

Political neutrality and working with the TEC

The TEC is an independent statutory body, with responsibility to provide independent, impartial and high-quality electoral services to the people of Tasmania.

As part of working for the TEC, staff agree

they will:

- ✓ *be impartial*
- ✓ *uphold our independence*
- ✓ *be accurate*
- ✓ *be transparent*
- ✓ *comply with electoral law*

they will not:

- ✗ *comment on political matters*
- ✗ *hide errors*

One of the ways the Commission maintains its integrity is by ensuring that its staff are, and are seen to be, politically neutral.

In recognition of the TEC's independent role, the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner has granted it an exemption, giving it the discretion to only employ people it determines to be politically neutral. This means that prospective and current employees of the TEC may be adversely affected by this exemption.

To be employed by the TEC, you will need to complete this form which asks you to disclose anything that could compromise the TEC's independence.

Disclosing information on the back of this form does not automatically exclude you from employment with the TEC. Some examples of activities that may be interpreted as conflicting with political neutrality include:

- » letters to the editor of a political nature
- » social media posts and comments on public social pages, of a political nature
- » doorknocking or distributing political material or displaying political advertising on your property,
- » donations of money, time or goods to political parties, candidates or lobby groups, and
- » employment by a party, member or candidate.

While each person's circumstances will be dealt with according to the relevant facts, merely following a person or page on social media is unlikely to pose a problem, but actively promoting a current political position through posting, sharing, or commenting could be perceived as political messaging or commentary.

In some cases your response may result in the TEC asking you for some additional information. If you are unsure if you should disclose something, we recommend that you include it.

Please note that membership of a union or professional association is *not* considered a violation of the TEC's political neutrality requirements.

TEC employees should also notify of any changes to previous disclosures if these changes put at risk their impartiality or independence or that of the TEC.

For more information on the exemption and TEC's political neutrality policy, please refer to the information, including the exemption itself, on our website www.tec.tas.gov.au/neutrality_policy or contact the TEC on 1800 801 701.

If the TEC finds that at this point in time you are not considered suitably politically neutral, it will directly contact you and advise of its decision.

Any person who is aggrieved by a decision of the TEC in relation to the application of the exemption may make a complaint to the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1998* or to the Human Rights Commission under the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* within 12 months. Further information can be found at www.equalopportunity.tas.gov.au and www.humanrights.gov.au.

Political neutrality declaration form

Are you, or have you been in the past 5 years:

- » a member of any political party anywhere in Australia? Yes No
- » a Member of Parliament or a local government councillor or a candidate in any State, Federal or local government election? Yes No
- » engaged in activity or employment that supports the aims of a political party, Member of Parliament or local government councillor, or candidate in any State, Federal or local government election? Yes No

If Yes to any of the above, please provide details

Have you publicly engaged in conduct promoting a political position in respect of a current political issue (including participating in social media commentary of a political nature)? Yes No

If Yes, please provide details

Are you, or have you been a member of a lobby group (not being a union or professional association) which promotes a political position for an issue currently before the electorate? Yes No

If Yes, please provide details

Is there anything else that should be considered when assessing your political neutrality? Yes No

If Yes, please provide details

Declaration

- » Aside from what I have answered above, I declare that I am politically neutral and that all information I have provided on this form is true and accurate.
- » I also declare that I will notify the TEC of any changes to my circumstances if they put at risk my impartiality or independence or that of the TEC.

Name	Signature	Date DD / MM / YYYY
Phone	Email	

OFFICE USE ONLY

Reviewed by:	Position	Date	Decision
--------------	----------	------	----------