

# 2020 State General Election

## Guidelines on the Caretaker Conventions



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 The ‘caretaker period’

The ‘caretaker period’ is the period of time preceding the election when the government assumes a caretaker role.

A caretaker period is important before a general election because:

- every general election carries the possibility of a change of government
- with the dissolution of the Queensland Legislative Assembly, the government cannot be held accountable for its decisions in the normal manner
- the incumbent government’s actions should not bind an incoming government or limit its freedom of action.

## 1.2 When the caretaker period starts and ends

In accordance with the *Constitution of Queensland 2001* (the Constitution), commencing from the 2020 State General Election, elections are held in Queensland every four years on the last Saturday in October. Under Part 2A of the Constitution, the Governor is to dissolve the Legislative Assembly and issue the writ 26 days before the polling day. The ‘caretaker period’ begins at the time the Legislative Assembly is dissolved.

The 2020 State General Election is due to be held on Saturday 31 October 2020 (unless the Legislative Assembly is dissolved before this date). The caretaker period therefore begins on Tuesday 6 October 2020.

The time at which the caretaker period ends will depend on the outcome of the election. If the government is returned, the caretaker period ends when the result becomes clear. That is:

- when the Leader of the Opposition concedes defeat, or
- when it is clear the government has won sufficient seats in the Legislative Assembly to form government.

If the government changes following an election, the caretaker period ends when the incoming government is sworn in.

## 1.3 The ‘caretaker conventions’ and practices

Successive Commonwealth and State governments have accepted that during the period preceding an election for the Legislative Assembly, the government assumes a ‘caretaker role’. This practice recognises that, with the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly, the Executive cannot be held accountable for its decisions in the normal manner, and every general election carries the possibility of a change of government.

The business of government continues throughout the ‘caretaker period’. However, the series of practices, known as the ‘caretaker conventions’ aim to ensure that the government’s actions do not bind an incoming government or limit its freedom of action.

In summary, the conventions recommend that caretaker governments avoid:

- making significant appointments
- making or implementing major policy decisions that are likely to commit an incoming government
- entering into major contracts or undertakings.

There are also established practices associated with the caretaker conventions that are directed at protecting the apolitical nature of the public service and avoiding the use of state resources in a manner to advantage a particular political party.

As the election date and the duration of the caretaker period are known, it is expected that government business that requires a decision or action of departments will happen in advance of the commencement of the caretaker period.

## 1.4 Application of the caretaker conventions

The caretaker conventions have been developed primarily in the context of the relationship between ministers and their departments. The relationship between ministers and other bodies, such as statutory authorities, statutory bodies and government companies, varies from body to body. However, those bodies should observe the conventions and practices unless to do so would conflict with their legal obligations or compelling organisational requirements.

The caretaker conventions are not legally binding nor hard and fast rules and their application in individual cases requires judgment and common sense.

For ministers and members of the government, adherence to the conventions and practices is ultimately the responsibility of the Premier and the government collectively. The conventions and practices also provide guidance to support the work of the public sector and ensure public officials avoid partisanship and maintain administrative continuity for the duration of the caretaker period. Directors-General and Chief Executive Officers therefore have a responsibility to take appropriate action to ensure that their agencies observe the conventions during the caretaker period.

## 2. Decisions during the caretaker period

As indicated above, the date of the commencement of the caretaker period and election is known. Accordingly, apart from unforeseen matters arising, steps should be taken by ministers and departments to avoid situations during the caretaker period that would require the making of any significant decisions or appointments, or the entry into major contracts or agreements.

### 2.1 Significant appointments

By convention a caretaker government should avoid, wherever possible, making appointments of significance in the caretaker period. Factors in deciding whether an appointment is significant include:

- the seniority, importance and profile of the position
- the duration of the appointment
- how the appointment is made (for example, appointed by the minister or the Governor in Council)
- the degree to which the appointment may be a matter of disagreement between the major parties contesting the election.

