

2026 Local Government elections

Electoral expenditure advertising return Q & A

Q. Do I need to complete an “electoral advertising return”?

A. Yes – every candidate must complete and return an electoral advertising return even if the total expenditure is nil.

Q. What is the most I can spend on electoral advertising?

A. \$21,000 for Clarence City, Glenorchy City, Hobart City, Kingborough or Launceston City Council candidates.

\$13,000 for all other local government council candidates.

Q. What must be included in the expenditure limit?

A. All electoral advertising used during the relevant period is to be included in the expenditure limit. Previously, the limit only included purchased newspaper, television and radio advertising.

Electoral advertising is defined in section 3 of the *Local Government Act 1993* to include:

- » any notice, sign or poster;
- » any pamphlet or handbill;
- » any “how-to-vote” card;
- » any print medium;
- » any broadcast by radio or TV;
- » advertising on the internet.

Q. What costs are included in the electoral advertising return?

A. The electoral advertising return includes the cost of all electoral advertising used during the relevant period. Some of the costs of electoral advertising are easy to overlook as illustrated by the below examples.

Example 1 – you have included the cost of signs in the return. Consider whether there were any costs for the design, transport or erecting of the signs, as these costs need to be included in the return too.

Example 2 – you have included the cost of printing pamphlets in the return. Consider whether there were any costs for the design or delivery as these costs also need to be included in the return.

Example 3 – the cost of radio advertising should include the production cost and the cost for running the advertisement.

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Q. **Do I need receipts?** **A.** Yes – receipts are required for everything included in the return.

Q. **What if I paid for the electoral advertising before the relevant period?** **A.** All electoral advertising used during the relevant period (6 August 2026 – 2 pm, 25 October 2026) must be included in the return even if the costs were incurred outside that period.
