

MEDIA RELEASE

CAMPAIGNING GUIDELINES FROM WRIT TILL NOMINATION DAY GENERAL ELECTION 2025

Our election laws primarily regulate campaigning during the campaigning period, which commences from the close of nomination proceedings on Nomination Day and ends with the start of Cooling-off Day. Outside of the campaign period, which includes the period after the Writ is issued, the election laws do not prohibit political parties from conducting activities such as introducing prospective candidates and conducting house-to-house visits while wearing their party uniforms and badge. However, political parties, prospective candidates and members of the public should take note of the following:

NO NEW BANNERS, FLAGS AND POSTERS BEFORE CAMPAIGN PERIOD

2 As part of their routine publicity, Town Councils and other organisations put up visual displays with the name, political party logo/symbol and/or image of individuals who may be prospective candidates, as well as non-election related messages¹. As some of these displays may appear similar to election banners, flags and posters (called Traditional Election Advertising or “TEA”), members of public may perceive these displays as election advertising. To clarify the rules for prospective candidates and members of public, such banners, flags and posters will be regulated from the time the Writ of Election is issued.

3 Between the issuance of Writ and start of campaign period (i.e. after Nomination Proceedings on Nomination Day), the public display of new banners, flags and posters that constitute election advertising is strictly prohibited under the Parliamentary Elections Act 1954.

4 However, the prohibition does not apply to such banners, flags or posters if they:

- (a) were lawfully and publicly displayed in the electoral division concerned before the Writ was issued;
- (b) have not been relocated, altered or modified since the Writ was issued; and
- (c) are declared by the person or political party concerned to the Returning Officer within 12 hours after the Writ is issued if they intend to retain them as TEA² for the election.

This list of declared banners, flags and posters will be published on the website of the Elections Department (ELD).

¹ These messages include “Welcome to <name of estate>”, “Merry Christmas to <name of estate> Residents”. These materials that serve a legitimate purpose unrelated to elections are unlikely to constitute election advertising.

² They must fully comply with the Parliamentary Elections Act 1954 and Parliamentary Elections (Election Advertising) Regulations 2024, i.e. the quantity and size of the TEA, and location, manner and period of display of the TEA. These banners, flags and posters will be treated as TEA and will be counted towards the maximum quantity of TEAs allowed for the electoral divisions where the candidates are contesting. They must also be affixed with the official Returning Officer stamp, and have a copy or image lodged with the Returning Officer.

5 This prohibition also does not apply to banners, flags and posters that are used as location markers, i.e. they contain only the name or symbol (or both) of the political party concerned, and is affixed and publicly displayed permanently:

- (a) on an exterior wall or exterior window of a building (or part of a building) occupied (or partly occupied) by a political party as its office; or
- (b) on any outer wall, fence or other structure or feature to mark the boundary of the grounds on which the building is located;

for the sole purpose of (i) indicating that the office of the political party is (or is within) the building, or (ii) identifying the business or the charitable or other undertaking operated or carried on by the political party is at (or within) the building.

6 The Returning Officer (RO) has authorised AETOS Security Management Pte Ltd to enforce the rules on the display of TEA during the election. Generally, for every undeclared or non-compliant banner/flag/poster reported, the political party concerned will be notified to rectify (i.e. remove or cover up) the existing banner/flag/poster in question within three hours of receiving the notification.³ If it is not rectified, the RO may direct AETOS to remove the TEA. The candidate will then be required to bear the expense to remove each TEA, and declare it as part of his election expenses.

7 Please refer to the *Other Activities Before Nomination Day* webpage for more details (https://www.eld.gov.sg/candidate_parliamentary_otheractivities.html).

WALKABOUTS AND HOUSE VISITS

8 In general, walkabouts and house visits do not require a permit from the Police if they are conducted for the purpose of a meet-and-greet with residents. The walkabouts and house visits must not be an explicit demonstration of support for or opposition to the views or actions of any person, group of persons or any government, or to publicise a cause or campaign.

