

GROUPS OF CANDIDATES

Funding and disclosure overview

Unless otherwise stated, all references to legislation are to the *Local Government Electoral Act 2011* (LGEA). The information in this fact sheet does not replace legislation. If you are concerned about your obligations, you should seek independent legal advice.

This fact sheet relates to groups of candidates and their agents participating in local elections and by-elections.

What is a group of candidates?

Two or more candidates may form a group to campaign collectively in a local government election, execute common policies and achieve shared goals if elected to council. Candidates who form a group are also able to pool their electoral expenditure caps.

Candidates **must** register as a group with the ECQ **before** engaging in group campaign activities. Applications for registration can be made up to the day before election day.

For more information about group campaign activities or group registration, please refer to [Fact sheet 22 – Group registration process](#).

Should groups of candidates appoint an agent?

An agent is an individual responsible for ensuring an election participant's compliance obligations under the LGEA are met.

A group of candidates **must** appoint an agent when registering as a group.

See [Fact sheet 38 – Funding and disclosure overview for agents](#) for further information about who can be an agent and their responsibilities.

Do groups need a dedicated campaign bank account?

A group of candidates **must** establish a dedicated campaign bank account for the election and provide the account details when applying to register the group.

The group's dedicated campaign bank account details will also need to be provided by each candidate as part of the nomination process (which is separate to the group registration process). Nominations cannot be accepted without these details.

See [Fact sheet 23 – Dedicated campaign bank accounts for groups](#).

What disclosure obligations do groups have?

DISCLOSURE OF GIFTS AND LOANS RECEIVED

Agents for a group of candidates must disclose all gifts and loans received of \$500 or more. Returns for gifts and loans must be lodged with the ECQ within 7 business days, or within 24 hours if the expenditure is incurred within 7 business days before election day.

For more information, see [Fact sheet 25 – Real-time disclosure of gifts and loans by agents of groups of candidates](#).

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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.



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DISCLOSURE OF ELECTORAL EXPENDITURE INCURRED

Agents of a group of candidates must disclose all electoral expenditure incurred once the group's total expenditure reaches \$500.

Expenditure disclosures are lodged as returns in the ECQ's Electronic Disclosure System (EDS) at disclosures.edq.qld.gov.au.

Returns must be given within 7 business days of incurring electoral expenditure.

If electoral expenditure is incurred during the 7 business days before the election, a return must be lodged within 24 hours.

For more information, please refer to [Fact sheet 18 – Real-time disclosure of electoral expenditure for candidates, groups and registered political parties](#).

ELECTION SUMMARY RETURN

Agents of a group of candidates must give an election summary return within 15 weeks after election day. The return must state the total amount of all electoral expenditure incurred for the election. All gifts and loans received by the group of candidates must also be disclosed in the election summary return as well as the bank statement for the group's dedicated campaign bank account.

For more information, see [Fact sheet 14 – Election summary returns](#).

Are any gifts prohibited?

It is unlawful for a group of candidates to receive anonymous gifts or loans totalling \$500 or more. This includes gifts or loans where the name, address or other required details of the donor are not known to the group.

It is also unlawful for a group of candidates to accept a gift or loan from a property developer or an industry organisation representing property developers. See [Fact sheet 42 – Definition of prohibited donors, property developers and close associates](#) and [Fact sheet 43 – Ban on political donations from prohibited donors](#) for more information.

Are there expenditure caps for local government elections?

There are limitations (caps) on the amount of electoral expenditure that can be incurred by a group of candidates during the capped expenditure period for a local election.

For more information, see [Fact sheet 24 – Expenditure caps for groups of candidates](#).

What happens if a mistake is made?

If a candidate or group agent realises they have incorrectly handled a funding and disclosure obligation, the participant should contact the ECQ at fad@ecq.qld.gov.au. The Funding and Disclosure team can assist the election participant in amending or fulfilling their obligations. Returns must still be lodged, even if they are late.

For further information

This fact sheet mainly refers to part 4, division 2 and part 6 of the LGEA. The LGEA is available in full at legislation.qld.gov.au. Participants in the electoral process should ensure they understand their obligations under the LGEA.

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.

 **RELATED FACT SHEETS**

Fact sheet 18 – Real-time disclosure of electoral expenditure for candidates, groups of candidates, and registered political parties

Fact sheet 14 – Election summary returns

Fact sheet 22 – Group registration process

Fact sheet 23 – Dedicated campaign bank accounts for groups

Fact sheet 24 – Expenditure caps for groups of candidates

Fact sheet 25 – Real-time disclosure of gifts and loans by agents of groups of candidates

Fact sheet 38 – Funding and disclosure overview for agents

Fact sheet 42 – Definition of prohibited donors, property developers and close associates

Fact sheet 43 – Ban on political donations from prohibited donors

Fact sheets are available on the [ECQ website](#).

More information

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