

Media kit

2026 General Election



March 2026

2026 Media Kit

The media have an important role to play in an election informing voters about the parties and candidates contesting the election, how to take part, the results, and how elections work.

The 2026 Media Kit for the General Election has useful information for journalists to use in their coverage, including the election timetable, statistics, answers to frequently asked questions on enrolment and voting, and summaries of the election rules.

Please contact us if you need more information or would like to fact check a story about the election process.

The Kit sits alongside the 2026 Publisher and Broadcaster Handbook available in the resources section at elections.nz/media-and-news. The Handbook has a detailed summary of the rules and obligations for broadcasters and publishers, particularly around election advertising.

Websites

The Electoral Commission websites are:

- vote.nz - enrol or update your details and find information about voting in the 2026 General Election
- elections.nz - election guidance and rules, enrolment statistics and information on past elections
- electionresults.govt.nz - parliamentary election results.

Images for stories

Photos to illustrate stories on enrolment and voting can be downloaded from the image gallery at elections.nz/media-and-news/image-gallery

Please credit the Electoral Commission if you use these photos.

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Media contacts

Subscribe to the RSS feed on elections.nz/media-and-news to receive notification of all media releases and news items on party compliance.

If you have a media enquiry, the best way to contact us is by sending an email to the media inbox. We'll get back to you as soon as we can.

Media inbox: media@elections.govt.nz

Media phones: **04 806 3536** or **027 551 7845**

Websites: vote.nz | elections.nz



2026 General Election timetable

21 January	Prime Minister announces date for the 2026 General Election
6 August	Last day for registration of parties and logos
Midnight, 6 August	Last day for Māori who are already enrolled to change roll types
7 August	Regulated period for election advertising expenses begins
7 September	Candidate nominations open
1 October	Dissolution of Parliament
4 October	Writ Day - the Governor-General issues formal direction to the Electoral Commission to hold the election Anyone who enrolls after this date casts a special vote
Noon, 8 October	Nominations close for candidates
21 October	Overseas voting starts
25 October	Last day to enrol to vote in the election
26 October	Advance voting starts
6 November	Regulated period ends. All election advertising must end. Signs must be taken down by midnight
7 November	Election day. Voting places open from 9.00am to 7.00pm Election night. Preliminary election results released progressively from 7.00pm on electionresults.govt.nz
27 November	Official results for the 2026 General Election declared
3 December	Last day for the return of the writ (subject to any recounts)
14 January 2027	Last day for Parliament to meet
9 March 2027	Deadline for candidates to report their election expenses, donations and loans, and for third parties to report their election expenses
8 April 2027	Deadline for parties to report their election expenses and broadcasting allocation expenses

What's new this election

A key focus in 2026 will be on ensuring people enrol by 4 October to make voting easier for them.

Anyone who enrolls after 4 October will cast a special vote, and once advance voting starts on 26 October, you won't be able to enrol or update your details.

The following changes introduced through the Electoral Amendment Act will take effect in time for the 2026 General Election.

- Enrolment closes 13 days before election day.
- An advance voting period of 12 days is set in the law.
- Sentenced prisoners are disqualified from voting. Previously, only prisoners sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three years or more were disqualified.
- It is an offence to improperly influence a person's roll choice - Māori roll or general roll - when enrolling or switching roll types, for example by offering money or a gift.
- You cannot provide free food, drink (excluding water), and entertainment within 100 metres of the entrance of a voting place during voting hours unless you do so in your ordinary course of business, unrelated to the election.
- The disclosure threshold for party donations increases from \$5,000 to \$6,000.
- The timeframe for disclosing donations of more than \$20,000 increases from 10 to 20 working days in election years.

Changes to eligibility for overseas voters

New Zealand citizens living overseas can enrol and vote if they have been in New Zealand within the last three years, and New Zealand residents living overseas can enrol and vote if they have been in New Zealand within the last 12 months.

During the 2023 election the eligibility criteria for New Zealanders overseas to enrol and vote was extended to recognise that some people could not return to NZ in the last three years because of the pandemic. That change has now lapsed.

Enrolment data showing the number of people who have told us they are overseas is released quarterly at elections.nz/stats-and-research/enrolment-statistics/enrolment-by-general-electorate/

Information about the election process

Promoting accurate information

'Facts about New Zealand elections' is a page on **vote.nz** where you'll find accurate information about enrolling and voting and how the election is run. If we see inaccurate information circulating about the election process, we'll put the correct information on this page:

<https://vote.nz/voting/how-to-vote/facts-about-new-zealand-elections>

Contact the Commission's media team if you need to fact check information about the election process.

There's always the potential for incorrect information to circulate at election time and the use of AI to generate images and videos means false information can spread quickly. We don't regulate the content of election material, but we encourage responsible use of AI tools.

Social media

There are things people can do if they see information on social media that doesn't look right.