As a rule, significant appointments dated to commence after polling day would not be made in the caretaker period. Appointments that would normally be made after the date of dissolution are deferred until after the election.

Where it is necessary for an appointment to be made during the caretaker period, usually for reasons associated with the proper function of the agency concerned, there are several options available. These options include:

- acting appointments (where permissible) to avoid the need for a substantive appointment
- short-term appointments until shortly after the end of the caretaker period (up to three months' duration), or
- if those options are not practicable, the minister could consult the relevant Opposition spokesperson regarding a full-term appointment.

### 2.2 Policy implementation

Governments should avoid implementing new policies or entering into major contracts or undertakings during the caretaker period. This includes commitments which could bind an incoming government.

When assessing if a policy decision is 'major', consideration should be given to the significance of the decision in terms of policy and resources and whether the decision is a matter of contention between the government and Opposition in the election campaign.

Consistent with this requirement, major project approvals within government programs are normally deferred by ministers until after the caretaker period has ended.

If circumstances require the government to make a major policy decision during the caretaker period that would bind an incoming government, the minister would usually consult the Opposition spokesperson before making the decision.

The conventions do not apply to promises on future policies that the party in government announces as part of its election campaign.

## 2.3 Major contracts

Caretaker governments should also avoid entering major contracts or undertakings during the caretaker period. When considering whether a contract or undertaking qualifies as ‘major’, agencies should consider:

- the dollar value of the commitment
- the nature of the commitment – does it involve a routine matter of administration or implement a policy, program or administrative structure which is politically contentious
- the approval required to enter into the commitment – does the commitment require ministerial approval.

If it is not possible to defer the commitment until after the caretaker period, for legal, commercial or other reasons, there are a number of options including:

- ministerial consultation with the relevant Opposition spokesperson regarding the commitment
- explanation of the implications of the election to the contractor (consideration could be given to including a clause in contracts providing for termination in the event of an incoming government not wishing to proceed)
- in the case of tenders, agencies should warn potential tenderers about the implications of the election and the possibility that the tender might not be completed.

## 2.4 Grants

During the caretaker period, commitments must not be made in respect of grant applications received during the period or which were lodged before commencement of the period, but are awaiting decision.

The payment of grants approved prior to the caretaker period can proceed but should be forwarded by the department rather than by a minister.

## 2.5 International and interstate negotiations and visits

The Premier may consider whether visits to Queensland by foreign dignitaries, involving government hospitality, should proceed during the caretaker period. Dignitaries must be advised of the election date and the reduced availability of ministers.

If an intergovernmental meeting is held during the caretaker period, ministers should generally avoid representing Queensland and adopting or announcing policy positions. Where it is not convenient or possible to postpone such a meeting, it is acceptable for the Director-General or another senior official to attend as an observer to ensure Queensland is informed of the deliberations. The officer should make it known that he/she is constrained by caretaker conventions and is not authorised to commit the incoming government to proposed actions that may be discussed at the meeting.

Due to the unprecedented COVID-19 public health emergency it is appropriate for the Premier to continue to sit on National Cabinet and make emergency decisions if required to ensure Queensland is well positioned to respond to the emergency.

The Premier will, to the extent possible, consult with the Opposition spokesperson prior to any decision being taken that would bind an incoming government or advance a policy position. Where this is not practicable the Premier will brief the Opposition spokesperson on the decision. Where possible, senior officials will attend the meeting in an observer capacity to ensure that the incoming government is fully informed of progress.

At the start of the caretaker period, the Director-General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet writes to jurisdictional counterparts to advise of the timing of the election and the application of caretaker arrangements.

## 3. Cabinet, Executive Council and legislation and Parliament matters

### 3.1 Cabinet

#### Meetings

Meetings of Cabinet and Cabinet Committees are generally not scheduled during the caretaker period, although this is ultimately a matter for the Premier. If Cabinet does meet, any deliberations will be the subject to the caretaker conventions referenced in these guidelines.