ONLINE CAMPAIGNING

9 Online campaigning is another way candidates can reach out to voters, such as through publishing election advertising on social media, podcasts, websites, and emails. Candidates are to comply with the rules for Online Election Advertising⁴ (OEA) in the Parliamentary Elections Act 1954 and Parliamentary Elections (Election Advertising) Regulations 2024, which are put in place to ensure transparency and accountability of such OEA. All persons are also reminded that while Singapore Citizens can put up unpaid OEA on their own accord except on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day, the publishing of paid OEA can only be undertaken by political parties, candidates, election agents and authorised third parties.

³ If the existing TEA poses a safety hazard (e.g. obstructing view of drivers), the rectification window will be one hour. However, if the existing TEA poses an imminent threat to public safety, it will be immediately removed by the AETOS personnel authorised by the Returning Officer.

⁴ Online Election Advertising is any material which is published online or in public chat messaging groups that can reasonably be regarded as intended to promote or prejudice the electoral success or standing of a political party or candidate.

10 Under the Elections (Integrity of Online Advertising) (Amendment) Act, all persons are not allowed to publish digitally generated or manipulated⁵ OEA that misrepresents a candidate's speech or actions, regardless of whether the content is favourable or unfavourable to any candidate. From the issuance of Writ up till the end of nomination proceedings on Nomination Day, this new law safeguards prospective candidates who have paid their election deposit and given ELD consent to make public their candidature against such digitally generated or manipulated OEA targeting them. Members of the public can view the latest list of prospective candidates on ELD's website, which will be updated daily. These rules, which will be in place for the first time in GE2025, serve to uphold the truthfulness of representation during an Election. For more information on our OEA rules, please refer to the factsheet at [Annex](#).

USE OF FILMS IN CAMPAIGNING

11 The use of films in campaigning is subject to the Films Act 1981, which prohibits the importation, making, reproduction, distribution or exhibition of party political films.⁶ The prohibition applies to all persons and is meant to keep politics objective and rational. The Films Act 1981 provides for certain exceptions that would not be considered party political films. These exceptions are meant to allow films that are factual and objective, and do not present a distorted picture of facts. For more information on party political films, please refer to the factsheet at [Annex](#).

PUBLICATION OF ELECTION SURVEYS AND EXIT POLLS

12 In accordance with the Parliamentary Elections Act 1954, the publication of results of election surveys and exit polls – such as a poll on who the voters are likely to vote for or have voted for – is disallowed from the issuance of the Writ of Election until the close of polling on Polling Day. For more information on the rules on election surveys and exit polls, please refer to the factsheet at [Annex](#).

NO FOREIGN INTERFERENCE, NEGATIVE CAMPAIGNING AND PROHIBITED PERSONS

13 The outcome of Singapore's elections must be for Singaporeans alone to decide. As such, candidates must play their part to mitigate the risk of becoming vectors or victims of foreign interference.⁷ Candidates should enhance their understanding of the threat and be alert to suspicious behaviours and hidden agendas, so that their election campaign is free from foreign interference.

14 Only Singapore Citizens can take part in elections and campaigning. Any Singapore Citizen who wants to conduct any election activity (whether online, offline

⁵ This includes content generated or manipulated using both Artificial Intelligence (AI) and non-AI techniques. Non-AI techniques include editing via Photoshop, dubbing, and splicing.

⁶ The Films Act defines a party political film as a film 'which is an advertisement made by or on behalf of any political party in Singapore or anybody whose objects relate wholly or mainly to politics in Singapore, or any branch of such party or body'. It is also one 'which is made by any person and directed towards any political end in Singapore'.

⁷ Foreign interference refers to activities conducted by foreign actors—such as foreign governments and organisations—that interfere in the politics and policies of the target country. The goal of foreign interference is to advance the foreign actor's own interests.

or both) for a candidate must first be in possession of a written authority signed by the candidate or his election agents.

15 Individuals (i) who are below 16 years of age, (ii) against whom an order of supervision has been made under section 30(1)(b) of the Criminal Law (Temporary Provisions) Act 1955, or (iii) who are foreigners⁸ and foreign entities, are prohibited from taking part in any election activity. Candidates should not solicit foreign support for their campaign.

