

# COVID-19 GUIDELINES

## General guidelines for candidates, scrutineers, voters and AEC staff

### Purpose

The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) election 2020 is scheduled for Saturday 28 November 2020.

The election is required to be conducted in a way that aligns with the key principles of COVID-19 risk management, in compliance with the QLD Department of Health requirements.

These guidelines have been developed to decrease the risk of COVID-19 transmission associated with election activities.

The guidelines apply to candidates, scrutineers, voters and AEC staff.

### Principles

These guiding principles will be used to assist in the delivery of the 2020 TSRA election.

**No one should attend a voting centre, campaign or work at the election if they are unwell.**

#### Physical distancing

- A minimum space of 1.5 metres between people who are not from the same household.
- If there is a requirement to be facing another person less than 1.5 metres away, minimise contact to less than 15 minutes

#### Hygiene

- Avoid touching your face and cough or sneeze into a tissue or into your elbow.

- Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before and after any contact with surfaces that are used by more than one person.
- Regularly clean and disinfect surfaces that are touched by more than one person – e.g. phones, door handles, benches, equipment.
- Avoid sharing implements e.g. cups or objects that you touch.

### Guidelines

The following guidelines have been developed to ensure the 2020 TSRA election complies with the guiding principles outlined above. The following changes to usual electoral activity are required to assist reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

- No one should attend a voting or counting centre if experiencing even mild symptoms of illness. Voting is not compulsory. Therefore, if voters are displaying symptoms of COVID-19 they are instructed to not attend a voting centre.
- Maintain social distancing, including wherever possible encouraging the distance between people to at least 1.5 metres, as far as reasonably practicable.
- Monitor the number of people inside indoor voting centres and the scrutiny centre to ensure compliance with social distancing principles and QLD government direction. This includes ensuring all people and voting screens are at least 1.5 metres apart.

- Ensure only one voter uses a voting screen at a time, except when an elector needs assistance to vote.
- Hygiene and cleaning protocols are to be followed at all polling booths and the scrutiny centre.
- Hand sanitiser will be available to voters and polling staff.
- Face masks and non-latex gloves will be available to voters and polling staff where requested.
- Signage on hygiene and social distancing will be displayed around the polling place.
- Voters are encouraged to bring their own pen or pencil. Single use pencils will also be available at all polling booths.
- Allocation of a Hygiene Officer (new role) to each pre-poll voting centre and static polling place.

### Reminders

- Early voting is offered as a practical option to attending polling booths on election day. Social distancing requirements are more likely to be met at early voting centres due to the smaller number of voters. The more people that vote early will reduce the number of people needing to vote on election day.
- Postal voting is also an option so that voters, including those that are vulnerable, will not be required to attend a polling booth.