#### Documents

It is a requirement that Cabinet documents are treated as confidential to the government that created them. Accordingly, such documents are generally not made available to succeeding governments drawn from different political parties, except in specific circumstances related to continuity of administration. Refer to Chapter 4.15.5 of *The Queensland Cabinet Handbook*, 'Access to past government's Cabinet documents by the present government'.

At the beginning of the caretaker period and in accordance with instructions issued by the Cabinet Secretary, all Cabinet documents previously circulated by the Cabinet Secretariat as part of the official Cabinet record that are held in ministerial and departmental offices should be clearly identified and prepared for possible return to the Cabinet Secretariat for disposal purposes. At a change of government, these documents must be returned to the Cabinet Secretariat for disposal. Refer to Chapter 4.14.5 of *The Queensland Cabinet Handbook*, 'Disposal of Cabinet documents'.

The Cabinet Secretariat may issue further procedural guidelines on the handling of Cabinet documents at the commencement of the caretaker period. The Cabinet Secretariat is the appropriate contact for further advice on Cabinet material.

### 3.2 Executive Council

Ordinary meetings of the Executive Council are not held during the caretaker period. However, with the consent of the Premier and the Governor, special sittings of the Executive Council may be held to consider limited business. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) is responsible for arranging any special sittings with the Office of the Governor.

Ministers are required to provide written confirmation to the Premier that matters submitted to the Governor in Council for consideration in the caretaker period are not in breach of the caretaker conventions and advice regarding why the matter cannot be held over until the end of the caretaker period. The Premier will make the final decision on whether a matter is to be submitted for Governor in Council consideration.

Arrangements for Executive Council will be forwarded to all departments by the Executive Council Secretariat at the commencement of the caretaker period.

### 3.3 Legislation and Parliament matters

#### Bills

All Bills that have been introduced in the Legislative Assembly but are yet to be passed, automatically lapse when the Legislative Assembly is dissolved. Royal Assent should be obtained for all Bills that have been passed by the Legislative Assembly before the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly.



## Proclamation of legislation

By convention, the Governor should not proclaim the commencement of any Acts during the caretaker period. Proclamations to commence legislation on a date falling during the caretaker period or after the election should be deferred until after the caretaker period has ended.

## Subordinate legislation

It is possible, where there is a need and where there is no infringement of the basic caretaker conventions, for subordinate legislation to be approved by the Governor in Council during the caretaker period (see 3.2 Executive Council for further information).

## Tabling of documents

Ministers may table documents during the caretaker period where there is a legislative requirement, or standing orders permit the tabling of a document and the minister believes it is desirable to be tabled between Parliaments.

## 4. Maintaining the neutrality of the Public Service

### 4.1 Departmental operations

The business of government continues throughout the caretaker period. Departments should therefore continue to deal with the ordinary business of government.

Ministers may continue to request factual information necessary for the day to day working of the government from departments during the caretaker period in the usual way. Ministers may not, however, request departments to develop new policy initiatives or to provide further advice on policy initiatives that have been the subject of previous advice during the caretaker period. In addition, administrative assistance or material should not be requested by a minister if the predominant purpose for the assistance relates to the election rather than the ongoing business of the government.

It may, however, be appropriate for a department to provide advice to a minister in circumstances where an emergent issue requires the government to respond appropriately in the public interest.

### 4.2 Comments and cost estimates on policy proposals

In accordance with section 89 of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, Queensland Treasury employees may not give oral or written comments or cost estimates relating to the policy proposals of a political party or candidates for election, to anyone other than another Queensland Treasury employee. However, this does not apply if a Queensland Treasury employee is specifically authorised under another Act to give the comments or estimates.

### 4.3 Departmental liaison officers

Departmental liaison officers are provided by departments to assist ministerial offices with necessary liaison work.

