



Campaign donation returns

Guidance material

Election candidates are required under Victorian law to provide campaign donation returns. All candidates in Victorian local government elections must submit a return within 40 days of election day.

What is a campaign donation return?

A campaign donation return is a record of donations or gifts, including in-kind support, during the donation period.

The return is supplied to candidates as a form, enabling candidates to fill in details of donations or gifts they have received above the \$500 threshold, as applicable under section 306 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Candidates must also disclose if they have not received any donations or gifts.

Submitting a return

Candidates must submit their completed return form to the council's Chief Executive Officer within 40 days after election day, even if they were not elected and/or did not receive gifts.

You should receive a blank form and submission instructions before election day, and also receive a reminder to submit your return during the 40 day submission period.

Each individual candidate **must** submit a return.

What happens if I don't submit a return?

Submitting a return is a legal requirement and your responsibility as a candidate. Failure to submit, or providing false or misleading information on a return, can result in prosecution and fines of more than \$10,900 (as of 1 July 2021).

What details must my return contain?

All fields must be filled out and the declaration signed by **you**. If you received no gifts, you can indicate this in the "Details of Gifts" section by writing "No disclosable gifts" in the table provided.

What is the Local Government Inspectorate?

The Inspectorate, led by the Chief Municipal Inspector, is the integrity agency for local government in Victoria and investigates alleged offences under the *Local Government Act 2020*, including electoral offences.

We will be monitoring the submission of campaign donation returns by candidates and may prosecute any candidate who fails to comply with section 306 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Further information

Read the *Local Government Act 2020* (Sections 306-310), *Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020*.

Should you have any queries or wish to discuss this matter further, please contact us by email with the subject 'Campaign donation returns query': campaigndonations@lgi.vic.gov.au

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Local Government Inspectorate

Encouraging higher standards of integrity, accountability and transparency in local government

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