



Policy Name	Elections – Staff Conduct	
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Categorisation:	People and Learning	
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Responsible Officer:	Chief People and Capability Officer	
Version (Revision Number):	1.0	

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide Council employees with clear guidance on appropriate staff conduct and use of Council resources during any official election within the West Arnhem Region.

The policy also contains guidance for employees who choose to resign their employment with Council in order to stand as a candidate for an election.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the West Arnhem Regional Council.

3. DEFINITIONS

In the context of this policy the following definitions apply:

Employee means all employees of Council, whether employed on a permanent, fixed term, or casual basis.

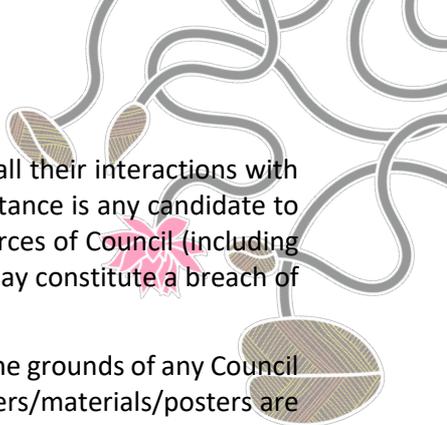
4. POLICY STATEMENT

During any official election within the West Arnhem Region, including Northern Territory elections and Commonwealth Government elections, employees of Council are often asked to assist. The purpose of this policy is to provide employees with clear guidance on appropriate staff conduct and use of Council resources, that is compliant with the legislative requirements of the *Local Government Act* and the Northern Territory Electoral Commission Advertising Responsibilities.

Northern Territory elections, including local government elections, are conducted by the Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) under the terms of the *Northern Territory Electoral Act* and *Local Government (Electoral) Regulations*. Commonwealth Government elections are conducted by the Australian Electoral Commission under the terms of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act*.

In the period leading up to elections, Council employees must be seen to have a neutral attitude towards candidates, including existing Elected Members.





Council employees must maintain a professional and politically neutral attitude in all their interactions with political candidates, their supporters, campaign staff and others. Under no circumstance is any candidate to be given or offered any assistance or preferential treatment. The facilities or resources of Council (including information) are not to be used for private electioneering purposes. Such actions may constitute a breach of the *Code of Conduct (Employees)*.

- No election poster is to be displayed on any Council building, vehicle, or in the grounds of any Council property. The exception is on election day when candidate's election banners/materials/posters are permitted to be displayed more than ten (10) metres from the entrance to the polling booth.
- Election material issued by the Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) or the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) for the purpose of conducting the election, may be displayed.
- No candidate for political office is to be permitted to canvass votes or otherwise influence potential voters within the office or grounds of any Council office.
- No Council member or employee, while on duty, is to engage in activities that could be viewed as promoting any candidate. Staff members are permitted to assist or work with a candidate in their own time when they are not on duty. Precautions should be taken to ensure that they are not seen to be representing Council in any way (e.g., they should not be wearing Council uniforms).
- Where Council employees are deployed for official purposes on behalf of the NTEC, for example to conduct mobile polling, Council uniforms with insignia should not be worn. Such an arrangement requires the preapproval of the CEO.
- Candidate material should not be stored or held in any Council building, office, or facility. Should material be sent to a community by mail or other means, and is received in a Council office, it should be passed as soon as possible to the designated receiver.
- During any election, officials of the NTEC or the AEC may request assistance in the form of workers, furniture, or equipment and/or the use of a Council room, office, or part of a building. Such a request must be pre-approved by the CEO. During such occasions, electoral officials will have full control and authority over the activities.
- Should the NTEC or AEC seek the ongoing use of a Council room, office, or part of a building for the purposes of an election, this request should be referred to the Council Service Manager or the CEO to negotiate appropriate terms of use and hire rate with the Commission.
- Council vehicles and drivers may be used to transport elderly and sick people to and from the polling booth on the day of polling only. Council vehicles are not to be used for any purpose connected with the election except as in direct co-operation with, and at the request of, polling booth officials.

Resignation to Contest Election – Staff Member

Where a Council employee resigns from their position of employment for the purpose of standing as a candidate for election to the West Arnhem Regional Council, the Legislative Assembly, the Commonwealth House of Representatives or Senate, they must ensure their resignation explicitly states this.

In accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act*, if the resignation takes place no more than 28 days before the close of nominations for the relevant election and the former employee is not elected, they may apply to the Chief Executive Officer to be reinstated within 7 days of the declaration of election results.

The employee will be reinstated pursuant to the provisions of the Act and their absence will be treated as unpaid leave between the dates of resignation and reinstatement.





Responsibilities

All employees are responsible for complying with the provisions of this policy.

Any query in respect of this policy should be referred to the CEO.

Breach of Policy

A breach of this policy may also constitute a breach of the *Code of Conduct (Employees)* and/or *Code of Conduct (CEO)* and will be handled in accordance with the provisions of Council's *Performance Management Policy*.

5. Responsibilities

The Chief People and Capability Officer is the Policy Custodian for this policy and is responsible for reviewing the operation of the policy (every 3 years or more frequently as may be required), and for monitoring continuing relevance, effectiveness, and consistency with related documents and the Law.

Following approval of this policy document, the Chief People and Capability Officer (or a nominated delegate) is also responsible for ensuring that the implementation and communication plan is implemented and that all Council employees have access to the policy.

6. Related Documents

Legislation and References

Commonwealth Electoral Act
Local Government Act 2019 (NT)
Local Government (Electoral) Regulations (NT)
Northern Territory Electoral Act (NT)

Policy documents

Code of Conduct (CEO) Policy
Code of Conduct (Employees) Policy
Performance Management Policy

Procedures

Nil

Instructions, tools, guidelines, forms and templates

Nil