Insofar as there is ongoing work of that kind for them during the caretaker period, they may remain with ministers' offices. They are, however, public servants and not ministerial staff. As such, it is important that they understand that their duties do not extend to assisting in ways which could lead to allegations that public servants are being employed for party political purposes or to undertake ministerial duties.

### 4.4 Hospitality

Agencies should exercise care in hosting official functions during the caretaker period, to avoid any perception that the function is for electioneering or party political purposes.

In the case of official functions held during the caretaker period involving the use of agency resources at which a minister will be present, it may be appropriate for the Opposition spokesperson to also be given the opportunity to be present to avoid perceptions of partisanship.

### 4.5 Non-participation in political activities

Political electioneering activity must not be conducted in a manner that seeks to engage public officials in political dialogue or partisan activity.

It is inappropriate for public servants to assist in electioneering either in the course of their duties, or in a manner which implies or gives the perception that the public service supports a particular candidate. This includes public servants appearing in uniform for campaign activities.

Publishing or distributing material promoting a candidate or party, including via departmental email or noticeboards, is also inappropriate.

Any staff of the public service wishing to appear in advertising of a political nature should not do so in an official capacity. Any participation of a staff member in the production of the advertisement must be conducted outside the staff member's normal working hours. Section 8.2 provides related guidance on filming at government facilities.

## 4.6 Public sector employees contesting elections

The Public Service Commission Circular 03/14 *Public Sector Employees Contesting Elections* outlines the rights and responsibilities of public sector employees participating in local, state or federal elections and should be read in conjunction with the *Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service* (or entity specific code) and applicable employing legislation.

## 5. Departmental matters

### 5.1 Public sector appointments

As outlined in section 2 of these guidelines, the caretaker conventions require a government to avoid making appointments of significance during the caretaker period. Appointments to senior executive service, senior officer and equivalent level positions should not be advertised, processed nor offers of appointments made during this time. Where selection processes are partially complete, it would be preferable to put these processes on hold during the caretaker period.

Care should also be exercised in all other public service appointments to assess whether the appointment may be significant. Factors in deciding whether or not a particular appointment is significant include the degree to which it may be a matter of disagreement between the major parties contesting the election, whether it might be affected by changed priorities in the event of a change of government, as well as the position's inherent importance.

Where the proper functioning of the agency requires a significant position to be filled, acting or short-term arrangements (no longer than three months) should be used during this interim period.

No action in relation to contracts of employment for senior executive service and equivalent levels or significant appointments should proceed, other than signing contracts where appointments have already been approved. Where such contracts of employment fall due, action should be taken to seek to extend or renew the existing contract, by mutual agreement for a short period of one to three months.

### 5.2 Correspondence

Once the caretaker period commences, ministers usually sign only the necessary minimum of correspondence. A judgment should be made in determining whether correspondence of significance should be signed by the minister or Director-General. Some correspondence may also be prepared for signature by ministerial staff or departmental officers.

When preparing responses to correspondence, care should be taken to protect the public service from perceptions of partisanship. Any response should not assume that the government will or will not be returned to office.

All references to post-election should be in terms of the 'incoming government'. Correspondence that requires an explanation of government policy should not commit the government to post-election action or imply that the policy will continue if the government is re-elected.

To avoid confusion, and as a matter of courtesy, members of the Legislative Assembly who are standing for re-election should continue to be addressed as 'MP' until it is known whether they have been re-elected. Newly-elected members should be addressed as 'MP' as soon as it is known that they are elected.

### 5.3 Incoming government briefs

At the commencement of the caretaker period, DPC will issue advice to departments asking them to prepare incoming government briefs for agencies within their portfolio responsibility.

Two sets of folders should be prepared, the first for the government, should it be returned, and the second for the Opposition, should it be invited to form government. Both sets of briefing documents should aim to provide the incoming ministers with a comprehensive statement of the organisation, structure, budget, functions and major issues currently facing the agency.

