



# Candidate Handbook

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## 1. Becoming a Candidate for Australia's Representatives

This overview provides you with an understanding of Australia's Representatives (AusReps), its formation and aims as well as many of the things you will need to personally consider before becoming a candidate.

## 2. Our Aim

The party exists to govern Australia in a manner that maximises the opportunity of the country for the people.

The party rejects the notion of top-down government driven by vested interests and seeks to champion the engagement of every citizen in the development of our nation and our people.

### 3. Introduction & Background

AusReps was born out of concern that our economy is being seriously mismanaged and compromised; division and fear has gripped many Australians over multiple policy issues, particularly loss of freedoms and liberties that lack of evidence-based policy; growing inequality across our nation; Aboriginal people still have not had their issues reconciled; loss of medical freedoms; transparency of government has steadily evaporated; our national security is compromised in multiple respects, and the two major political parties, in lockstep, don't listen to the people.

In fact, over the past 70 years, after receiving billions of dollars in public funding, neither of the two major parties have taken a single step of innovation towards actively and effectively listening to the voice of the people.

Peter Harris, founder of the Federal Family First party (Federal Chairman 2003 - 2006), was deeply concerned about the 'thought-bubble' leadership of Prime Minister Scott Morrison. He concluded that both the Liberal and Labor parties, in lockstep, have become totalitarian parties driven by power brokers and vested interests. They no longer listened to the people and prefer to use the democratic systems and institutions to serve their own ends and interests.

As a result, Peter launched AusReps on the 7<sup>th</sup> of April 2021.

### 4. What is Different About Australia's Representatives?

AusReps is designed to be a people's party, one that is inherently committed to listening to all voices across Australia.

We are fundamentally different to Liberal and Labor because everything in the party is designed to listen to the constituents. The two major parties have no such systems or commitment to the people and are in fact top-down totalitarians controlled by a few power brokers and elites.

This party is not for the faint hearted. Being committed to listening to the voices of the people is hard work and requires systems and processes, not just words.

The people of Australia deserve the best leadership possible. The best leadership listens to, and acts upon, the will of the people.

The best leadership unites Australians.

AusReps has designed, and will continue to enhance, a modern system of democracy where all Australians will once again have a genuine representative who truly hears their voices every single day and takes the initiative to act on behalf of the people they represent.

AusReps is developing new and leverage existing technologies to engage and interact with our constituents. Through this a representative will be able to have their voice heard as well as contribute directly to the democratic process.

## 5. How is Australia's Representatives Organised?

We are a new party, in the process of building our organisation and platforms, and as a result there is still much to do.

We operate the following structure:

- We have a constitution with founding officeholders. The first elections for office holders will be held two years after the first Federal Election in which the party competes.
- We currently have more than 800+ members, of whom 550 have been audited and our application has now been submitted to register for the next Federal Election (this process takes around three months).
- We have a management team led by a National Director, all volunteer based, with over 12 people involved in leading the development of various areas of the party along with a growing army of volunteers.
- We will contest 151 Federal House of Representative seats and, over time, build a branch structure with local oversight.
- There is a Federal Executive where final decision making for the party will rest with respect to the organisation of the party and selection of candidates.
- Elected members will need to embrace the values of the party and align with the policy positions of the party, however, if they can demonstrate they are acting in the best interests of their constituents they can vote with their conscience without retribution from the party.

## 6. Houses of Parliament we will Contest

The party intends to contest 151 House of Representative seats across all States and Territories, as well as fielding Senate teams in each state and territory.

**The party will be particularly focused on the House of Representatives. It is here where the disruption of the Labor and Liberal parties will occur. We will be challenging their assumed right to govern and we believe our message for the Australian people and our vision to create a modern system of democracy in practice will place us in a strong position to win Lower House seats.**

## 7. What is Required of You Personally?

Each candidate will be required to commit to the following:

- Complete a Candidate Application & Declaration Form.
- Participate in a transparent selection and interview process with the National Campaign Director and other members of the National Executive and team.
- Each candidate will be required to have a police check completed and declare if there are any legal actions of any nature currently underway that involves them.
- Sign a candidate agreement with the party.
- Sign, and commit to memory, a Public Pact for the constituents that you intend to represent.
- Provide three references from within the community you wish to represent.
- Once the branch structure is established, the National Executive will always retain the final right of veto over any branch decision on the basis that it is protecting the best interests of the party, however mandatory, and diligent consultation will be undertaken prior to a final decision being reached on a disputed matter. On occasions the National Executive may call upon an independent arbitrator to resolve disputes with a branch so the principle of fairness and independence will always prevail.
- Demonstrate that you can work with and lead a campaign team.
- Once selected, you will be required to engage actively in your electorate to fund raise to a minimum budget of \$10,000. The party will provide support and guidance in this respect.
- Demonstrate that you will be able to dedicate sufficient time and energy to your election campaign.
- Once elected, you will be required to undertake the roles outlined in a Federal Candidates/Elected Members job profile.

## 8. Fundraising

A great campaign is always well funded.

You are asked to raise \$10,000 to contribute for you own campaign as well as national costs and your AEC candidate and registration costs.

