

# **Premier and Cabinet Circular**

## **PC001 – ADMINISTRATION OF PREMIER AND CABINET CIRCULARS**

Effective from November 2023

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## Purpose

Premier and Cabinet Circulars (circulars) are issued by the Premier to establish whole of Government policy and requirements which agencies must apply when conducting business. Circulars:

- align with key policy directions
- establish principles, standards and accountabilities
- outline reporting and monitoring requirements.

This circular establishes requirements for all other circulars (including minimum content requirements) and how they are authorised, maintained, monitored and reviewed.

## Context

Circulars are one mechanism used to set requirements, expectations and common practice across government. They help set the framework to ensure government agencies operate consistently.

Other mechanisms include:

- Treasurer's Instructions
- Determinations of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment
- legislation
- Charter Letters
- Chief Executive Performance Agreements.

## Authority and accountability

Circulars are approved by Cabinet and issued by the Premier as the Chair of Cabinet.

They generally apply to all entities covered by the *Public Sector Act 2009*. In some circumstances, exemptions may be applied through the circular or sought by agencies via established exemption approval processes.

Chief Executives are responsible for ensuring circulars are applied within their agency and that staff are aware of them.

The authoring (lead) agency for the circular is responsible for creating, reviewing and maintaining the circular, and any associated monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes (unless otherwise assigned through the circular).

Cabinet Office in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet maintains a central record of all circulars, provides advice on the need for circulars and their consistency with this policy, and coordinates holistic reviews. Agencies are expected to follow Cabinet Office advice about circulars.

Circulars may have additional supporting material, such as frameworks, guidelines, instructions or forms. Circulars should be clear that these supporting materials may be altered and approved by a Minister or Chief Executive, as long as the changes do not alter the intent of the circular (e.g. updating dates related to an annual process). Authority to update supporting materials must be clearly outlined in each circular, and agreed to by Cabinet when approving the circular.

## Application

Agencies are required to comply with the guidance provided in this circular and its supporting document when proposing a new circular or amending an existing circular.

The key principles applied to the administration of circulars are as follows:

- **Creating a new circular**

Any agency can propose a new circular by demonstrating that it meets the scope/definition of a circular, generally applies to all public sector agencies and does not duplicate other mechanisms, such as Treasurer's Instructions or Commissioner for Public Sector Employment Determinations.

Agencies must consult with Cabinet Office to confirm whether a new circular is necessary and appropriate, and how to navigate specific issues and considerations. While Cabinet approves new circulars, agencies are expected to follow Cabinet Office's advice.

Circulars must be developed according to the format and style outlined in this document.

The relevant Minister must seek Cabinet's approval for new circulars.

- **Maintaining and monitoring circulars**

All circulars must be reviewed regularly by the responsible agency to ensure they reflect current policy positions, remain fit for purpose and respond to feedback from agencies.

All circulars must be reviewed following each state election to ensure they are consistent with new policy commitments or directions.

Cabinet Office should be consulted if an agency is proposing to review, update or rescind an existing circular.

While individual Chief Executives are responsible for ensuring their agency complies with circulars, the Chief Executive of the authoring agency is also responsible for monitoring compliance. The process for monitoring compliance and reporting must be outlined in the circular.

- **Rescinding a circular**

If a circular is no longer required, or has been superseded by other mechanisms (such as new legislation), the authoring agency must seek approval from Cabinet to rescind the circular as soon as possible. This ensures clear policy settings and avoids potential confusion, conflicting requirements, or duplicate reporting for agencies.

If the circular is only relevant for a set period, an expiry date must be set at which time the circular will be automatically rescinded.

Cabinet Office must be consulted by the authoring agency before Cabinet's approval is sought to rescind a circular.

## • Format and content

All circulars must follow the template provided on the [DPC website](#).

Circulars should be focussed on high level policy, principles, and clear requirements. While the content should be tailored to the topic, at a minimum circulars must include the following sections:

1. Purpose statement
2. Context
3. Authority and accountability
4. Application
5. Exemptions
6. Monitoring and compliance
7. Distribution and publication
8. Document control, including review date

Additional sub-headings may be included as required. Detail to support consistent application across government should be included in supporting materials.

Circulars should be written in plain English. Cabinet Office will provide feedback to agencies on language and usability. Titles of circulars should be short and clear.

## • Communication

All circulars are to be published on the [DPC website](#).

The authoring agency must advise all Chief Executives (and other key contacts) of new circulars or changes to existing circulars and the date they come into operation. The advice should include the intent of the circular, action required by agencies and a contact point for queries. Broader communication may be required, if relevant. Contact [DPC Communications](#) for advice on across-government communication.

## Exemptions

A circular can establish how public sector agencies can seek an exemption from complying with all or part of it. Circulars must clearly set out these circumstances, thresholds and processes for agencies to seek these exemptions.

Examples of circumstances where Cabinet may agree to authorise exemptions include:

- a time-limited exemption while agencies implement new requirements
- an exemption to avoid duplicate administration, such as where particular agencies are required to do certain things under legislation.

There are no exemptions associated with this circular.

## Monitoring and compliance

Cabinet Office is responsible for monitoring application of this circular and working with responsible agencies to ensure the principles, requirements and intent of the circular are appropriately applied.

Cabinet Office will coordinate a review of all circulars after each state election.

## Distribution and publication

This circular will be published on the DPC website, along with additional guidance material. Cabinet Office will distribute the circular to all Chief Executives across government.

## Document Control

Review number: 2  
Review date: November 2023

Next review date: April 2026

## For more information

Cabinet Advice, Cabinet Office  
E: DPCCabinetOffice@sa.gov.au

W: [dpc.sa.gov.au/resources-and-publications/premier-and-cabinet-circulars](https://dpc.sa.gov.au/resources-and-publications/premier-and-cabinet-circulars)