By convention, only the set of folders relevant to the incoming government will be made available to it.

## 6. Government advertising, communication activities and related matters

### 6.1 Guidelines for advertising and communication activities

When the caretaker period commences, campaign advertising should cease, unless:

- there is an urgent emerging issue
- it addresses a social education issue (e.g. road safety campaigns, health campaigns, any emergency service information)
- it communicates business-as-usual information (e.g. recruitment, timetable changes, ticket sales).

These campaigns should not be perceived to benefit any party political and it should be in the public interest for them to continue.

Departments should also cease corporate promotional events and activity that highlight the role of ministers or addresses issues that are controversial between the major political parties.

Attachment 1 provides a guide for making decisions about the continuation of certain activities during the caretaker period.

### 6.2 Principles for specific communication activities

These principles can assist in making decisions about the continuation of activities during the caretaker period.

#### Distribution of publications/pamphlets/eNewsletters

Departments should review arrangements for distribution of material that may be of political benefit prior to the commencement of the caretaker period, and avoid active distribution (for example, bulk mail-out) of any such material during the caretaker period.

Passive display and distribution of printed material (where it is not practicable to retrieve it) can continue.

#### Use of minister's photo and/or message in corporate publications

Any publication featuring a minister's photo or message from the minister should be deferred.

If a publication has been printed, careful consideration should be given to the distribution arrangements of the publication.

If the initiative is time imperative and operational in nature, publication may be able to occur without the message and photo.

#### Ministerial involvement in forums or launches

Generally, departments should not schedule forums and launches during the caretaker period. If a forum or launch is required to be held during caretaker (for example, to coincide with a significant state, national or international day or special annual event), the Director-General or a senior departmental representative can attend in place of the minister. The same principle applies for functions organised external to the Queensland Government where a member of the government would usually participate.

## Digital communication (websites, social media and other digital engagement tools)

At the onset of the caretaker period, consideration should be given to including a post or message highlighting the additional restrictions to comments and updates during this time. Sample messaging is provided at Attachment 2.

### Websites

#### *Ministerial content managed by departments*

Departments that maintain, or fund, the maintenance of ministerial content on a website (for example, biographical information) can continue this arrangement as long as updates are specific to existing ministerial/government policy or purely factual material.

Embedded “live” content, including feeds of ministerial social media accounts, should be removed or paused as this may include political messaging during the caretaker period.

#### *Ministerial media releases*

Ministers and ministerial staff may continue to post media releases to the whole-of-government ministerial media release website, but these should be restricted to administrative or operational information.

#### *Departmental content*

Ongoing portfolio-related announcements can continue to be placed on departmental websites, as can purely factual material.

New information on existing policies would normally be acceptable, including material promoting an existing program, unless it included criticism of political parties’ policies or other material perceived to be of political benefit.

Material on the website before the commencement of the caretaker period would, in most cases, remain.

### Intranets, electronic bulletin boards and email

Departments should ensure any intranets, electronic bulletin boards and email systems provided by the department for staff are not used to publish material perceived to be of political benefit.

### Social media and other digital engagement tools (chat rooms, forums, blogs)

Departments must give careful consideration to any content, comments or responses published on digital engagement tools.

For example, while it may be appropriate to respond to business-as-usual enquiries relating to operational matters, it would not be appropriate to post content or reply to comments that could be viewed as commentary on government policies and priorities.

Departments should review the functions and settings of their accounts at the beginning of the caretaker period to minimise risk. Depending on the purpose and nature of the platform, this may include disabling comments or turning on pre-post moderation.

## Media reporting services

During the caretaker period, media monitoring services and resources such as the Queensland Government media portal should not be used to provide an advantage to a particular party or candidate in the campaign.

Departments should review their media monitoring activities at the commencement of the caretaker period. Departmental resources should not be used to generate reports about a particular party or candidate.