- If it's an ad, check for a promoter statement to see who is behind it.
- If it looks like inaccurate information, don't share it. A better approach is to share the correct information instead.
- Verify it. Check the source of the information. If it's a statement by a candidate or party, check it's from their real social media account, or their real website.

There's more social media advice on **elections.nz**, including who to contact if you see content you're concerned about.

Enquiries about election material

There are different organisations you can contact if you have questions about election material.

The Electoral Commission is responsible for making sure everyone follows the rules about, the rules about having a promoter statement on election advertising, authorisation of advertising and electoral finance.

If we believe a person or group has committed an offence, we'll report the facts to the police.

We can't enforce laws or prosecute offenders. Our role does not include regulating the content of campaign advertising, broadcasts, or media activity.

The Advertising Standards Authority, Broadcasting Standards Authority and the Media Council all have roles when it comes to considering whether the content of campaign advertising, broadcasts and media activity meets the standards they administer (see diagram).

If you have questions about the placement of election billboards, contact the local council. Local authorities decide where and when election signs can go up and there is no set date for when they can appear.

Election Ads, Editorial and Programme Content

Election Ads, Editorial and Programme Content

Who does what?



TV and radio party
& candidate ads and
programme content



Paid party &
candidate ads in
other media. Paid &
third party election
ads in all media



Advertiser identity /
promoter statement
issues /expenditure
limits



Print / digital
news sites
Editorial content

Quick guides to filming in voting places and election day coverage

Filming in voting places

The media can arrange filming at voting places during advance voting and on election day through the Electoral Commission. If you know you're going to be filming a party leader going to vote, or you want footage and photos of voting, contact us as early as you can so we can get it cleared. Send an email to media@elections.govt.nz

Media organisations can take photos or film at a voting place so long as:

- the Electorate Manager approves. Media should contact the media team at the Electoral Commission at least a day ahead to arrange this
- no photographs are taken of voters actually completing their ballot papers or showing how a person voted
- photographers and camera crews do not disrupt voters from voting, or officials from their duties
- no interviews are conducted in or near the voting place.

News coverage on election day

Voters should be free from interference on election day Saturday 7 November. For that reason, political parties cannot campaign on the day and the media cannot publish stories or advertising likely to influence voters before 7pm on election day.

- It's okay to refer to the election, for example, a news item noting that it's election day and when results will be available.
- BUT news items must not include any words or visual images that are likely to influence voters about how they should vote.
- Newspapers published after 6pm on the day before election day are treated as being published on election day.
- Election material posted on websites before election day can remain, but the material cannot be added to on election day, and the website cannot be advertised on election day.
- No opinion polling of voters can be carried out on election day.

Reporting the election results

XML media feed

The Electoral Commission's XML feed of election results is available to the media on election night. Email the media team at media@elections.govt.nz to receive updates about testing the media feed for graphics production.

Preliminary results

The results will start coming through after voting closes at 7pm on election night, Saturday 7 November. The first results are expected to be entered before 7.30pm.

- The results will be released on our results website <http://electionresults.govt.nz>
- For the XML media feed go to <http://media.election.net.nz/xml/>

These are live feeds as results are entered. Progress is shown as the % of results from voting places that have come in (not the % of votes). Targets for the release of results are:

- results from 50% of voting places by 10pm
- results from 95% of voting places by 11.30pm

The count on election night provides the preliminary results.

Official results

The results released on election night are an indication of the outcome of an election. It takes longer to produce the official results.

The preliminary results are based on the first count of ordinary votes and do not include special votes, including overseas votes.

The official count starts the day after election day. It's called the official count, but counting is only one part of the process. Rolls are scanned and checked, and all the ordinary votes counted on election night are recounted.

