

## C. ELECTION GUIDELINES

The *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* and resulting Codes of Practice create a number of rules specifically for broadcasting during election periods.

The exact timings and rules for elections vary from state to state. Local governments exist as part of state government legislation and the way they are structured differs from state to state.

More information: [www.cbaa.org.au/resource/election-coverage](http://www.cbaa.org.au/resource/election-coverage)

### KEYTERMS

#### ELECTION ADVERTISEMENT

An advertisement that relates to an election or an announcement that is sponsored by a particular candidate or party in the election.

#### ELECTION PERIOD

Begins on the day that polling day is publicly announced or the writs are issued, whichever comes first (except for the Legislative Council of Tasmania and Legislative Assembly in the ACT). It ends at the close of voting.

#### ELECTION MATTER

Commenting on or advocating support for an election candidate or their political party. Also, meetings held in connection with the election.

#### POLITICAL MATTER

Any political matter, including the policy launch of a political party.

#### REQUIRED ANNOUNCEMENT

During the election period, if you broadcast political matter at the request of another person, you must include the announcement of certain details, in the same language as the political matter.

The candidate or political party is typically responsible for supplying these announcements.

The announcement must include:

- The name of the person authorising and responsible for the political matter, along with the name of the political party, corporation, association, if relevant.
- The town, city or suburb where the political party, corporation or association has its main office. If none of those apply, it must be that of the individual authorising the material.
- The name of every single person who can be heard in the political matter, e.g:

*"Authorised by Benjamin Button for the Older to Younger Party, Brisbane. Spoken by F. Scott Fitzgerald, David Fincher, Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett."*

#### EQUAL ACCESS

If your station chooses to broadcast any election matter during an election period, you must give all parties contesting the election a reasonable opportunity to have election matter broadcast during the election period.

You are not required to broadcast material for free.

#### BLACKOUT PERIOD

Broadcasters are prohibited from broadcasting state or federal election advertisements from the end of the Wednesday before the polling day until the close of the poll on polling day.

This does not apply to online services and print media.

#### KEEPING RECORDS

At all times you must also keep a record of any news, statements, commentaries, discussions, etc. that relate to political matters or current affairs.

These must be kept for six weeks from broadcast, or 60 days if a complaint has been made about it, in a format approved by ACMA.

During an election period, if you have broadcast political matters at someone else's request, you must keep a record of the name, address and occupation of the person (or the name and address of the principal office, if the person is a company) that requested it.

These records must be kept for six weeks from the date of broadcast or until the election ends (whichever period is longer) and they must be given to ACMA if requested in writing.