| # | Election timeline | Requirement | Explanation | Additional resources | Date/s completed |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Pre-election |
| 1 | Before the notice of election is issued. | Create an account in the Self-Service Portal (SSP)  | We offer many candidate services online. To access those services, you need a Self-Service Portal (SSP) account. * Create your SSP account and link yourself to the electoral roll. Doing this early will ensure you can access the SSP as soon as you need it.
* Been a candidate before? You may already have a SSP account. Try logging in to make sure you know your username and password.
 | [How to log in to the Electronic Disclosure System (EDS) using the Self-Service Portal](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/24930/EDS-User-Guide-How-to-login-to-the-Electronic-Disclosure-System-using-the-Self-Service-Portal.pdf) |  |
| 2 | Before the notice of election is issued. | Let us know that you intend to be a candidate | Once you have created an SSP account, you should “announce” your candidacy. This lets the ECQ know that you intend to nominate as a candidate, and we can begin sending you information you may find useful.* If you are completing this checklist after nominating, you don’t need to tell us that you intend to be a candidate. Your candidacy details will automatically attach to your profile when you create your SSP account.
 | [How to log in to the Electronic Disclosure System (EDS) using the Self-Service Portal](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/24930/EDS-User-Guide-How-to-login-to-the-Electronic-Disclosure-System-using-the-Self-Service-Portal.pdf) |  |
| 3 | Before the notice of election is issued. | Access the [Electronic Disclosure System (EDS)](disclosures.ecq.qld.gov.au) | * Make sure you can access the Electronic Disclosure System (EDS) and have the option to lodge a return as a candidate.
* Checking this now will ensure you can do what you need to do when you’re busy during the election.
 | [How to log in to the Electronic Disclosure System (EDS) using the Self-Service Portal](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/24930/EDS-User-Guide-How-to-login-to-the-Electronic-Disclosure-System-using-the-Self-Service-Portal.pdf) |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Any time before nominations close. | Register as a group (if applicable) | Do you intend to share resources or money, or appearing in advertising with other candidates for your council election?* If so, you and the other candidates will need to register as a group before nominations close.
* You **must not conduct group campaign activities** until you register your group.
 | [Fact Sheet 5 – Groups of candidates](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/7092/LG-Fact-sheet-5-Information-for-groups-of-candidates.pdf) |  |
| 5 | Any time before you nominate. | Open a dedicated campaign bank account | * You must open a dedicated campaign bank account before you spend any money on your campaign and before you accept any donations (gifts or loans).
* You will need details of your dedicated campaign account to nominate for the election.
* You must use your dedicated campaign account to directly pay for all campaign expenses, and directly receive all gifts/loans. You cannot use the account for any non-election expenses.
* You may use a debit card that is directly linked to your dedicated campaign account.
* You must not use a credit card or any other bank account to pay for any expenses.
* Be careful with self-funding. At the end of the election, **you can’t take money out** of your dedicated account, so be mindful of how much you deposit into the dedicated account.
 | [Fact Sheet 3 – Campaign bank accounts](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0029/6887/LG-Fact-sheet-3-Campaign-bank-accounts-and-use-of-credit-cards.pdf) |  |
| 6 | Every day. | Have you spent more than $500 on electoral expenditure?Has any person or entity given you more than $500 (either as a single amount or as several smaller gifts or loans?) Have you told your donors? | Access the EDS (refer Steps #1-3 above) and disclose!* At this point, all disclosures must be made within **seven business days** of exceeding the $500 threshold.
* We recommend you **check your bank account transactions every day** to make sure you have disclosed everything you need to.
* We also strongly recommend you review the rules around prohibited donors and anonymous gifts/loans.
* If you have to disclose a donation, you **must tell the donor** that they have to disclose too.