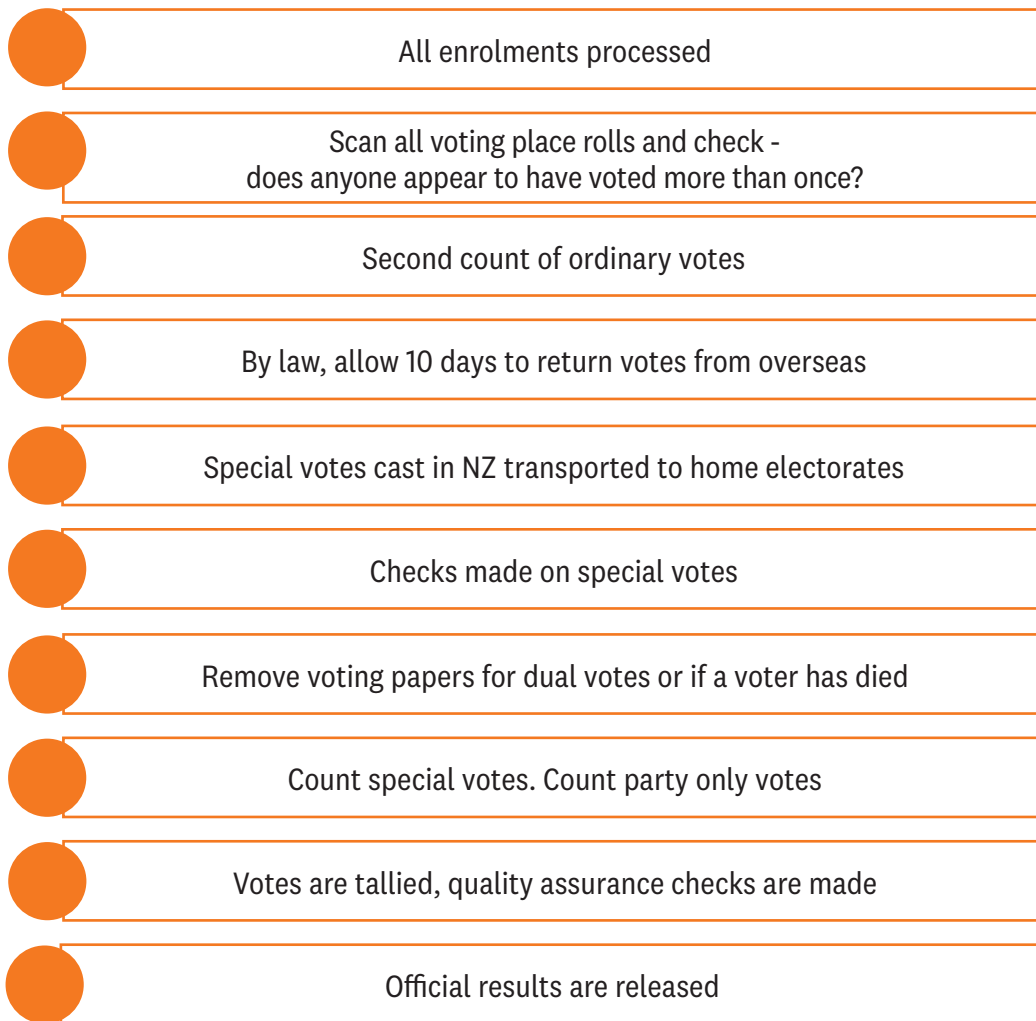
Special declaration votes take up to 10 times longer to process than ordinary votes. Checks include whether they arrived on time, if the declaration is complete, and whether the voter is enrolled.

Counting the special votes, and then tallying and running quality assurance checks on the results are the final tasks.

The target for the release of the official results is Friday 27 November.

For more information on how votes are counted, go to <https://elections.nz/democracy-in-nz/about-elections/how-are-general-election-votes-counted>

Steps in the official count



Special votes

A special vote is like a normal vote but the voter must also sign a declaration form. The number of special votes has grown in recent elections.

People cast a special vote if they are not on the printed electoral roll at the voting place. It could be because they:

- enrolled after 4 October (writ day) when the rolls are printed
- are on the unpublished roll
- are voting outside their electorate.

People also cast a special vote if they are voting from overseas or are using an alternative form of voting such as takeaway voting.



FAQ Section

Enrolling and voting

Who can enrol and vote?

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. This includes someone on a resident visa.

Is enrolling compulsory?

If you are living in New Zealand and you are eligible, you must enrol. However, voting is not compulsory in New Zealand.

How do people enrol?

You can enrol, check or update your details online at vote.nz using a New Zealand driver licence, New Zealand passport or a RealMe verified identity. You can also enrol or update your details by filling in an enrolment form. Call **0800 36 76 56** or text your name and address to **3676** to have a form sent to you.

What will the Commission be doing to help people enrol?

Our focus in 2026 will be on ensuring people enrol earlier so their vote counts. The Commission is undertaking a nationwide information and education programme to let you and your community know when you need to enrol, and how to do it. It will include advertising and community engagement.

Will there be automatic enrolment updates this year?

No. If we receive information from another government agency that you have moved, we will contact you and invite you to update your address.

In the future, we plan to move to automatic updates when we change your address on the electoral roll based on the information we've received. There is a lot of work to do before we can introduce this step, and it won't be in place for the 2026 General Election.

Have there been changes to electorate boundaries?

The Representation Commission has made changes to New Zealand's parliamentary electorates. This includes changes to the boundaries and, in some cases, the names of electorates. In 2026, there will be seven Māori electorates and 64 general electorates.

There's more information on what's changed on elections.nz

<https://elections.nz/democracy-in-nz/historical-events/boundary-review-2025>

How do people check what electorate they are in?

You can check your electorate using the map at vote.nz. The personalised enrolment update and EasyVote packs sent to all enrolled voters will say which electorate you are in.

Māori Electoral Option

What is the Māori Electoral Option?

