

Queensland Government Advertising and Marketing Communication Code of Conduct

Introduction

Advertising and marketing communication activities play an important role in efficiently and effectively achieving the policy objectives of the Queensland Government. Reasons the Queensland Government communicates with the public include:

- encouraging behavioural and attitudinal change to improve public health and safety or quality of life
- encouraging economic investment and growth
- maximising compliance with laws and regulations
- promoting the availability of, or changes to, government services
- encouraging involvement and consultation in government decision-making
- raising awareness of a planned or impending initiative
- assisting in disseminating information in an emergency or crisis
- recruiting employees.

This Code of Conduct provides specific criteria for Queensland Government agencies and government entities to ensure advertising and marketing communication is objective, factual and an efficient use of funds. It does not apply to advertising and communication activity undertaken, and paid for, by Ministerial Offices.

Definitions

Advertising is defined within this Code of Conduct as the activities involved in publishing or broadcasting a message about the Queensland Government's programs, services or policies. Typically, these messages are disseminated under a commercial agreement through the mediums of radio, television, print, outdoor media, cinema, online, social media, mobile devices, applications or any emerging media.

Marketing communication activities are defined within this Code of Conduct as activities involved in communicating information about the Queensland Government's programs, services or policies, whether paid or unpaid. These messages can be presented through a range of activities such as community engagement, events, public relations, sponsorships and community service announcements.

Code of Conduct criteria

When planning, developing, approving and disseminating advertising and marketing communication, Queensland Government agencies and government entities (as described in Division 4 of the *Public Service Act 2008*) must observe the below criteria. Note any partnership advertising (described as advertising by a Queensland Government agency or government entity produced or placed in collaboration with an organisation outside of government) must also comply with the below criteria.

1. Materials developed are objective, factual and an efficient use of funds.
2. There is a direct and obvious benefit to the people of Queensland. The communication must have an educative or informative role, or support economic growth. Materials developed should address specific objectives such as:
 - encouraging behavioural and attitudinal change to improve public health and safety or quality of life
 - encouraging economic investment and growth
 - maximising compliance with laws and regulations
 - promoting the availability of, or changes to, government services
 - encouraging involvement and consultation in government decision-making
 - raising awareness of a planned or impending initiative
 - assisting in disseminating information in an emergency or crisis
 - recruiting employees
 - materials are targeted at the right audience using the most effective channels.
3. Materials produced or published by the Queensland Government agencies or government entities must not attempt to foster a positive impression of a political party or promote party-political interests. For example, it must not:
 - use political argument
 - mention the party in the Government by name
 - give prominence to the voice or image, of a Minister, any other member of Parliament or a candidate nominated for Parliament*
 - directly attack or scorn the views, policies or action of others such as the policies and opinions of the other political groups
 - include party political slogans or images
 - be designed to influence public support for a political party, a candidate for election or a Member of Parliament.

* An exemption exists in relation to the use of images of the Premier, Ministers and Members of Parliament specifically for Community Cabinet newsletters, printed and distributed by direct mail to community members of the immediate region, up to a maximum total expenditure of \$50,000 (excl. GST).
4. The language used in materials is appropriate and in keeping with Prevailing Community Standards as determined by the Advertising Standards Board (please refer to the Australian Association of National Advertisers Code of Ethics).

5. The whole-of-Government advertising approval process, administered by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, must be considered and adhered to if relevant to the materials being developed.
6. All activities must adhere to Queensland Government caretaker conventions which state campaign advertising should cease when the caretaker period commences, unless:
 - there is an urgent emerging issue
 - it addresses a social education issue (e.g. road safety campaigns, health campaigns, any emergency service information)
 - it communicates business-as-usual information (e.g. recruitment, timetable changes, ticket sales).

Administration

Any questions about the Code and its application should be directed to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Strategic Communication at email: communicationservices@premiers.qld.gov.au.

Effective date: **December 2021**