16 Candidates, their elections agents and their authorised representatives should conduct election campaigning in a responsible and dignified manner that befits the seriousness of the election process. They should steer away from negative campaigning based on hate and denigration of opposing candidates. They should not make false statements, for example, unfounded allegations of corruption or commission of criminal offences, or statements that may cause racial or religious tensions or affect social cohesion.

CAMPAIGNING BY POLITICAL PARTIES AND CIVIC ORGANISATIONS ON BEHALF OF A CANDIDATE

17 Under the law, any person who conducts activities to promote or procure the election of a candidate must be individually authorised in writing by the candidate or his election agent before the conduct of the said election activity.

18 Civic, business or professional bodies that wish to participate in any political activity or allow their funds or premises to be used for political purposes need to ensure that their constitutions allow them to do so, and that they do not contravene any laws that they are subject to. Such political activities include endorsing certain candidates and publishing advertisements or issuing press statements to express support for a candidate. Advertisements or statements that amount to election advertising should comply with the Parliamentary Elections Act 1954 and Parliamentary Elections (Election Advertising) Regulations 2024.

19 While such bodies should have their own processes to consult their members and consider the merits of supporting a candidate, it remains each individual's right as a voter, regardless of his membership of any organisation, to freely decide whom to support and how to cast his vote.

**ISSUED BY
ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE**

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⁸ Permanent residents or persons issued with a work pass are, however, allowed, under the Parliamentary Elections (Exemption from section 83(1)(c) and (2)) Regulations 2011 if they have a contract for service with a candidate, a candidate's election agent, or an authorised person, to undertake set-up and tear-down of traditional election advertising and rally sites / assembly centres. The Parliamentary Elections (Exemption from section 83(1)(c) and (2)) Regulations 2011, also allow some foreign family members of election candidates to take part in some election activities.

FACTSHEET

ONLINE ELECTION ADVERTISING, PARTY POLITICAL FILMS, ELECTION SURVEYS, AND EXIT POLLS FOR GENERAL ELECTION 2025

The relevant rules concerning Online Election Advertising (OEA),⁹ Party Political Films (PPFs), election surveys, and exit polls, which will apply during the election period are as follows.

ONLINE ELECTION ADVERTISINGUnpaid Online Election Advertising published by Singapore Citizens

2 Singapore Citizens can put up unpaid OEA on their own accord except during the Cooling-off Period, where the publishing of any OEA is prohibited. The Cooling-off Period is the period which starts from Cooling-off Day and ends with the close of polling on Polling Day.

Paid Online Election Advertising

3 The publishing of paid OEA is reserved for political parties, candidates and their election agents. Third parties, i.e. any person that is not a political party, candidate, or election agent, can only publish paid OEA if they receive written authorisation from a candidate or election agent from Nomination Day.

4 All paid OEA must be declared to the Returning Officer by the candidate or election agent, and abide by the published-by requirements. This ensures accountability and prevents the use of paid advertisements as a conduit for foreign interference in the elections process, or to bypass the election expense limits for candidates.

Published-by requirements

5 Under the published-by requirements, all OEA, whether paid or unpaid, must display clearly the full names of all persons who played an active role in publishing it. This comprises persons (a) responsible for publishing the OEA, (b) who approved the content of the OEA, and (c) who directed that the OEA be published. In addition, paid OEA is required to include a message or statement to indicate that it has been sponsored or paid for, and the full names of the persons who paid for it.

6 Singapore Citizens who are not candidates or election agents are exempted from the published-by requirements if they post unpaid OEA in their individual capacity, and not at the direction of others.

⁹ Online Election Advertising is any material which is published online or in public chat messaging groups that can reasonably be regarded as intended to promote or prejudice the electoral success or standing of a political party or candidate.

Digitally generated or manipulated Online Election Advertising

7 Publishing digitally generated or manipulated OEA that realistically misrepresents a prospective or nominated candidate's speech or actions is prohibited during the election period.¹⁰ This includes both content created using generative-AI technology, or altered using digital means. Candidates who have been misrepresented by such content may make a request and formal declaration to the Returning Officer to review the content.