If you are Māori, you choose which electoral roll you want to be on when you enrol for the first time: the Māori roll or the general roll. After that, you can change the roll you are on at any time except:

- in the 3 months before a general election
- in the 3 months before the local elections which are held every 3 years
- before a parliamentary by-election if the change would move you into the electorate where the by-election is being held.

Can I change the type of roll (Māori roll or general roll) I'm on before the 2026 General Election?

If you are already enrolled, you can change the roll you're on up until midnight, Thursday 6 August. You cannot change roll types in the 3 months before the 2026 General Election (7 August – 7 November).

What if I am not enrolled yet – is there a deadline to make my roll choice?

If you are Māori and enrolling for the first time, you can enrol and make your roll choice up until midnight, 25 October. Once you've chosen your roll, you won't be able to change it until after the election.

How does my choice affect my vote?

If you choose the general roll, you'll vote for a candidate in a general electorate. If you choose the Māori roll, you'll vote for a candidate in a Māori electorate. The candidate who wins the most votes in your electorate will become your local member of Parliament (MP) and represent you in Parliament.

Does my choice affect who I can vote for with my party vote?

No. When it comes to the party vote, every voter, regardless of which electoral roll they are on, has the same list of political parties to choose from.

Can someone tell me which roll to choose?

Talking to friends and whānau can help when you are deciding which roll to choose, but the final choice is up to you.

Following electoral law changes, it is now an offence to improperly influence a person's roll choice - Māori roll or general roll - when enrolling or switching roll types, for example by offering money or a gift.

How many Māori electorates are there?

There are seven Māori electorates for the 2026 General Election. The number of Māori electorates was fixed in October 2024 based on population data from the Census and electoral roll data.

What are the packs being sent to Māori voters?

If you're enrolled to vote and you said you are of Māori descent when you enrolled, you will be sent a personalised Māori Electoral Option pack in the mail in early April 2026. It will be sent to the most recent address we have for you.

The pack includes a letter confirming which electoral roll you're currently enrolled on. If you don't want to change the roll you're on, you don't need to do anything.

If you want to change the roll you are on before this year's election, sign and date the letter you received and send it back or make the change online at **vote.nz**.

How do I return my letter?

To return the letter, you can:

- upload a scan or photo of it at vote.nz/upload
- email a scan or photo of it to enrol@vote.nz
- post it in the envelope included in your pack.

What if I'm on the unpublished roll?

If you are on the unpublished roll and would like to change the roll you're on, either send back the letter you receive in your Māori Electoral Option pack or fill in a new enrolment form.

You can't change your enrolment online at **vote.nz** if you're on the unpublished roll.

What should I do if I don't receive a 2026 Māori Electoral Option pack in the mail?

If you don't receive a pack it could mean you're not enrolled, your address details are not up to date, or you haven't told us you're Māori.

You can enrol or update your details online at vote.nz using your New Zealand driver licence, New Zealand passport, or RealMe verified identity.

You can also enrol or update your details by filling in a paper enrolment form. Text your name and address to **3676** to be sent an enrolment form or call **0800 36 76 56** and ask for a form to be sent to you. Texts and calls to those numbers are free.

How many people are on the Māori roll and the general roll?

We publish monthly Māori enrolment figures here: <https://elections.nz/stats-and-research/enrolment-statistics/enrolment-by-general-electorate/maori-enrolment/>

On 2 March 2026, 562,069 voters of Māori descent were enrolled to vote, 304,508 (54%) on the Māori roll and 257,561 (46%) on the general roll.

Voting

When can people vote?

Voting starts in New Zealand on 26 October in New Zealand and goes through until 7pm on election day, 7 November. Voters who are overseas can vote from 21 October.

What about people who will be away from home at the time of the election?

You can vote at any voting place in the country, but if you are voting outside your electorate or away from a voting place, you may need to complete a special declaration vote. Information on when and where people can vote will be available at **vote.nz** or by calling **0800 36 76 56**.

Are there accessible voting options available for disabled voters?

There are accessible voting places in every electorate. The list of voting places at **vote.nz** shows which voting places are fully accessible and accessible with assistance.

The telephone dictation voting service can be used by people who are blind, have low vision, or a physical disability that means they can't mark their ballot paper without assistance.

Voters who are unable to vote in person can ask someone to bring them their voting papers or apply for voting papers to be sent to them.

For more information go to **vote.nz**

What is advance voting?

Voting before election day has grown steadily over recent years and has become part of New Zealand elections. It is a convenient option for people who are ready to vote or can't vote on election day. In 2008 11% of votes were cast in advance. That grew to 47% in 2017, 68% in 2020, and 61% in 2023.

Can prisoners vote?

The law has changed so that all sentenced prisoners are disqualified from voting.

Previously, only prisoners sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three years or more were disqualified.

However, prisoners can enrol and vote if they are on remand or are serving a prison sentence of less than 3 years and all the offences they were sentenced for occurred before 20 December 2025.

What if I turn 18 during the voting period?

