

**CANDIDATES, REGISTERED POLITICAL PARTIES,
ASSOCIATED ENTITIES, DONORS**

Political donation caps

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.

Queensland's electoral laws impose limitations (caps) on the amount or value of political donations which can be made to or accepted by registered political parties or candidates in state elections.

What are political donation caps?

Political donation caps are limitations on the value of political donations that a single donor can give to a registered political party, independent candidate or candidates endorsed by the same registered political party during a donation cap period.

Donors must keep track of the political donations they give to make sure they do not exceed the cap. Registered political parties and candidates must also keep track of the political donations they receive so they do not accept donations of more than the capped amount from any particular donor in a donation cap period.

What is a political donation?

A political donation is any gift or non-commercial loan given to a registered political party or candidate that, within 14 days, is accompanied by a **donor statement**.

Gifted electoral expenditure is a political donation even if there is no donor statement.

For more details, refer to:

- [Fact sheet 5 – Definition of gifts and loans](#)
- [Fact sheet 5A – Definition of political donations and donor statements](#)
- [Fact sheet 34 – Gifted electoral expenditure.](#)

Not all gifts or loans made to political parties or candidates are **political donations**.

Caps only apply to political donations.

What is the donation cap period?

The donation cap period is each financial year (i.e. starting on 1 July and ending on 30 June of the following year).

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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.



**Electoral
Commission**
QUEENSLAND

What is the political donation cap amount?

The current political donation caps are published on the ECQ's website at www.ecq.qld.gov.au/caps.

The caps are set by legislation and adjusted on 1 July each year.

A political donation must not exceed the cap either by itself or cumulatively with other political donations made by the same donor during the same financial year.

Examples of how the political donations apply can be found at the end of this fact sheet.

Requirement to notify donors about political donation caps

Registered political parties, candidates or their associated entities must give donors a receipt **within 14 days** of receiving a political donation.

The receipt must:

- state the names of the party, candidate or associated entity and the donor
- acknowledge receipt of the donation
- include an ECQ-approved statement summarising the political donation cap laws.

ECQ-approved statements can be found in [Fact sheet 26 – Approved statements for political donation receipts](#).

Copies of receipts for all political donations should be retained by both the donor and the recipient. These may assist in demonstrating compliance with political donation caps.

Are there caps on gifts and loans that are not political donations?

There are no caps on gifts and loans that do not qualify as political donations (i.e. those that are not accompanied by a donor statement or do not constitute gifted electoral expenditure). Registered political parties and candidates can accept any amount in gifts and loans that are not political donations.

However, gifts and loans that are not political donations **must not be placed into the recipient's state campaign bank account**, and they **must not be used to incur electoral expenditure** for a state election.

Only political donations (and other allowable amounts) can be deposited into a state campaign bank account and used to incur electoral expenditure during state elections.

For more information about state campaign bank accounts, see:

- [Fact sheet 11 – State campaign bank accounts for registered political parties](#)
- [Fact sheet 16 – State campaign bank accounts for candidates](#)

What happens if a political donation exceeds the cap?

If a registered political party or candidate receives a political donation that exceeds the donation cap, the party or candidate has **6 weeks** to return the amount that exceeds the cap.

Likewise, if a donor identifies that they have given a political donation that exceeds the cap, the donor has **6 weeks** to request in writing for the excess amount to be refunded.

More information on state government elections

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Do political donations need to be disclosed?

All gifts and loans, including political donations, must be disclosed once they reach the disclosure threshold.

More information about disclosure requirements is available in:

- [Fact sheet 12 – Real-time disclosure of gifts and loans by registered political parties](#)
- [Fact sheet 17 – Real-time disclosure of gifts and loans by candidates](#)
- [Fact sheet 23 – Disclosure of gifts made to registered political parties and state election candidates](#)

Record keeping

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

Compliance and penalties

The ECQ is responsible for administering and enforcing the EA, which includes penalties for election participants who breach their obligations.

Exceeding political donation caps is an offence under the EA that carries substantial penalties. In addition to potential prosecution, the ECQ can recover the amount by which the political donation exceeds the cap as a debt to the State.

For further information

This fact sheet mainly refers to part 11 of the EA. The Act is available in full at 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 5 – Definition of gifts and loans
- Fact sheet 5A – Definition of political donations and donor statements
- Fact sheet 7 – Definition of electoral expenditure
- Fact sheet 11 – State campaign bank accounts for registered political parties
- Fact sheet 12 – Real-time disclosure of gifts, loans and political donations by registered political parties
- Fact sheet 16 – State campaign bank accounts for candidates
- Fact sheet 17 – Real-time disclosure of gifts, loans and political donations by candidates
- Fact sheet 23 – Disclosure of gifts made to registered political parties and state election candidates
- Fact sheet 26 – Approved statements for political donation receipts

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

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EXAMPLES OF HOW POLITICAL DONATION CAPS APPLY

Example 1

The political donation cap for a **registered political party** for the 2025-26 financial year is \$4,930.

On 1 July 2025, Political Party A accepts a political donation of \$4,000 from Donor Y. The party accepts another political donation of \$930 from Donor Y on 3 June 2026. The party is unable to accept any further political donations from Donor Y until 1 July 2026.

Political Party A may accept other gifts and loans that are not political donations from Donor Y regardless of their value. However, these gifts **must not be paid** into the party's state campaign bank account and **cannot be used** to incur electoral expenditure for a state election.

Example 2

The political donation cap for an **independent candidate** for the 2025-26 financial year is \$7,395.

On 1 October 2025, independent Candidate R accepts a political donation of \$2,000 from her cousin, Donor L. 10 days later, Candidate R accepts \$5,395 worth of newspaper ads (i.e., gifted electoral expenditure) from Donor L.

Candidate R cannot accept any further political donations from Donor L until 1 July 2026. Candidate R is still able to accept up to \$7,395 each in political donations from other donors during the 2025-26 financial year.

Example 3

The political donation cap for an **endorsed candidate** for the 2025-26 financial year is \$7,395. This cap is shared by all candidates endorsed by the same registered political party for an election.

On 2 February 2026, Donor Bob makes a political donation of \$7,395 to a state election candidate who has been endorsed by Political Party B. Donor Bob is unable to make any further political donations to any other candidate endorsed by Party B until 1 July 2026.

Donor Bob can still make political donations to the party itself (up to \$4,930) or to other candidates not endorsed by Party B (up to the relevant donation caps). Donor Bob can also make gifts and loans that are not political donations up to any amount, but the recipients would not be able to use those gifts to incur electoral expenditure for a state election.

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