No election advertising to be published during Cooling-off Period

8 Election advertising (including paid and unpaid OEA) is not allowed on the eve of Polling Day (i.e. Cooling-Off Day) and Polling Day. OEA that was already lawfully published before Cooling-off Day and remains unchanged after its publication, need not be taken down. However, republishing existing OEA is considered to be publishing new OEA, and is also prohibited on Cooling-Off Day and Polling Day. Examples include sharing, resharing, reposting or boosting existing OEA.

Ban on foreigners and foreign entities publishing Online Election Advertising

9 The outcome of Singapore's elections must be for Singaporeans alone to decide. Individuals who are not citizens of Singapore are prohibited from taking part in any election activity, and publishing or displaying any election advertising during the election period, i.e., from the issuance of Writ to close of polling on Polling Day.

PROHIBITION OF PARTY POLITICAL FILMS

10 The Films Act 1981 prohibits the importation, making, reproduction, distribution or exhibition of party political films. The prohibition applies to all persons and is meant to keep politics objective and rational.

11 A party political film is a film that (a) is an advertisement made by or on behalf of any political party in Singapore or any body whose objects relate wholly or mainly to politics in Singapore, or (b) is made by any person and directed towards any political end in Singapore.

12 The Act provides for certain exceptions that would not be considered party political films. The exceptions, which are generally described below, include:

- (a) Films that record live the whole or a material proportion of any performance, assembly of persons or procession that is held in accordance with the law and that do not depict any event, person or situation in a dramatic way;
- (b) Films designed to provide a record of an event or occasion that is held in accordance with the law for those who took part in the event or occasion;
- (c) Documentary films without animation and composed wholly of an accurate account of actual events, persons or situations (but not films based wholly or substantially on unscripted or "reality" type programmes or films that depict those events, persons or situations in a dramatic way);

¹⁰ The list of prospective candidates will be published on the ELD website during the elections period. These individuals have paid their election deposit and consented for their names to be published on the ELD website between the issuance of the Writ of Election and the end of nomination proceedings on Nomination Day.

- (d) Films without animation and dramatic elements, made by or on behalf of a political party, and composed wholly of the party's manifesto or the policy or ideology on which the party's authorised candidates will seek to be elected to Parliament;
- (e) Films without animation and dramatic elements, made by or on behalf of a candidate, and composed wholly of the policy or ideology on which the candidate will seek to be elected to Parliament;
- (f) Films made solely for the purpose of reporting of news by a licensed broadcasting service.

13 Viewed generally, these exceptions, and in particular the prohibition of dramatisation and animation, are generally meant to allow films that are factual and objective, and do not present a distorted picture of facts.

14 For example, a film that records live one or more lawful community events involving a candidate, with editorial adjustments (e.g. in the form of music or compilations) that do not distort any facts or otherwise mislead viewers, is generally unlikely to be regarded as a party political film. By contrast, a film containing editorial adjustments that present a distorted or misleading account of any political matter is likely to fall within the definition of a party political film.

15 All political parties and candidates must ensure that their films do not contravene the law. Persons who make or publish party political films may be subject to investigations and prosecution under the Films Act 1981. If in doubt over the contents of a film, political parties and candidates are advised to consult the IMDA.

16 Videos uploaded online should also comply with the Internet Code of Practice (ICOP).

BAN ON ELECTION SURVEYS AND EXIT POLLS

17 An election survey is an opinion survey of how voters will vote at an election or of the preferences of voters respecting any candidate or any issue with which an identifiable candidate is associated at an election.

18 The publication of the results of an election survey, or any content purporting to be the results of an election survey, is not allowed during the election period. For example, the public should not create survey polls on social media platforms (e.g. Instagram, TikTok), online forums (e.g. Reddit), messaging services (e.g. WhatsApp, Telegram), or websites, where the results can be viewed, as this will be considered a breach. Reposting the results of an election survey is also not allowed.

19 The publication of the results of an exit poll is not allowed during the election period. An exit poll is any (a) statement on how voters have voted at the election, or (b) forecast on the result of the election, where the statement or forecast is (or might reasonably be taken to be) based on information from voters after they have voted.