Routine media monitoring regarding the day-to-day operations of government will continue during the caretaker period.

This will require assessment on a case-by-case basis, recognising that some news stories will cover both routine government business and campaign debate.

Media monitoring briefs should not be amended unless a change is both necessary and minor in nature (e.g. to correct an error).

DPC's Media Reporting Unit will continue to operate within the above parameters. Requests for orders of media monitoring products (i.e. video/audio clips, transcripts) will be subject to endorsement by the DPC Media Reporting Unit.

## 6.3 Printing, publication, distribution or broadcast of 'election matter'

Separate to the caretaker conventions, it is an offence under section 181 of the *Electoral Act 1992* to print, publish, distribute or broadcast 'election matter' without proper authorisation. 'Election matter' is defined in section 2 of the Act to mean 'anything able to, or intended to influence an elector in relation to voting at an election; or affect the result of an election.'

## 6.4 Signage

### During the caretaker period

During the caretaker period, if a government sign or notice contains 'election matter' requiring an authorisation statement, in accordance with requirements under the *Electoral Act 1992*, the statement should contain the name and work address of the authoriser, e.g. 'Authorised by XYZ, on behalf of the Queensland Government, 1 William Street, Brisbane.' Authorisation text size should be proportionate to the entire signage size and be clearly visible and legible.

### On polling day

Where voting takes place within a government building or structure, it is possible that some government signs ordinarily in place in the building may contain election matter. Signs with electoral matter are prohibited inside a room with voting compartments or within six metres of the entrance to a building with voting compartments.

To avoid the possibility that election matter is being displayed by such signs, ALL signs displaying the Queensland Government logo inside or within six metres of the entrance to a building with voting compartments must be covered on polling day.

## 7. Guidelines for consultation by the Opposition

The following guidelines for consultation between the Opposition and public officials apply from the commencement of the caretaker period (from 6 October 2020) until the end of the caretaker period.

- Consultation should be initiated by the Opposition spokesperson making the request for access to the relevant minister. The minister should notify the Premier as to the nature of the request and as to whether it has been granted.
- The subject matter of the discussion between officers and the Opposition spokesperson must relate to the machinery-of-government and administration and the resources generally available in the portfolio area, as they would relate to the implementation of Opposition policy. Officers are not authorised to discuss the merits of policies of either the government or the Opposition.
- Officers are to inform ministers when the discussions are taking place and ministers are entitled only to seek assurances that the discussions are kept within the agreed purposes. The content of the discussion is confidential to the participants.
- Departments will be represented in such discussions by the Director-General and an appropriate officer with relevant expertise from DPC.
- If the request is to meet with an agency other than a department (including a statutory authority, statutory body or a government company), the request should be made in the same manner (to the relevant minister), with the chief executive of the government body to attend, as well as the Director-General of the administering department and an appropriate officer with relevant expertise from DPC.
- For the purpose of facilitating consultation, the Director-General (or Chief Executive) should seek details of the likely topics for discussion so that relevant information can be made available during the deliberations. Information should only be presented in the form in which it exists at the time of the consultation (e.g. annual reports, program statements, etc.). Alternatively, information can be communicated orally.
- The creation of documents for, or records of, consultations should be avoided. The confidentiality of matters raised during discussions should remain insulated from partisan political debate during an election period. Specific material generated for, or notes taken during, the meeting would form an official record of the proceedings and seriously undermine the requisite confidentiality of the consultation particularly if the records subsequently became public.

Queries about approval of particular requests for consultation should be handled between a minister and the Premier. Requests which involve an unreasonable amount of work by the department/agency may properly be denied.



## 8. Using government facilities for electioneering activities

### 8.1 Using government facilities

Queensland Government facilities may only be used by political candidates in circumstances where:

- the facility is normally accessible to the public
- the appropriate approvals are provided
- the use is responsible and does not unreasonably disrupt the day-to-day service functions of the facility
- the use of premises does not extend to
  - such activities which could reasonably expect to engage public officials in political dialogue, or
  - using public officials for logistical support for operations of the candidate concerned.