Some candidates will be great fundraisers and have extensive networks, while others will find it challenging to ask for money and not know where to start.

The AusReps campaign handbook will provide guidance and ideas for your team to activate, and we will have support people who can answer questions and provide guidance on how to get the best results.

AusReps will also identify a list of businesses in each electorate that can be approached for support. A dedicated team of sponsorship volunteers will be on hand to call business owners in each electorate, explaining the party's ideals, aims and values and ask for their support, financially and otherwise.

The campaign handbook will also suggest ways to connect with constituents and maximise your unique campaign points of difference.

Remember, no one else has a system to represent the people. They just talk about it. They all have a long history of betraying the trust of the people.

The party will setup a campaign account for your electorate and make available mobile and/or web-based payment processes for accepting payments and donations of all types.

## 9. The Candidates Public Pact

The public pact you will sign and commit to follow will be provided to your electorate through various promotional collateral, letterboxing and door knocking. This will be along the following lines:

Signing of and commitment to the Public Pact:

- I promise to serve my electors before the interests of any party or organisation.
- I will never vote for something that undermines the personal freedoms and rights of the people I serve and represent.
- I will respect and fight for the right of every Australian citizen to freedom of speech, medical choice, freedom of movement and freedom of religious belief.
- I promise organised, perpetual and coordinated consultation with my constituents through Citizen Legislative Review Groups in which I will focus on the views of my constituents.
- I will cast my vote with my conscience and best judgement in the best interests of the people I serve and represent.
- I will never support legislation that unnecessarily coerces the People or divides them in any way.
- I promise to personally serve and behave in a manner that reflects the expectations of the people I serve.

## 10. The Campaign

Over time, campaign committees will be formed for candidates comprising a Campaign Manager, Treasurer and Secretary. Campaign managers can be appointed if you are not able to find a suitable person. All appointments must be agreed with the State Director, or National Executive in lieu of a state branch. This group needs to meet regularly and as the campaign commences there would be daily meetings with the core campaign team. Key performance data and reporting back to the National Director will be required on an agreed basis.

There will be three key positions to be filled in your campaign.

### ***Campaign Manager***

- They will oversee the entire campaign.
- Take responsibility for reporting to the State Director on all campaign matters.
- Arrange signage for the campaign including corflutes, vehicle signage, billboards and others as agreed.
- Will have a direct link to the National Campaign Director as required.
- Facilitate community and fundraising events.
- Appoint polling booth captains in association with the campaign coordinator.
- Liaise directly with the designated AEC Returning Officer.

### ***Fundraising Manager***

- Responsible for party merchandise sales.
- Coordinating fundraising events.
- Securing local business sponsors.

### ***Volunteer Coordinator***

- Pivotal to the campaign's success and will be responsible for securing, coordinating and scheduling volunteers.
- Pre-polling, election day and polling booth scrutineers are critical for campaign success.

### ***Campaign Collateral***

The party will make available a brand guide and will also make available a range of campaign collateral/merchandise. This will include:

- A range of merchandise.
- Various types of signage depending on the campaign signage laws in your area.
- Letterbox collateral.
- Viral advertising.
- Social Media Advertising programs.
- Local area media advertising materials.
- Guidelines for speaking to the media.
- How to Vote Cards.
- Booth boxes for volunteers.
- Maps – accessed through the AEC.



## 11. Preferencing

The National and State Campaign Directors will liaise with your team about 'How to Vote Cards' as well as preferencing arrangements. Preferencing is complex and is a bit like horse trading. These negotiations often go until the last minute and impact individual seats. The party preference negotiators are focused on getting the best preference outcomes for each candidate. Preferencing will be discussed transparently when the time comes.

## 12. Party Policies

Party policy is currently under development and will occur via a number of forums. All members and candidates are invited to send their policy ideas and suggestions to the AusReps Policy email [policy@ausreps.org](mailto:policy@ausreps.org). It is also important to understand any federal issues that affect your local constituents.

If you have initiatives that you would like to discuss specifically for your electorate you can do this with the State and/or National Campaign Director. We are interested in life-changing initiatives for communities that will make a big impact on daily living.

## 13. Risks for You to Consider

Any political campaign carries risks. You are seeking public office, and this makes you known in the community. It can also make you, your family and your business a target for political attack by individuals, other candidates and the media. You should make your whole family aware of your intentions.

If you have 'skeletons' in the closet that concern you, it is best to disclose these now. These 'skeletons' don't necessarily exclude you, however, it is best to have a strategy at a personal level to deal with these issues, so you have a clear response to any criticisms that may come along. This protects you and the party. We all have lives and sometimes things don't go to plan. Politics, like nothing else, seeks to highlight and exploit those moments in your life.

AusReps is currently seeking party registration with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). This process generally takes three months but can take longer. The party has made every effort to ensure we have lodged an application without fault. This has included the auditing and cross referencing of each member with AEC records. The party cannot guarantee that we will be registered in time for the Federal Election. This could result in you having to compete for the election as an independent or, if you agree, under another banner. We have a range of contingencies that we are pursuing to avert the likelihood of this outcome, but it is important for you to understand that this is an ongoing risk until the AEC confirms the party registration.