

Elections to the Greater London Authority in May 2021: Non-party campaigners

This factsheet is for non-party campaigners who are campaigning at the Greater London Authority (GLA) elections being held on 6 May 2021.

Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, non-party campaigners must follow rules about how much they can spend on campaign activities in the run up to certain elections.

This document explains how the rules apply.

What are non-party campaigners?

Non-party campaigners are individuals or organisations that campaign in elections, but are not standing as political parties or candidates.

Non-party campaigners have to follow certain rules in the run-up to elections.

This document explains which rules apply when you campaign for or against candidates or parties contesting the elections to the Greater London Authority (GLA) in May 2021.

If you are campaigning at other elections, please see the guidance on our [website](#).

The types of non-party campaigns

There are two types of non-party campaigns:

- **Local campaigns** – non-party campaigns for or against one or more candidates in a particular constituency, ward or other electoral area
- **General campaigns** - non-party campaigns for or against a political party, or particular categories of candidates, including campaigns on policies or issues closely associated with a particular party or category of candidates (for example, candidates in a certain age group).

You can find more information about the different types of campaign in our guidance [Non-party campaigners: Where to start](#).

The general campaign rules do not apply at the GLA elections on 6 May 2021. You therefore do not have to register with us or report donations to us, and spending on activities directed only at your members will still count towards your spending total.

Local campaigns at elections to the GLA in May 2021

If you are campaigning at the GLA elections on 6 May 2021, you are likely to be covered by the rules for local campaigns.

The Electoral Commission does not regulate local campaigning. Complaints about possible breaches should be made to the police.

Under the local campaign rules, there are limits on how much you can spend on campaigning for or against particular candidates in a constituency or local electoral area. These limits are different, depending on the size of the electorate in the relevant area.

These spending limits cover spending on most campaign activities, including leaflets, meetings and websites.

Spending on campaigning for or against a party that is fielding a list of candidates at the GLA elections will also count as local campaigning.

Types of candidates at the GLA elections

Mayor of London

- **candidates for Mayor of London** stand across the whole of London. They may represent a party, or stand as an independent.

London Assembly

- **constituency candidates** stand in one of the 14 constituency seats in London. They may represent a party, or stand as an independent.
- **candidates for a London-wide seat** stand across the whole of London. There are 11 London-wide seats on the London Assembly. Candidates can stand as an independent, or may represent a party

The regulated period

We call the time when the spending limits and rules apply the regulated period.

The regulated period starts on the day after the person you are campaigning for or against officially becomes a candidate, and finishes on polling day, 6 May 2021.

You can find more information about when people become candidates on our [guidance page for candidates and agents](#).

Spending limits

There are separate spending limits for the different types of candidate at the GLA elections.

If you are campaigning for or against

- a candidate for Mayor of London
- a candidate for the London-wide London Assembly seats, including candidates on a party list

you have a limit of:

£50 plus 0.5p for each elector in the **Greater London Authority area**.

If you are campaigning for or against a constituency candidate for the London Assembly you have a limit of:

£50 plus 0.5p for each elector in the **relevant constituency**.

The number of electors in a particular constituency or area is based on the electoral register as it stands on 22 March 2021. You should ask [London Elects](#) for the specific number of registered electors on this day to calculate your spending limit(s).

You should keep a record of your spending, to make sure that you do not exceed a spending limit.

Any spending over these limits must be authorised by the agent of the relevant candidate or party list. The authorised spending will count as candidate spending and towards the candidate's or party list's spending limit.

How to calculate your spending limit

Example 1:

If there are 5,995,542 registered electors in the Greater London Authority area, your spending limit for campaigning for or against a candidate for Mayor of London would be:

$$\begin{aligned} &£50 + (5,995,542 \times 0.5p) = \\ &£50 + £29,977.71 = \\ &£30,027.71 \end{aligned}$$

This would also be your spending limit for the contest for London-wide seats, including candidates on a party list.

Example 2:

If you campaign for a candidate for the London Assembly standing in a constituency with 401,538 registered electors, then your spending limit would be:

$$\begin{aligned} &£50 + (401,538 \times 0.5p) = \\ &£50 + £2007.69 = \\ &£2,057.69 \end{aligned}$$

Splitting spending

Sometimes you may need to split your spending, for example:

- between items used before the regulated period begins, and items used during the period
- between activities that count as non-party campaign spending and those that don't
- between your spending limits for the different types of candidates at the GLA elections.

In all cases, you should make an honest assessment, based on the facts, of the proportion of the cost that

can fairly be attributed towards the spending limits. This will be straightforward for many items. However, for some it will be more complicated.

In each case, you must consider the relevant facts in order to reach an honest assessment of how to split the spending fairly.

If you're not sure how to split certain costs, you should call or email us for advice. We are happy to talk through how you propose to assess the costs in particular cases.

You should also keep a record of how you made your assessment, in case of any later queries.

Example:

You print some double-sided leaflets. The first side is taken up with photos and information about your campaign issue and why a certain party has a good record on it, referring to the party list. Half of the second side promotes that party's mayoral candidate and the other half promotes a constituency candidate.

So, you should split the total cost of the leaflets as follows:

- 50% towards your limit in the contest for London-wide seats, which includes party list candidates
- 25% towards your limit in the contest for Mayor of London
- 25% towards your limit in the relevant constituency

Remember – you don't need to split spending between the candidates on a party list. You have one spending limit for any activity promoting or

criticising the party or any of its list candidates.

Reporting

If authorisation is given, the agent will need to include your spending in the candidate spending return. You will need to give the agent the necessary details for that spending to be included.

If you spend more than the limit you must also complete a return and declaration and forward these to the Returning Officer within 21 days of the result being declared. The return and declaration for non-party campaigners can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Imprints

Whenever printed election material is published, it must contain certain details (which we refer to as an 'imprint') to show who is responsible for the material. This helps to ensure there is transparency about who is campaigning.

Please see our [imprint factsheet for non-party campaigners](#) for guidance on using imprints on election material.

Where you can find more information

You can view our full range of guidance and up-to-date resources on our website.

You can contact us via email on the address below or on the phone number below. We are here to help, so please get in touch.

Visit us at

www.electoralcommission.org.uk

Email:

pef@electoralcommission.org.uk

Call us on 0333 103 1928

We welcome feedback on our guidance – just email us at:

pef@electoralcommission.org.uk

Translations and other formats

For information on obtaining this publication in another language or in a large-print or Braille version please contact the Electoral Commission:

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