Are you 17? Make sure you enrol by midnight Sunday 25 October so you can vote in the election.

If you turn 18 up to and including election day, you are eligible to vote at the election, as long as you applied to enrol before enrolment closes on 25 October. If you enrol after that date, you won't be able to vote at the election.

Why can't people vote online?

We don't use online voting for parliamentary elections in New Zealand, and it would be up to Parliament to change the law to enable that to happen.

Are there any new offences following electoral law changes?

You cannot provide free food, drink (excluding water), and entertainment within 100 metres of the entrance of a voting place during voting hours unless you do so in your ordinary course of business, unrelated to the election.

It is also now an offence to improperly influence a person's roll choice - Māori roll or general roll - when enrolling or switching roll types, for example by offering money or a gift.

Overseas voting

What happens if people are overseas at election time?

If you are overseas during the election, you can still vote. From 21 October, enrolled voters who are overseas can download voting papers from **vote.nz**.

You can print your voting papers or complete them using electronic marks and signatures.

You may also be able to vote at an overseas voting place. A list of overseas posts will be available online at **vote.nz** or by calling **0800 36 76 56**.

If you're still in New Zealand when advance voting opens on 26 October, it will be easier to vote before you go overseas.

Who can vote from overseas?

New Zealand citizens living overseas can enrol and vote if they have been in New Zealand within the last three years.

Residents for electoral purposes living overseas can enrol and vote if they have been in New Zealand within the last 12 months.

Overseas voting statistics

Overseas enrolment figures are published quarterly on our website.

<https://elections.nz/stats-and-research/enrolment-statistics/enrolment-by-general-electorate/overseas-enrolment/>

On 7 January 2026 there were 99,239 people enrolled who have told us they are living overseas.

At the 2023 General Election there were 77,295 overseas votes. The largest number of votes come from New Zealanders in Australia and the United Kingdom.

Scrutineers

What are scrutineers?

Scrutineers play an important role in observing elections. Candidates and parties can appoint scrutineers to observe the election process including the issuing of votes in voting places and the count of votes.

What are the rules for scrutineers?

We provide guidance to scrutineers about what they can and can't do at a voting place, for example, scrutineers can ask our staff questions but can't speak directly to voters. Voters might see scrutineers sitting at voting places. Scrutineers can wear a party lapel badge or rosette and clothing in party colours.

For more information, see the Scrutineer Handbook for the 2026 General Election: <https://elections.nz/guidance-and-rules/candidate-hub/resources/handbooks>

MMP and government formation

What is New Zealand's voting system?

MMP is the voting system we use in New Zealand. It stands for Mixed Member Proportional.

Under MMP, each voter gets two votes. Their electorate vote is for the candidate they want to be their MP and represent their local area. Their party vote is for the party they support.

The party vote largely decides the total number of seats each political party gets. Parties with a bigger share of the party vote get more seats in Parliament. Parties must get at least 5% of the party vote or win an electorate seat before they can have any seats in Parliament.

For more information on how MMP works, see elections.nz.

How are governments formed?

Negotiations and agreements between political parties are usually needed before a government can be formed. Some types of possible agreements are:

- coalitions — when two or more parties join together to form a government
- confidence and supply agreements — when one party agrees to support another on certain issues and laws that are voted on in Parliament.

For more information on what happens after an election see the DPMC elections page: <https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/our-business-units/cabinet-office/supporting-work-cabinet/elections>

For the process of appointing a government, see a recent speech by the Governor-General: <https://gg.govt.nz/publications/electoral-commission-national-training-electorate-managers>

What happens to votes for parties that don't make it into Parliament?

If the party you voted for doesn't make it into Parliament, your vote doesn't go to another party.

To calculate how many seats in Parliament each party will get, we only use the votes for parties who make it into Parliament, either by winning an electorate seat or receiving 5% or more of the party vote. This means the share of seats in Parliament each of these parties gets will be higher than their share of the overall party vote.

Campaign rules

For a full explanation of campaign rules for candidates, parties and third parties, see the 'Guidance and Rules' section at **elections.nz**.

The Publisher and Broadcaster Handbook has detailed information on the rules and responsibilities for the media, particularly around election advertising. Downloadable copies are available at <https://elections.nz/media-and-news/media-resources>

Candidates and parties

Who can be a candidate?

Candidates must be a New Zealand citizen and enrolled to vote. Candidates do not need to be enrolled in the electorate they are contesting, and they do not need to be of Māori descent to stand in a Māori electorate.

How does the nomination process work?

There are two ways to become an electorate candidate. Registered political parties can lodge a bulk nomination for all their electorate candidates with the Electoral Commission, or individual nominations can be submitted to the Commission.

List candidates are included on the party lists supplied by registered political parties to the Electoral Commission.

When is the deadline for nominations?

Following a law change, there is now a single deadline (nomination day) for all candidate and party list nominations. For the 2026 General Election, the deadline for party secretaries and candidates to return their nominations to us is noon, Thursday 8 October.

