

EU referendum: Campaigner update No. 9

May 2016

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The referendum on the UK's membership of the EU will be held on 23 June 2016.

We are the regulator of political funding and spending. We register campaigners and regulate their spending and donations at referendums.

Our objective is to ensure integrity and transparency of campaign funding and spending for voters.

We will continue to publish updates, providing additional guidance for campaigners on any changes to the rules, best practice for campaigners and key dates and deadlines.

About this update

This update covers:

- guidance for campaigners
- attending the national count event
- Chief Counting Officer campaigner briefing
- pre-poll reporting
- imprints
- working together
- where you can find further information

Guidance for campaigners

There are rules campaigners must follow in the run up to the referendum. We provide guidance to help campaigners comply with these rules. You can find all of our guidance for the referendum on the UK's membership of the EU on this [page](#). We will publish the final forms and documents by Friday 13 May 2016.

In particular, please note this includes the spending return form.

Attending the national count event

Manchester Town Hall will be the host for the UK count and the final result declaration overnight on the 23 June 2016.

The Town Hall will also host the North West of England regional count and declaration.

We welcome applications from members of the press or registered campaigners who would like to

attend the national count event. Please note that access to the Town Hall requires accreditation in advance and is not open to general members of the public unless you are a member of the statutory observers scheme. Please do not apply yet. Our [website](#) will provide information shortly on how to apply once the accreditation process is open.

Please also note that there will be no physical counting of ballot papers in the Town Hall. The Manchester local count will be taking place nearby in Manchester Central and registration to attend this venue is separate. To attend the local count and declaration at Manchester Central you will need to contact [Manchester City Council press office](#) directly for details.

The Electoral Commission is committed to ensuring transparency of the referendum process and will work to ensure that as many applications for accreditation are successful as possible but please be aware that demand for media accreditation is likely to far exceed available venue capacity and a strict prioritisation system will be in place.

Chief Counting Officer campaigner briefing

On 27 April Jenny Watson, Chief Counting Officer and Andrew Scallan, Deputy Chief Counting Officer met with referendum campaigners to brief them about the administrative arrangements of the referendum.

The briefing covered:

- The management framework for the referendum
- The role of the Chief Counting Officer, Regional Counting Officers and Counting Officers at the referendum
- Campaigner entitlements
- Electoral processes – postal voting, polling day and the verification and count

The presentation slides used for the briefing as well as the other supporting materials given to attendees can be found at the links below:

- [Chief Counting Officer briefing for registered campaigners](#)
- [Referendum timetable](#)
- [Code of conduct for campaigners](#)
- [Tellers do's and don'ts](#)

Pre-poll reporting

The deadline for registered campaigners to submit their first pre-poll report was 28 April and the next date for pre poll reporting is **19 May**. Today we published the first pre-poll report for registered campaigners on our [website](#).

The first pre-poll report covers donations received and loans entered into by registered campaigners over £7,500 in the period 1 February – 21 April. If you register on or after 22 April your first report must include all donations received and loans entered into over £7,500 from 1 February. You can find out more information on pre-poll reporting in our guidance: [Pre-poll reporting for EU referendum campaigners](#).

For a full list of important reporting deadlines, please see our guidance

[Timetable and reporting deadlines at the EU referendum](#)

Imprints

We receive a large number of queries about imprints from voters who are concerned when an imprint is missing. An imprint must be added to all printed referendum material that is published during the referendum period (15 April -23 June 2016) to show who is responsible for its production. It helps to ensure that there is transparency about who is campaigning at the referendum.

On printed material such as leaflets and posters, you must include the name and address of:

- the printer, and
- the promoter

The promoter is the person who has caused the material to be printed. If you are registered with us as a referendum campaigner, this may be the person notified to us as the 'responsible person', or someone authorised by them to incur spending.

In the event we receive an allegation about a missing or insufficient imprint on campaign material, we will take action and contact the campaigner involved.

We take a proportionate, effective and fair approach to enforcement, meaning that wherever possible we resolve issues by providing guidance, even where an offence may have occurred. More detailed information can be found in our [enforcement policy](#).

Working together

Campaigners often choose to work together on a joint campaign. The referendum rules allow working together. Working together means spending money as a result of a coordinated plan or arrangement between two or more campaigners during the referendum period that is intended to, or is otherwise in connection with, promoting or bringing about a particular outcome in the referendum. Our guidance provides examples of working together and you can contact us for advice if you are unsure whether you are working together with other campaigners.

There are spending rules that apply if you work with other campaigners and it is important that you understand these rules so that you ensure you do not breach your spending limit.

If you work together with other non-designated lead campaign groups then the combined amount of referendum spending you each incur towards the coordinated plan will count towards the spending limit for each campaigner involved. When you work together with a designated lead campaigner all the spending that you incur working together counts towards the lead campaign group's spending limit.

It is important that you discuss and plan any joint working with other campaigners and that you have a clear written plan of your joint campaign and written authorisation for incurring spending, what you can spend the money on and how much you can spend.

You can find out more information in our guidance: [Working together for EU referendum campaigners](#).

FAQs

Overhead or administrative costs

We have received questions about how to account for overhead and administrative costs in referendum spending. Our [guidance](#) explains that you must include overheads or administrative costs which are associated with each of your campaign activities. For example, this may include increased telephone bills for your office.

You only need to include overhead or administrative costs for activities that count as referendum spending. You should make an honest assessment of the amount you have spent, based on the facts.

If you have questions about how to account for these costs, please contact us for advice.

Volunteers and street stalls

We have received questions on how the working together rules may apply when volunteers for one outcome come together or share material on each others stalls. We recognise that some volunteers volunteer for a number of different campaigners who are campaigning for the same outcome.

As highlighted in this campaigner update, working together is spending money as a result of a coordinated plan or arrangement between two or more campaigners that is intended

to, or is otherwise in connection with, promoting or bringing about a particular outcome in the referendum.

If the volunteers are acting as part of a coordinated plan or arrangement agreed to by the campaigner groups then this is likely to be working together. If however, the volunteers spontaneously combine their stalls with no coordination by the campaigners and no agreed plan then this is unlikely to constitute working together.

You can find out more information in our guidance: [Working together for EU referendum campaigners.](#)

Where you can find more information

We are always happy to give campaigners advice on how to comply with the rules. Please contact us on 0333 103 1928 or at pef@electoralcommission.org.uk

Alternatively you can use the email addresses below.

- England and Gibraltar:
pef@electoralcommission.org.uk
- Scotland:
infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk
- Wales: 0333 103 1929
infowales@electoralcommission.org.uk
- Northern Ireland:
infonorthernireland@electoralcommission.org.uk

For other information about the referendum

On our website, www.electoralcommission.org.uk, you can find:

- more information about our role in referendums
- our key principles for running referendums
- our approach to assessing referendum questions
- our findings on the referendum question
- briefings on the Bill explaining our position on provisions where appropriate