

Explaining the changes to political funding and disclosure

The *Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Reform) Act 2025* is the **biggest update** to the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* in 40 years.

From **1 July 2026**, major changes to political funding and disclosure take effect.

These changes impact **political parties, parliamentarians, candidates, significant third parties, associated entities, third parties, donors and other regulated entities**.

Key changes commencing 1 July 2026



Lower disclosure threshold

all donations that total more than \$5,000 must be disclosed.



Gift and electoral expenditure caps

limits on how much can be donated and spent.



Faster disclosure

donations for a federal purpose must be reported sooner (as soon as within 24 hours during an election period).



New entity and definitions

introduction of nominated entities, plus updated definitions of donations, candidates, third parties and electoral expenditure.



Expanded reporting

increased reporting requirements and new rules for federal accounts.



Updated returns

changes to annual returns, reporting timeframes, and indexation.



Reporting periods

change from financial year to calendar year reporting.



Stronger compliance requirements

to ensure transparency and integrity of elections.



Transparency Register

updated timeframes for publication by the AEC.

Role of the AEC

- An **expanded regulatory role** under the new legislation.
- Maintains **responsibility for electoral integrity and impartiality** while implementing these changes fairly and consistently across all participants.
- Will **support stakeholders** to understand their new obligations and provide clear guidance, tools and technology-enabled education.
- Ensures the **regulated community is equipped** to meet their obligations.

What this means for you

Opportunities are available to be involved: Register your interest to have information emailed to you or engage with us online. You may be invited to participate in AEC user groups to help shape new systems and processes.

Preparation time: The time to prepare starts now. Use the lead-in period to understand your obligations and adjust your record-keeping.

From 1 July 2026, parties, candidates, donors and other disclosure entities must adapt processes, systems and reporting to comply.

Funding and Disclosure Reform Program

The AEC has established the Funding and Disclosure (FAD) Reform Program to implement the changes. The AEC is:

- Providing **education materials** – fact sheets, how-to guides, FAQs, videos and training.
- Running **stakeholder engagement activities** including surveys and user groups.
- Building a **new digital platform** to streamline how users interact with the funding and disclosure framework.
- Updating the AEC website regularly with the latest information.

Key dates

20 Feb 2025
Legislation received
Royal Assent.

21 Feb 2025
Minor amendments
took effect.

1 July 2026
Major changes
commence.

Ongoing engagement: Communications, education, and system development are under way throughout 2025–2026.