

STATES OF JERSEY



REGISTRATION OF POLITICAL GROUPS (P.115/2025): COMMENTS

Presented to the States on 16th January 2026
by the Privileges and Procedures Committee

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

The Privileges and Procedures Committee (PPC) is unable to reach a consensus view on this matter. It has therefore asked the Jersey Electoral Authority (JEA) to provide comment.

The JEA considers that, when it comes to elections, particularly the funding of electoral campaigns, there should be full transparency. The JEA also considers it vital from a voter's perspective, that there is full disclosure if a candidate is not standing in a fully independent capacity, but is not certain that this proposal is the right approach.

The JEA accepts that, long before parties began to be formed, there have always been 'groupings' and States Members have gravitated towards others who share their political views, without this being explicitly stated. This has allowed Members the freedom to change their minds and not be tied to a particular party manifesto and to consider arguments put forward in debate before taking a particular view.

In recent times this practice has been extended through the creation of named 'groups' or movements and there was some disquiet expressed during the 2022 elections to the Jersey Electoral Authority regarding the fact that such bodies did not need to meet the same level of transparency as their party counterparts, despite the fact that they were campaigning as a collective and appeared to be sharing resources. The Authority reviewed the expenses submissions of all candidates after the elections and was satisfied that all relevant declarations had been made.

The current Public Elections (Expenditure and Donations) (Jersey) Law 2014 has provisions which require full disclosure by candidates, whether they are independents or party members, of their spending for the elections and there is also a section relating to third party election expenses which covers expenditure by people who are not candidates acting independently without the express or implied consent of a candidate to promote or procure their election or indeed to prejudice the prospects of any candidate. We are satisfied that the existing Law ensures that everyone is required to make full declarations about the funding of their campaigns.

We have considered whether there is any real advantage to a group or collective deciding not to register as a party, apart from avoiding the associated administrative burdens. Registered parties are able to include their party's logo or emblem on a ballot, making their candidates instantly recognisable to the voting public, whereas candidates belonging to a 'group' do not benefit from this distinction.

The JEA accepts that there should be discussions with the PPC to address any gaps, perceived or otherwise, in the existing Election legislation, but it does not consider the suggestion that there should be a voluntary Code implemented in the interim for this year's elections to be either practicable or policeable. The JEA will, as in 2022, issue a general Code of Conduct for all candidates which will include reference to candidates' requisite declarations under the Law.

As the JEA does have powers under Article 17D of the Elections (Jersey) Law 2002 regarding the content of the nomination form, it will undertake to consider whether there should be some inclusion of a declaration relating to an affiliation to a group or movement in the forms to be used this April.