Campaign Donation Returns – Council General Elections 2020

It is a requirement of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) for all Council Election Candidates to complete a Campaign Donation Return. The following information explains what that process is and provides a list of candidates who participated in the 2020 Council elections and their donations as defined in the Act.

**What is an election campaign donation return?**

An election campaign donation return is a record of significant gifts received by election candidates for use in their election campaigns. These returns ensure public transparency about the level of financial and in-kind support given to candidates by individuals and organisations during elections.

**Who needs to lodge a return?**

Every person who is a candidate in a council election for a Victorian local government must lodge an election campaign donation return. A return must be lodged by a candidate even if he or she has not received any campaign donations.

**When and where must a return be lodged?**

Campaign donation returns must be given to the Chief Executive Officer of the Council for which the person was a candidate within 40 days after the election day.

Within 14 days after that date, the Chief Executive Officer will:

* Notify the Minister for Local Government of the names of candidates who have lodged campaign donation returns; and
* Place a summary of each campaign donation return received on the Council's website until the entitlement date for the next general election. The summary contains the name of each candidate, the name of each person if any, who made a gift to the candidate disclosed in the return and the total value of the gift received from that person. ·

Copies of completed returns will also be available for inspection at the Council office for 4 years.

**What gifts must be disclosed?**

Campaign donation returns must record all relevant gifts that were received by the candidate from 30 days after the previous election for the relevant Ward or District until 30 days after the current election. (This is referred to as the "donation period").

All campaign donations received during the donation period, either by the candidate or by someone acting on behalf of the candidate, must be disclosed if they are valued at $500 or more. This includes gifts of goods or services as well as cash donations.

Disclosable gifts include, but are not limited to:

* Cash donations in any form;
* A payment or contribution at a fundraising function;
* Rent free or discounted use of commercial premises;
* Free or discounted media advertising;
* Free or discounted printing;
* Free or discounted services, such as catering, design work or legal advice;
* Free use of a motor vehicle or other equipment;
* Employer approved and paid time off work that is taken by a candidate to campaign (but not if the candidate takes leave); and
* Work undertaken for a candidate by a person during normal working hours where the person's employer continues to pay their salary or wages (but not if the person takes leave to work for the candidate as a volunteer).

**Multiple gifts from one source**

If two or more gifts are made to a candidate from the same person or organisation they must be treated as a single donation when determining their value. This means that they must be disclosed in the candidate's return if their combined value is $500 or more.

**Items that do not need to be disclosed**

Items that do not need to be disclosed in a campaign donation return include:

* Media interviews;
* Volunteer labour, such as people handing out how-to-vote cards or delivering leaflets;
* Gifts made in a private capacity to the candidate that are not used in relation to the election; and
* The candidate's own funds that are used for their election campaign.

**What if no gifts have been received?**

If a candidate has not received any gifts that need to be disclosed, the candidate must still lodge a campaign donation return. The candidate should record on the form that they did not receive any gifts of a kind that are required to be disclosed.

Campaign Donation Returns Summary

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Candidate** | **Disclosable Gift/s** | **Name of Donor/s** |
| Cr. Moira Berry | Nil |  |
| Cr. Tonia Dudzik | Nil |  |
| Cr. David Charles Edwards | Nil |  |
| Cr. Ally Munari | Nil |  |
| Cr. Thomas Gerard Sullivan | Nil |  |
| Cr. Paul Tatchell | Nil |  |
| Cr. Rodney Ward | Nil |  |
| Jarrod James Bingham | Nil |  |
| Benjamin Davison | $1,000 | John Armitage |
| Prabhat Gaur | Nil |  |
| Verity Julia Grainger | Nil |  |
| Seray Hassan | Nil |  |
| John Keogh | Nil |  |
| Nicola Lane | $200  $50  $50  $100 | Gayle Harrison  David Laffy  Sandra Woodard  Natalie Goode |
| Phaedra Morris | Nil |  |
| Renee Rachelle Robinson | Nil |  |
| Margaret Scarff | Nil |  |
| Helen Tatchell | Nil |  |
| Lindsay Watters | Nil |  |
| Larissa Weston | Nil |  |