

1. Title: Workplace Fundraising by Charities

2. Application:

This document revises government policy on workplace fundraising by charities in the public service. It replaces guidelines issued on 1 October 1996 as part of the *Personnel Management Handbook*.

3. Effective Date: October 2002

4. Definitions:

- Definitions of "**charity**" and "**charitable purpose**" are found in Queensland legislation in section 2 of the *Charitable Funds Act 1958* and section 5 of the *Collections Act 1966*.
- More broadly, at common law a "**charity**" is understood to be a non-profit body that has the sole or dominant purpose of relieving poverty, sickness or distress; advancing education; advancing religion; or engaging in other activities for the public benefit.

5. Background:

Queensland Government recognises the vital role that charities play in contributing to the social fabric of our community. It supports the diverse range of charities that include health, welfare and education, religious, cultural, animal welfare and environmental protection bodies. It also recognises that the sheer number of charities, and the changed social and economic environment that they operate within, has created a highly competitive environment for charitable funding raising.

6. Guidelines:

Queensland Government supports the activities of charities and recognises that public service employees may wish to make donations. Queensland Government does not, however, formally endorse or encourage contributions to any particular charity.

The two main methods of fundraising in public service agencies are:

- direct payroll deductions, and
- campaigns or events that occur periodically (eg. *Jeans for Genes Day, Red Nose Day, Bow Tie Day, fun runs*).

Participation by public service employees in any form of fundraising activity is on an individual, voluntary basis.

The development of each agency's policy on fundraising is at the sole discretion of the chief executive.

In recognition of the extent and diversity of charitable organisations and the competitive nature of fundraising, when developing workplace fundraising policies it is important for chief executives to:

- maintain a reasonable, fair and equitable approach, ensuring that no individual charities are advantaged or disadvantaged, and that there are no conflicts of interest;
- balance the protection of the public service workforce from excessive or 'captive audience' fundraising with the opportunity for charities to raise funds on a fair and equitable basis;
- ensure that access granted to, or arrangements made with, charities are non-exclusive;
- include a disclaimer that agencies are not responsible for monies collected or any other matter concerning the fundraising;
- include a disclaimer that an individual's decision to donate to a particular charity does not infer agency endorsement of the mandate of that charity; and
- emphasise that fundraising activities should occur mostly outside of working hours, so that they have minimal impact on the workplace.

Fundraising should be undertaken in accordance with ethics principles outlined in the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*. This includes integrity and respect for persons, the law and the system of government.

In addition, there should be no contravention of an agency's *Code of Conduct*, in particular, guidelines on the use of agency resources and release of confidential information.

Payroll deductions

- Voluntary payroll deductions for charitable purposes are allowed. The principle of equality of opportunity should be applied to charities and arrangements entered into must be non-exclusive.
- Agencies are not to incur additional administrative costs for the setting up and disbursement of deductions for charities. Chief executives may approve donations to umbrella organisations that collect on behalf of many charities (e.g. Earth Share) provided these arrangements pose no additional costs to government.

In-agency fundraising

- Chief executives may agree to charities seeking donations in government departments and buildings, provided there is no unreasonable disruption to the work of the department. It is noted that fundraising activities in buildings not owned by the government may need to conform to specific conditions of the building owner/management.
- Fundraising activities undertaken by staff in the workplace are regarded as personal activities and should be neither onerous nor resource intensive. Activities might include the distribution of brochures, collection boxes, posters; electronic communication and information sharing through staff meetings, agency newsletters and notice boards.