During the caretaker period, approval to access Queensland Government facilities for electioneering activities is at the discretion of the relevant Director-General or their nominated delegate, or the relevant Chief Executive Officer if access is to the facilities of a statutory authority, statutory body or government company. Applications for access are to be assessed on a case-by-case basis, regardless of the origin of the application. Any dispute relating to access is to be referred to DPC for consideration. The office of the minister responsible for that particular facility is to be notified of requests and approvals for access.

Queensland Government facilities that are not normally accessible to the public, such as hospital operating theatres and office accommodation, should not be used for electioneering activities.

### 8.2 Filming at government facilities

Any filming or live streaming (“filming”) on government property is not to interfere with the services of the facility or infringe on the privacy of clients or staff.

Filming should only be conducted with the explicit approval of the departmental Director-General or the Chief Executive Officer for statutory authorities, statutory bodies or government companies. The Director-General or the Chief Executive Officer will inform the relevant minister of their decision and reasons.

Any filming of individuals on the site requires their explicit consent.

Advertisements may be filmed outside Queensland Government facilities provided they are not disruptive or conflict with the above principles of not interrupting the operations of facilities or seeking to portray or give the perception of the public service in a partisan manner.

## 9. Further information

Where ministers are in doubt about a particular matter, they should raise it with the Premier. If a decision-maker requires advice on the application of the caretaker conventions, requests (approved by the responsible Director-General or delegate) should be submitted through the respective Director-General's Office of each department to DPC via:

Office of the Deputy Director-General  
Corporate and Government Services  
Email: [Caretaker@premiers.qld.gov.au](mailto:Caretaker@premiers.qld.gov.au)  
Phone: (07) 3003 9223

# Attachment 1

## Decision-making guide for continuation of activities

The following guide should be used for making decisions about continuation of activities during caretaker periods.

### 1. Can the campaign or activity be postponed?

*Consider any legal, contractual, financial or other major implications of delaying until after the caretaker period.*

If yes, then postpone it.

If there are implications, these need to be considered and the campaign/event may need to be changed in order for it to go ahead.

### 2. Is it informational concerning the day-to-day operations of government and does it have direct benefit to the people of Queensland?

If yes, then it can usually proceed.

### 3. Is there ministerial or Member of Parliament involvement?

If yes, other options need to be investigated. It would be more appropriate for the Director-General or a delegated departmental representative to represent the government.

### 4. If it is an event or launch, are there equal opportunities for representatives of all parties to attend?

Is the event or launch in a public space? If it is invitation only and Members of Parliament or candidates have been invited, consideration needs to be given to inviting the Opposition member or candidates.

### 5. Can the creative material be changed to meet the caretaker conventions?

Some campaigns may be able to proceed with changes to their creative execution – e.g. removing Premier/Minister's message, limiting content to basic factual information, removing information about future programs or policies.

# Attachment 2

## Sample messaging for digital platforms

The following sample messaging should be used on digital platforms during the caretaker period.

### Ministerial web content managed by a department

*The Queensland Government is now in caretaker mode until after the state election. Minimal updates will be made to this site until after the election results are declared.*

Note: link for “state election” <http://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/>

### Third party social media/online engagement tools

#### Initial “pinned” post:

*The Queensland Government is now in caretaker mode until after the state election. We won’t be able to reply to political comments and they may be deleted. Content posted here by members of the public does not necessarily represent the views of the Queensland Government.*

(optional) link to <http://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/>

#### Short form for Twitter:

*QldGov is now in caretaker mode until after the state election. We won’t be able to reply to political comments and they may be deleted.*

#### In response to deleted posts:

*We’re in caretaker mode until after the election and will remove any comments that appear political.*