We will publish the names of up to 120 list candidates for each registered party, rather than 65.

When will the candidates be announced?

Candidates for the 2026 General Election will be announced on Friday 9 October. Contact details for candidates will be available to media on request by sending an email to media@elections.govt.nz

When do political parties need to be registered by?

Political parties need to register by 6 August to contest the party vote and stand list candidates at the 2026 General Election. This also applies to registering party logos.

Election advertising

What is election advertising?

An election advertisement is an advertisement in any medium that may reasonably be regarded as either encouraging or persuading voters to vote or not vote for a candidate or party, or type of candidate or party.

When can election advertising run?

Election advertising can run anytime except election day. The cost of advertising for parties, candidates and third parties is counted as an election expense during the regulated period from 7 August to 6 November.

Separate to this are election programmes (advertisements) for parties and candidates. They can only be broadcast on radio and television from 4 October (writ day) to midnight on Friday 6 November (excluding 6am – noon on Sundays). This is known as the election period.

Note, third parties can broadcast election advertising at any time except on election day.

What are the spending limits for advertising?

From 7 August to 6 November 2026 (the regulated period), the following limits will apply for the 2026 General Election.

- Electorate candidates can spend up to \$36,000.
- Registered political parties can spend up to \$1,503,000 if they contest the party vote, plus \$36,000 for each electorate contested by candidates for the party.
- Registered third-party promoters can spend up to \$424,000.
- Unregistered third-party promoters can spend up to \$17,000.

What is the broadcasting allocation?

Political parties can apply for public funding for election programmes and advertising on radio, television and the internet. The Electoral Commission decides how the funds will be allocated based on the criteria in the Broadcasting Act 1989. The 2026 allocation is \$4,145,750 including GST (\$3,605,000 excluding GST), the same amount as in 2023 and 2020.

The Commission's broadcasting allocation decision for 2026 is released on 8 May, 2026 and published on **elections.nz**.

Note, party advertising on TV and radio can only be placed using the broadcasting allocation.

What obligations do the media have?

The media have a responsibility to ensure election advertisements follow the relevant rules before they are published or broadcast.

All election advertisements must include a promoter statement. A promoter statement shows the name and contact details of the person promoting the ad.

Contact details can be: a street address, email address, PO Box number, phone number, or link to a page on a website if it contains one or more of these other contact details.

Promoters must get written authorisation to promote a party or candidate. You should ask for a copy of the written authorisation before the advertising is published or broadcast.

There is detailed information about election advertising in the 2026 Publisher and Broadcaster Handbook at elections.nz. If you're not sure about the rules, you can ask the Electoral Commission for advice by sending an email to advisory@elections.govt.nz

What about editorial content and views expressed in the media?

There are exemptions to election advertising rules for:

- editorial content including news stories and current affairs programmes
- personal political views stated by an individual online where no payment is involved.

What if someone has a complaint about election advertising?

There are different agencies people can go to if they have concerns about an election advertisement.

The Commission is responsible for ensuring that the rules regarding promoter statements, authorisation and electoral finance are being complied with. We will consider complaints about advertising with regards to these rules.

The Advertising Standards Authority, Broadcasting Standards Authority and the Media Council all have roles when it comes to considering whether the content of campaign advertising, broadcasts and media activity meets the standards they administer (see diagram on pg 9).

What happens if the Electoral Act rules are broken?

If a potential breach is brought to our attention, we will look into it. If we believe there has been a breach, we can report it to the Police. We are not an enforcement agency so cannot prosecute or fine people – that is up to the Police.

What are the rules around election signs?

Local authorities decide where and when election signs can go up and there is no set date for when they can appear.

Rules vary between councils, so the Electoral Act allows election signs up to 3 square metres in size to be put up from 5 September 2026. Signs can be larger or go up earlier if the local council allows it.

Election signs need to include a promoter statement. They must be covered up or removed by midnight on Friday 6 November, the day before election day.

Donation returns

Are there any changes to the donation disclosure rules?

The disclosure threshold for party donations has increased from \$5,000 to \$6,000. The timeframe for disclosing donations of more than \$20,000 increases from 10 to 20 working days in election years.

Annual party returns

Parties file donation returns every year and these are published on the Commission website.

Annual returns: <https://elections.nz/democracy-in-nz/political-parties-in-new-zealand/party-donations-and-loans-by-year/>

Donations over \$20,000

In election year, between 1 January and the day before election day, donations to parties over \$20,000 must be declared within 20 working days. The return is published on the Commission's website.

Find out more about donations over \$20,000: elections.nz/democracy-in-nz/political-parties-in-new-zealand/donations-exceeding-20000/

Candidate donations, expenses and loans

Candidate donations of more than \$1,500 must be declared in the candidate's return following the General Election. Candidates also have to disclose their election expenses and loans. The 2026 returns are due on 9 March 2027.

