

Elections in New Zealand are fair, free and independent

July 2026

Every eligible voter has the right to decide freely who they will vote for.

We make sure elections are fair, independent, and can be trusted by voters.

If you're eligible to vote in New Zealand's elections, you must enrol, but voting is not compulsory. Enrolling and voting means you can have a say on the issues that affect you and your community.

Your vote is private. We won't tell anyone, including the government, how you voted.

QUICK FACTS



The general election usually occurs every three years.



To vote in a general election and have your say, you need to be enrolled.



Enrolment closes 13 days before election day.



Voting will open 12 days before election day.



Voting closes at 7pm on election day.

Eligibility to enrol

You're eligible to enrol and vote if you are:

- 18 years or older,
- a New Zealand citizen or resident for electoral purposes, and
- you've lived in New Zealand continuously for 12 months or more at some time in your life.

You're a resident for electoral purposes if you're eligible to live in New Zealand lawfully and you're not required to leave within a specified time.

How to enrol or update your details

You can enrol, check or update your details at vote.nz or you can call 0800 36 76 56 for free at any time and ask for an enrolment form to be sent to you.

We safeguard your personal information and make sure your privacy is upheld. This is a requirement under New Zealand legislation.

We have a range of resources about enrolling and voting available on vote.nz in 31 languages.

Your vote is your choice

All New Zealanders have the right to vote freely without fear of punishment from employers, community groups or authorities.

It's okay to listen to others' views but your vote should reflect your own decision.

Campaigning is not allowed inside voting places.

It is illegal for anyone to pressure, threaten, bribe, or force you to vote in a certain way.

Accepting or offering gifts or money in exchange for a vote is illegal.

Your vote is private

If someone asks you how you voted, you do not have to tell them.

We make sure that your vote remains secret when you're voting and when we're counting votes.

We can help you to vote

To find your nearest official voting place and opening times check vote.nz

The only voting places are those run by the Electoral Commission.

Electoral Commission staff at your voting place are there to help and answer any questions you may have.

Our staff will be wearing orange vests. They'll also have name tags identifying them as Electoral Commission employees.

What to expect at the voting place

You do not have to talk to campaigners outside voting places. If you feel unsafe or pressured at a voting place, you can leave and return later to vote.

When you arrive at a voting place, our staff will welcome you and provide support on what to do.

You don't need to take your driver licence, your passport or anything else with you to a voting place. No identification is required to vote.

If you have an EasyVote card it will make voting faster – but you can vote without it.

How to vote

Once you get your voting paper, you take it to a voting screen where you can vote privately.

If you need help to read or mark your voting paper, a friend, family member or electoral official can be your support person. Your support person can't tell you who you should vote for. Your vote should be your own decision.

Everyone's vote is private, so we require everyone in a voting place to respect the privacy of other voters.

You have two votes

Your voting paper will have a list of political parties and a list of candidates.



Place a tick by the party you support.



Place another tick by the candidate you would like to be the member of Parliament for the area you live in.

Fold your paper in half and put it in the ballot box provided.

Scrutineers

Candidates and parties can appoint 'scrutineers' to be observers in voting places and when votes are counted.

Scrutineers play an important role in our elections. They provide independent assurance to voters that elections are being conducted fairly.

Scrutineers are not voting place staff and are not employed by the Electoral Commission.

They usually sit along one side of the voting place, away from the voting screens.

Scrutineers may wear a rosette showing which party they represent and may also take notes.