

## THIRD PARTIES

### Expenditure caps for third parties

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 provides information about expenditure caps for both registered and unregistered third parties who participate in state elections and by-elections.

### What are expenditure caps?

Expenditure caps are limitations on the amount of electoral expenditure that can be incurred during the capped expenditure period for a state election.

It is unlawful for a third party to exceed their expenditure cap during the capped expenditure period.

The caps apply to electoral expenditure which has a specific meaning for state elections and by-elections. See [Fact sheet 7 – Definition of electoral expenditure](#) to understand more about what is and what is not electoral expenditure.

### Who do expenditure caps apply to?

Expenditure caps apply to registered and unregistered third parties among others.

For further information about third parties and registration requirements for state elections, see [Fact sheet 19 – Funding and disclosure overview for third parties](#).

### When do expenditure caps apply?

Expenditure caps apply to electoral expenditure incurred during a capped expenditure period for an election. The capped expenditure period starts on:

- for the 2028 state general election – 27 March 2028
- for a by-election – the day the writ for the election is issued.

The capped expenditure period ends at 6pm on election day.

The date electoral expenditure is paid for or invoiced is not necessarily when it is *incurred*.

For more information about when expenditure is incurred, see [Fact sheet 7 – Definition of electoral expenditure](#).

### What is the expenditure cap amount?

The expenditure cap varies depending upon the type of election and participant.

For the 2028 state general election, the cap for a **registered third party** is:

- **\$108,898.38** per electoral district
- **\$1,251,705.56** in total across Queensland

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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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For a by-election, the expenditure cap for a registered third party is **\$108,898.38**.

For an **unregistered third party**, the expenditure cap amount for a state general election or by-election is **\$6,000**. This cap does not apply separately for each electoral district – it is the total cap for the entire election.

## Electoral expenditure relating to an electoral district

Electoral expenditure relates to an electoral district if the expenditure is incurred for advertising or election material that is communicated to voters in that district and not mainly communicated to voters outside that district.

If electoral expenditure is incurred to carry out an opinion poll or research, the expenditure will only be counted towards the third party's general expenditure cap.

## Record keeping

All election participants must keep records for 5 years. This is required to demonstrate compliance in relation to all electoral expenditure, disclosure, and reporting requirements. Refer to [Fact sheet 4 – Record keeping requirements](#) for more information.

## Compliance and penalties

Incurring electoral expenditure which exceeds a third party's electoral expenditure cap is an offence that carries substantial penalties including potential prosecution. Twice the amount of the excess expenditure may also be recovered by the ECQ as a debt to the State.

## For further information

This fact sheet mainly refers to part 11, division 9 of the EA. The EA 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 4 – Record keeping requirements

Fact sheet 7 – Definition of electoral expenditure

Fact sheet 8 – Disclosure of electoral expenditure and election summary returns

Fact sheet 19 – Funding and disclosure overview for third parties

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

## More information on state government elections

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