Official results

When will the results be available?

Preliminary results will be available progressively on election night from shortly after 7pm. You can check the election results website: www.electionresults.govt.nz. The official results for the general election will be declared on 27 November.

Will the change to the enrolment deadline affect the timing of the official election results?

It takes time for overseas votes to be returned, for special votes to be checked before they are counted, and for integrity checks to be made before we release the official results.

We are looking at ways we can reduce the time in future elections but have allowed 20 days in 2026. We understand how important it is to deliver a timely election result. It is also critically important that all the necessary checks are undertaken so the public can trust the result.

What is the Commission doing to ensure the integrity of the 2026 General Election results?

The Electoral Commission has put changes in place that strengthen the way votes are recorded, counted and checked.

What other changes are you making?

As well as making improvements to our assurance processes, we are beginning a programme of modernisation. That includes more digital communications with voters. For example, we will be using emails and text messages to prompt people to update their enrolment details.

Election day rules - 7 November 2026

The Electoral Act prohibits campaigning of any kind on election day from midnight to 7pm, so people can vote without interference.

On election day parties, party supporters and candidates and third party promoters must:

- cover up or take down all election signs
- not distribute any campaign material
- not post any new material on websites.
- not display clothing (such as T-shirts) promoting a party or candidate.

Parties, party supporters, candidates may:

- wear party lapel badges (including rosettes) in public bearing the party's name, emblem, slogan or logo (but not the candidate's name)
- display streamers, rosettes, ribbons and similar items in party colours on people or vehicles
- contact voters to offer help to get to a voting place BUT they must not say or do anything to influence who they vote for
- display fixed signs exhibited before voting day on party headquarters including party names, slogans or logos that do not relate specifically to the election campaign
- keep election material on a website on election day as long as the material is only made available to people who voluntarily access it. New material must not be posted on the website on election day. Advertisements promoting the website must not be published on election day.

Scrutineers may be appointed by candidates to observe the issuing of votes during advance voting, election day and the preliminary count on election day.

- Scrutineers may wear party lapel badges.
- They must not communicate with voters.



Election statistics

Results of the 2023 General Election

The full results are at elections.govt.nz, see the statistics section for results from each voting place.

Party votes	% of Votes	Electorate Seats	List Seats	Total Seats	
National Party	1,085,851	38.08	43	5	48
Labour Party	767,540	26.91	17	17	34
Green Party	330,907	11.60	3	12	15
ACT New Zealand	246,473	8.64	2	9	11
New Zealand First Party	173,553	6.08	-	8	8
Te Pāti Māori	87,844	3.08	6	-	6
The Opportunities Party (TOP)	63,344	2.22	-	-	-
New Zealand Loyal	34,478	1.20	-	-	-
NewZeal	16,126	0.56	-	-	-
Aotearoa Legalise Cannabis Party	13,025	0.45	-	-	-
Freedoms NZ	9,586	0.33	-	-	-
Freedoms NZ	-	-	-	-	-
NZ Outdoors & Freedom Party	-	-	-	-	-
Rock the Vote NZ	-	-	-	-	-
Vision New Zealand	-	-	-	-	-
DemocracyNZ	6,786	0.23	-	-	-
Animal Justice Party	5,018	0.17	-	-	-
New Conservatives	4,532	0.15	-	-	-
Women's Rights Party	2,513	0.08	-	-	-
Leighton Baker Party	2,105	0.07	-	-	-
New Nation Party	1,530	0.05	-	-	-
Total	2,851,211		71	51	122

Quick election statistics

Quick election statistics				
	2023	2020	2017	2014
Number enrolled	3,688,292	3,549,580	3,298,009	3,140,417
% enrolled	94.7%	94.1%	92.4%	92.6%
Total votes cast	2,884,111	2,919,073	2,630,173	2,446,297
Turnout % of those enrolled	78.2%	82.2%	79.8%	77.9%
Turnout Māori descent (general and Māori roll)	70.3%	72.9%	71.1%	67.6%
Turnout 18 to 24-year-olds	74.2%	78.0%	69.3%	62.7%
Advance voting				
Number of advance votes	1,762,490	1,976,996	1,240,740	717,579
Percentage of voters	61%	68%	47%	29%
Overseas votes				
Number of overseas votes cast	77,295	61,133	59,016	38,316
Māori electorates				
Voters on the Māori roll	290,300	276,013	251,793	239,941
Votes in Māori electorates	197,389	190,740	167,974	156,147
Turnout (Māori roll)	68.0%	69.1%	66.7%	65.1%
Special votes				
No. of special votes	602,488	504,621	446,287	331,005
% of total votes cast	20.9%	17.3%	17.0%	13.5%

