

## CAMPAIGN BANK ACCOUNTS AND USE OF CREDIT CARDS

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

### Dedicated campaign bank accounts

Candidates planning to contest a local government election must open a dedicated campaign bank account prior to nominating for an election or by-election.

Account details must be provided to the Electoral Commission of Queensland (ECQ) during the candidate nomination process. Account details are not made public by the ECQ.

All gifts and loans received in support of the campaign must be deposited directly into this account and all expenses relating to the campaign must be paid from this account, under Queensland's electoral legislation.

Self-funded candidates are required to operate a dedicated bank account and use this account for all transactions relating to their campaign.

Groups of candidates only require one dedicated bank account for the group. The details for this shared dedicated account must be provided to the ECQ by each candidate in the group during the nomination process, and when registering the group with the ECQ.

After the election, all candidates and groups of candidates are required to provide bank statements for their dedicated campaign accounts to the ECQ with their election summary return.

Records relating to the dedicated bank account must be kept and made available to the ECQ for at least **five years** after the election.

**Note:** There are strict regulations on how campaign funds can be disbursed from a dedicated bank account after an election. 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 The amounts cannot be withdrawn for personal use (even if the amounts are made up of the candidate's own funds).

### Use of credit cards not permitted

A dedicated bank account must not have a credit card facility attached. **The use of credit cards is strictly prohibited** for local government election campaign expenses, as is using dedicated bank account funds to pay for a charge incurred using a credit card.

### Offences

There are financial penalties for not complying with the dedicated account requirements and for using a credit card for campaign expenses. Failure to comply with banking requirements carries a maximum penalty of 100 penalty units (valued at \$13,345 as at 1 July 2020).

Failing to comply with dedicated bank account requirements is also an integrity offence, meaning a local government election candidate may also be disqualified from becoming a councillor.

### 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).