

SNAPSHOT

- Outdoor Media Association (OMA) members only display political advertising that complies with all applicable regulations.
- OMA members include authorisation details in political advertisements to inform voters of the source of the advertisement.
- OMA members will not display political advertising that misleads or deceives people about how to cast a vote.
- OMA members will not knowingly display political advertising that amounts to defamation.
- OMA members are committed to ensuring the content of political advertising aligns with community standards, and only display advertising that complies with The Australian Association of national Advertisers (AANA) *Code of Ethics*.
- The ‘blackout period’ on political advertising does not apply to Out of Home (OOH) advertising.
- Complaints about political advertising should be made to the local Member of Parliament, the advertiser, or the person, political party or group responsible for a particular advertisement.

01 WHICH LAWS REGULATE POLITICAL ADVERTISING?

Federal elections, including non-broadcast political advertising, are regulated by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) under the provisions of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 (The Act)*.

The Act is intended to ensure a fair and free election outcome, and covers the big issues of concern about political advertising. This includes misleading and deceptive conduct and ensuring that political advertising is properly authorised so that voters know who is responsible for them.

02 IS CONTENT IN POLITICAL ADVERTISING REGULATED?

The *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* is not intended to regulate the content of political messages contained in electoral advertising, but keep electors informed about the source of political advertising and ensure they are not mislead or deceived about how to cast a vote.

There is no legal requirement for the content of political advertising to be factually correct, and no agency takes responsibility for ensuring the accuracy of claims or the appropriateness of content of political advertising. Misleading and deceptive conduct in advertising is enforced only when it concerns how to vote.

Despite this lack of regulation, the OMA *Code of Ethics* affirms: “OMA members only endorse political advertising that complies with regulations and aligns with community standards outlined in the *AANA Code of Ethics*”.

03 WHY DO AUTHORISATION DETAILS NEED TO BE INCLUDED?

The *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* requires authorisation details to be included in political advertising to make it easy for complainants to take legal action arising from publication of the material — eg. if someone wants to bring a claim for defamation.

04 DOES THE MEDIA BLACKOUT APPLY TO OOH?

No. The election advertising blackout in the lead up to an election only applies to Radio and Television broadcasters. It does not include Online services or Print media, and makes no reference to OOH advertising.

05 HOW CAN I COMPLAIN ABOUT THE CONTENT OF A POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT?

Complaints are often made regarding the accuracy or truth of statements made in political advertising.

In general, complainants are suggested to contact their local Member of Parliament, the advertiser, or the person, political party or group responsible for a particular advertisement with any complaints.

For further information please contact OMA:

Outdoor Media Association / Suite 504, 80 William Street, East Sydney NSW 2011
Telephone: 02 9357 9900 / **Email:** info@oma.org.au / **Web:** oma.org.au