Turnout breakdown by age and Māori descent

Voters of Māori descent - enrolment and turnout									
Age band	Māori enrolled on the Māori and general rolls			Number that voted			Turnout % of those enrolled		
	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023	2017	2020	2023
18-24	73,587	81,039	77,669	45,503	56,513	54,583	61.80%	69.70%	70.28%
25-29	55,807	63,847	65,902	34,398	41,930	42,563	61.60%	65.70%	64.59%
30-34	46,928	57,478	64,904	30,142	38,206	42,037	64.20%	66.50%	64.77%
35-39	44,166	48,295	54,033	30,410	33,002	35,207	68.90%	68.30%	65.16%
40-44	44,436	46,430	47,808	32,019	33,175	32,235	72.10%	71.50%	67.43%
45-49	46,494	49,134	46,937	34,445	36,511	32,769	74.10%	74.30%	69.81%
50-54	42,805	46,075	49,274	32,443	35,150	35,370	75.80%	76.30%	71.78%
55-59	39,457	43,918	43,764	31,106	34,525	32,240	78.80%	78.60%	73.67%
60-64	29,778	35,662	41,388	24,219	28,986	31,844	81.30%	81.30%	76.94%
65-69	22,162	25,885	30,186	18,719	21,624	24,102	84.50%	83.50%	79.84%
70+	31,178	37,709	45,147	25,576	30,684	35,820	82.00%	81.40%	79.34%
Total	476,798	535,472	567,012	338,980	390,306	398,770	71.10%	72.90%	70.33%

International voter turnout - parliamentary elections

Country	Date	Turnout %	Date	Turnout %	Date	Turnout %
Australia*	2025	90.67	2022	89.74	2019	91.89
Austria	2024	76.25	2019	75.59	2017	80.00
Belgium*	2024	87.42	2019	88.38	2014	89.37
Canada	2025	68.70	2021	62.25	2019	67.65
Denmark	2022	84.16	2019	84.60	2015	85.89
Finland	2023	68.50	2019	68.73	2015	66.85
France	2024	66.63	2017	48.70	2012	57.22
Germany	2025	82.54	2021	76.58	2017	76.15
Ireland	2024	59.70	2020	62.77	2016	65.09
Italy	2022	63.79	2018	72.93	2013	75.19
Japan	2026	56.25	2021	55.97	2014	52.66
Netherlands	2025	78.30	2021	78.71	2017	81.93
Norway	2025	80.12	2021	77.16	2017	78.22
Sweden	2022	84.21	2018	87.18	2014	85.81
Switzerland	2023	46.64	2019	45.12	2015	48.51
United Kingdom	2024	59.76	2019	67.55	2017	69.31
U.S.A (Presidential)	2024	64.47	2020	70.75	2016	65.44%

The voter turnout is usually defined as the percentage of registered voters who actually voted.

*Indicates Compulsory Voting

Source: International IDEA Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance <https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout-database>



Enrolment statistics February 2026

Enrolment statistics are updated monthly for each electorate at elections.nz in the stats and research section.

Age	Est. Eligible Population	General Roll	Māori Roll	Total Enrolled	Difference	% Enrolled
18 - 24	428,414	199,823	32,787	232,610	195,804	54.3%
25 - 29	325,356	232,563	35,370	267,933	57,423	82.35%
30 - 34	397,790	276,638	36,834	313,472	84,318	78.8%
35 - 39	386,217	300,809	33,501	334,310	51,907	86.56%
40 - 44	350,314	285,644	27,640	313,284	37,030	89.43%
45 - 49	320,772	266,555	26,289	292,844	27,928	91.29%
50 - 54	341,860	279,826	26,153	305,979	35,881	89.5%
55 - 59	324,002	284,970	24,159	309,129	14,873	95.41%
60 - 64	320,528	282,394	21,816	304,210	16,318	94.91%
65 - 69	274,864	258,278	16,946	275,224	-360	100.13%
70+	626,757	621,005	22,978	643,983	-17,226	102.75%
Total	4,096,874	3,288,505	304,473	3,592,978	503,896	87.7%

Candidate numbers at recent elections

Candidates	2011	2014	2017	2020	2023
Male	397	390	341	413	329
Female	147	164	190	263	229
Gender not specified *			3	1	9
Total	544	554	534	677	567

*Includes did not disclose a gender or identified as another gender

Numbers of parties contesting recent elections

	2005	2008	2011	2014	2017	2020	2023
Number of registered parties contesting the party vote	19	19	13	15	16	17	17*
Number of parties elected to Parliament	8	7	8	7	5	5	6

*In 2023 19 registered parties stood candidates in electorate seats. 17 parties contested the party vote.

Did you know?

- The Electoral Commission expects to recruit more than 28,000 temporary roles (some people work in more than one role) to deliver our services with the majority based in voting places or electoral headquarters across the country
- Around 3.6million enrolment update packs will be sent to enrolled voters
- The Commission will print more than 9million ballot papers
- There will be 64 general electorates and seven Māori electorates for the 2026 General Election

March 2026