the party's Registered Officer in advance of the nomination process.

STEPS TO NOMINATE AS A CANDIDATE

There are several steps that must be completed prior to nominating:

1. Mandatory councillor training

All candidates are required to complete a free online training course with the **Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning** (formerly DLGRMA) within the six-month period prior to nominating for a quadrennial election or by-election.

More information

For more information about local government elections, contact the ECQ on 1300 881 665 or by emailing ecq@ecq.qld.gov.au.

This applies to ALL candidates - whether they have previously contested an election or have never contested an election.

Candidates should refer to '[So you want to be a councillor](#)' on the DLGRMA website to access the training.

2. Dedicated campaign bank account

Candidates must establish a dedicated bank account to manage their campaign finances and provide the account details to the ECQ on their nomination form.

Candidates who are members of a group of candidates are required to have one dedicated campaign bank account for the group. Account details for the group's dedicated account must be provided on each candidate's nomination form.

Under Queensland's electoral laws, all campaign **donations** received - and **electoral expenditure** incurred - must be transacted via this account and reported to the ECQ in line with disclosure obligations.

Note: Any amounts remaining in the dedicated campaign account at the end of the election must either be kept in the account for a future election or be given to a charity or a political party of which the candidate was a member during their disclosure period. The amounts cannot be withdrawn for personal use (even if the amounts are made up of the candidate's own funds).

3. Declaration of personal interests

Details of a candidate's personal and material interests and affiliations must be declared on the nomination form.

Candidates should prepare the following information in advance of nominating:

- any membership of a registered political party or trade or professional organisation held by the candidate within the 12 months prior to nominating
- whether the candidate, or a close associate of the candidate, has a contractual arrangement* with the council being contested

- whether the candidate, or a close associate of the candidate, is engaged in a contractual process* with the council being contested, and
- whether the candidate, or a close associate of the candidate, has made any applications, or representations about particular applications (which are yet to be decided), to the council being contested.

* Refer to the **ECQ Local Government Glossary** for definitions of contractual arrangements and processes with councils.

For the purposes of candidate nominations, a person is a **close associate** of a candidate if the person is:

- a spouse of the candidate, or
- a partner in a partnership with the candidate, or
- an entity for which the candidate is an executive officer or board member.

4. Endorsement

Candidates who are not endorsed by a registered political party must obtain endorsement from six electors who live within the local government area (for undivided councils) or six electors who live within the division or ward of the local government area being contested (for divided councils). This includes candidates who are contesting the election as a member of a group of candidates.

A candidate operating as a member of a group of candidates (i.e. not a political party) to contest the election as a team, must provide the ECQ with a record of the group's membership which states the name of the group, the names of the candidates who are members of the group, and the dedicated bank account details of the group. Each member of the group must sign the record of membership of the group.

A candidate endorsed by a registered political party must be nominated by the Registered Officer of the political party. Party-endorsed candidates are required to sign a Consent and Declaration Form to consent to the nomination. The Consent and Declaration Form can be obtained from

the Registered Officer of the political party or from the ECQ and should be provided to the party's Registered Officer by each candidate in advance of nomination.

5. Nomination deposit

A deposit of \$250 must be lodged with the Returning Officer by each candidate at the time of nomination. Deposits can be paid by cash, electronic funds transfer (EFT), bank cheque or BPoint through the ECQ Self-Service Portal.

Nomination deposits are refunded to candidates who are successfully elected and to candidates who receive more than 4% of the total number of formal votes.

Candidate nominations cannot be lodged until all requirements have been met. It is strongly recommended that candidates plan to complete these steps well in advance of nominating to ensure that the deadline for close of nominations can be met. Late or incomplete nominations cannot be accepted.

AFTER NOMINATION

Once the nomination process has been completed, the Returning Officer for the local government area will provide candidates with certification of their nomination and will advise details of the ballot draw to be held.

For political party-endorsed candidates, Registered Officers will be provided with the candidate nomination certifications.

A notice of nominations will be published on the ECQ's website. Under the *Local Government Electoral Act 2011*, the ECQ must publish prescribed information from the candidate nomination form for each candidate following their nomination. This information will be published on the ECQ website and will remain publicly available until the conclusion of the election.

Information which will be held by the ECQ but **will not be disclosed** to the public as part of the nomination process:

- residential address of a candidate who is a silent elector
- residential address of close associates named on a candidate's nomination form
- residential address of a person who is an elector endorsing a candidate, and
- details of the dedicated campaign bank account, including BSB and account number, name of account and financial institution, of the candidate or group of candidates.

By signing the nomination form, candidates are (1) declaring that they are eligible to be a councillor and not disqualified under any provisions of the governing legislation, and (2) consenting to the information provided in their nomination form being published by the ECQ.

The legislation governing eligibility to become a councillor can be found in the *Local Government Act 2009*, *City of Brisbane Act 2010* and *Local Government Electoral Act 2011*, which can be accessed via www.legislation.qld.gov.au.