

AUTHORISATION OF CAMPAIGN MATERIAL

Disclaimer: This factsheet is a general overview provided by the Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC). Please consult the legislation and seek independent legal advice as necessary. Unless specified otherwise, all references are to the Local Government Act 2019 and Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021.

Why are there rules for campaign material?

Laws regulate campaign material to protect the integrity of elections. Authorisation rules are in place to:

- enhance transparency by allowing people to know the origin and funding of the campaign material, and
- allow people to decide for themselves how much they value or trust the campaign material.

There are significant penalties for non-compliance with campaign material rules.

What is campaign material?

Campaign material is defined as an advertisement, document or any other material that is intended to promote the electoral prospect of a particular candidate or group of candidates for an election, including (but not limited to):¹

- an electoral advertisement
- a printed document containing an electoral matter (for example, a flier, pamphlet or how-to-vote card)
- a message containing an electoral matter sent by telephone or broadcast by electronic means
- published materials containing electoral matter (e.g. car stickers, decals, campaign sticker).

An electoral matter is matter that is intended or likely to affect voting at an election.²

¹ See section 158

² See section 159

What is required to authorise campaign materials?

All campaign material, both printed and in electronic format, must have an authorisation statement in a sufficient font size to be read by the intended audience containing:³

1. the **name** and **address** of the person authorising the publication or distribution (a post office box is not permitted), and
2. if printed, the name and address of the printing company, and
3. if the material is double sided, the above authorisations must appear on both sides, and
4. the source of the funding for that material, if it is not self-funded.

Even if the candidate includes their name in the campaign material, it must still have an authorisation statement.

Examples:

- *Authorised by John Day, Darwin, NT. Printed by Armadillo Printing, 25 Winnellie Road, Winnellie, NT.*
- *Authorised by Anthony Smith, Friends of Alice Springs, 10 Gregory Terrace Alice Springs, NT. Printed by Anteatr Publishing, 25 Stott Terrace, Alice Springs, NT.*
- *Authorised by Yang Li, Katherine NT. Paid for by Safe Electrical, 1 Giles Street Katherine, NT. Printed by Aardvark Printing, 11 Fifth Street, Katherine, NT.*

What are the address requirements?

Address requirements include:

- if the authoriser is a **person** – the locality of the person’s residence (a post office box or email address does not satisfy the requirement). For example: *Darwin, NT.*
- if the authoriser is an **organisation** – their business address (in full) or the address of their primary office. For example: *10 Smith Street Darwin, NT.*

³ See section 164

Language requirements

The authorisation statement must be in accordance with the following language requirements:

- if the campaign material is only in English – the authorisation statement must be in English
- if the campaign material is in a language other than English – the authorisation statement must be in both English and the language used in the material
- if the campaign material is in two or more languages – the authorisation statement must be in English and all other languages used in the material.

Rules for specific types of campaign material

There are specific rules for campaign material types, including:

- video communications such as social media video ads (e.g. YouTube videos)
- broadcast advertising (radio and television advertising)
- social media
- websites
- emails and letters
- newsletters
- push polling
- SMS.

There are also exemptions for authorisation requirements at the end of the factsheet.

Further details on types of authorisations are below:

Video communications such as social media video ads (e.g. YouTube videos)

The authorisation statement must be **announced and shown** at the end of the communication. The locality (suburb/town) can be used in place of a full address.

Broadcast advertising (radio and television advertising)

The authorisation must be:

- **announced** at the end of the communication if on radio, podcasts and other audio platforms, or
- **announced and shown** if on television or other visual platforms at the end of the communication.

The locality (suburb/town) can be used in place of a full address.

Social media

There are several ways to authorise social media content including:

- an authorisation statement in the social media account's bio or profile information, or
- pinning a post with the authorisation statement to the top of the profile, or
- a link in the post to a website containing the authorisation statement.

If an image can be separated from its original authorisation and still remain a clear election ad for the candidate, then the complete authorisation must be embedded in the image.

The same rules apply whether the material is paid or unpaid.

Websites

An authorisation should be placed on each webpage on a campaign-specific website. For a general website, the authorisation only needs to be placed on web pages containing campaign material.

Emails and letters

An authorisation statement must be included in distributed emails and letters. However, an authorisation is not needed in a reply to a letter or email from a person.

Newsletters

Newsletters containing campaign material must include an authorisation statement.

SMS

SMS communications containing campaign material must contain an authorisation statement. It is an acceptable alternative to include a hyperlink to a website where the full authorisation is published if the website remains active for the election period.

What campaign material does not need to include an authorisation statement?

The following campaign materials do not require an authorisation statement:

- t-shirts, buttons, badges, pens, pencils, balloons.
- a business or visiting card that promotes the candidacy of a person in an election
- an advertisement in a newspaper that is only announcing the holding of a meeting.

Version	Date	Author	Changes made
1.1	2 June 2025	Chris Brack, Financial Disclosure and Compliance Manager	Update to authorisation address requirements