Keep up to date to avoid a fine for failing to make disclosures by the due date.  | [Fact Sheet 12 – Disclosure of political donations](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/6904/LG-Fact-sheet-12-Disclosure-of-political-donations.pdf)[Fact Sheet 13 – Disclosure of electoral expenditure](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/7091/LG-Fact-sheet-13-Disclosure-of-electoral-expenditure.pdf)[Fact Sheet 15 – Information for political donors](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0024/6909/LG-Fact-sheet-15-Information-for-political-donors.pdf) |  |
| 7 | Within six months before nominating  | Mandatory candidate training | Anyone who intends to be a local government candidate must complete free mandatory training within six months before nominating.* The training is conducted by the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. Access it [here](https://www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au/so-you-want-to-be-a-councillor/training) and or call (07) 3452 7148.
 | [Fact Sheet 2 – How to nominate as a candidate for local government elections](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0027/6885/LG-Fact-sheet-2-How-to-nominate-as-a-candidate-for-local-government-election.pdf) |  |
| Election period |
| 8 | When the notice of election is issued | Officially nominate as a candidate | An official nomination may be lodged only:* after the notice of election is issued, and
* before 12pm on the cut-off day for nomination.
* Please lodge your nomination as soon as possible to allow for any errors or omissions to be corrected before the deadline.
* Late nominations cannot be accepted.
 | [Fact Sheet 2 – How to nominate as a candidate for local government elections](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0027/6885/LG-Fact-sheet-2-How-to-nominate-as-a-candidate-for-local-government-election.pdf) |  |
| 9 | Every day | Check transactions and make disclosures | By now, you have probably spent at least some money on your campaign and may have received some donations.* Keep checking your bank account for transactions that must be disclosed such as gifts and loans, or any electoral expenditure that has been incurred.
* Access the EDS (refer Steps #1-3 above) and disclose!
 | [Fact Sheet 12 – Disclosure of political donations](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/6904/LG-Fact-sheet-12-Disclosure-of-political-donations.pdf)[Fact Sheet 13 – Disclosure of electoral expenditure](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/7091/LG-Fact-sheet-13-Disclosure-of-electoral-expenditure.pdf) |  |
| 10 | Every day | Authorise election material | Once the formal election period commences, all advertising material must be authorised with a name and address (not a PO Box). * Make sure you check your social media accounts, text messages, flyers, corflutes, etc.
 | [Fact Sheet 6 – Electoral advertising and signage](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/6893/LG-Fact-sheet-6-Electoral-advertising%2C-authorisation-and-signage.pdf) |  |
| 11 | Before you distribute how-to-vote cards | Lodge your how-to-vote cards for approval.  | How-to-vote cards that are authorised for a candidate (or a group of candidates) must be lodged with the ECQ for approval seven business days before they are to be distributed. * Not everything will be a how-to-vote card, so please read fact sheet 8 carefully.
 | [Fact Sheet 8 – How-to-vote cards](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0021/9192/LG-Fact-sheet-8-How-to-vote-cards.pdf) |  |
| 12 | Last seven business days before election day.  | Keep disclosing | Access the EDS (refer Steps #1-3 above) and disclose!* Keep checking your bank account for transactions that must be disclosed such as gifts and loans, or any electoral expenditure that has been incurred.
* At this point in the election, all disclosures must be completed within **24 hours.**
 | [Fact Sheet 12 – Disclosure of political donations](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/6904/LG-Fact-sheet-12-Disclosure-of-political-donations.pdf)[Fact Sheet 13 – Disclosure of electoral expenditure](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/7091/LG-Fact-sheet-13-Disclosure-of-electoral-expenditure.pdf) |  |
| After election day |
| 13 | After election day | Review your records. Lodge any outstanding returns | Now that the election is over, you should:* review your bank account transactions,
* lodge any outstanding returns for electoral expenditure (you may have missed some!), and
* lodge any outstanding returns for gifts/loans received.

If you still have election expenses to pay, you must disclose those costs as well. This is your opportunity to review your records, make sure everything reconciles, and fix any mistakes. | [Fact Sheet 12 – Disclosure of political donations](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/6904/LG-Fact-sheet-12-Disclosure-of-political-donations.pdf)[Fact Sheet 13 – Disclosure of electoral expenditure](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/7091/LG-Fact-sheet-13-Disclosure-of-electoral-expenditure.pdf) |  |
| 14 | After election day | Submit an election summary return | Every candidate must lodge an election summary return. This is an entirely separate process to the disclosures you made during the election. Every candidate must complete this process.* You have 15 weeks to lodge an election summary return.
* You will be required to attach your dedicated bank account statement.
 | [Fact Sheet 12 – Disclosure of political donations](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/6904/LG-Fact-sheet-12-Disclosure-of-political-donations.pdf)[Fact Sheet 13 – Disclosure of electoral expenditure](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/7091/LG-Fact-sheet-13-Disclosure-of-electoral-expenditure.pdf) |  |
| 15 | Notify your donors | Are your donations still showing as orange in the EDS? | If you have orange “UNREC” donations in the EDS, it means your donors are yet to disclose them.* Contact your donors to remind them to comply with their disclosure obligations.
* It’s recommended that you send a reminder in writing.
 | [Fact Sheet 15 – Information for political donors](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0024/6909/LG-Fact-sheet-15-Information-for-political-donors.pdf) |  |
| 16 | After election day | Dedicated bank account | Do you still have money in your dedicated campaign bank account? If yes, you must either:* save it for a future local government election,
* give it to charity, or
* give it to a registered political party (but only if you’re a member of the party).
* You cannot put any money back into your personal account (even if it is your own money)
 | [Fact Sheet 3 – Campaign bank accounts](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0029/6887/LG-Fact-sheet-3-Campaign-bank-accounts-and-use-of-credit-cards.pdf) |  |
| 17 | After election day | Back-up your records | What do you do with all the invoices, advertising artwork, emails, receipts, and the other records you have accumulated?* You must retain them for five years.
* Back up your electronic records and store them somewhere safe but accessible (in case you are asked to provide them).

Remember, your records may prove that you did everything within your power to comply with your legal obligations.  | [Fact Sheet 4 – Record keeping requirements](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0031/6889/LG-Fact-sheet-4-Record-keeping-requirements.pdf) |  |