

30 March 2022

By email to: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2022/07

Thank you for your request of 16 March 2022 under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) in which you asked:

- 1. How many people have been charged or prosecuted for voting more than once in the NZ 2020 General Election?*
- 2. Was voter ID required for the NZ 2020 General Election? If not, why not?*
- 3. To avoid duplicate voting by some citizens, voters ought to be required to produce some form of formal identification (e.g. Driver's Licence, Passport, Power bill), and a person immediately recorded as having voted. What changes to systems and procedures have been identified to ensure that no voters can vote more than once at future national or sub-national government elections?*

Your questions have been answered as set out below.

How many people have been charged or prosecuted for voting more than once in the NZ 2020 General Election?

Following the Commission's preliminary inquiries into cases of apparent dual voting at the 2020 General Election, the Commission referred 48 individuals to the New Zealand Police.

The New Zealand Police are responsible for investigating and prosecuting cases of dual voting. New Zealand Police has advised that 4 persons have been charged and are being prosecuted for dual voting following the 2020 general election.

Was voter ID required for the NZ 2020 General Election? If not, why not?

No. Voters do not need to provide any form of identification when they vote. There is no requirement under the Act that voters need to produce identification in order to vote.

Voters are required to verbally confirm their name in accordance with section 167(2) of the Act before an ordinary vote can be issued and the voter marked off the electoral roll.

To avoid duplicate voting by some citizens, voters ought to be required to produce some form of formal identification (e.g. Driver's Licence, Passport, Power bill), and a person immediately recorded as having voted. What changes to systems and procedures have been identified to ensure that no voters can vote more than once at future national or sub-national government elections?

The Commission is not aware of any current legislative proposals to introduce mandatory voter identification for New Zealand elections.

The Commission's current process for detecting dual votes is outlined below.

People who cast an ordinary vote are immediately marked off a roll in the voting place. To begin the official count, Returning Officers create a master roll which lists the names of people who voted in each electorate. We call this 'scrutinising the roll'. This is how we identify voters who may have voted more than once. We make the master roll available for public inspection after the election.

The Returning Officer's team complete a range of inquiries to investigate apparent dual votes. For example, they might check when and where each vote was cast in relation to where the apparent dual voter resides, check the page of the roll the voter was marked off when they voted and find the ballot stub with the voter's page and line number written by the issuing officer. For voters who can't be marked off the roll but who completed a special declaration vote, the content of the declarations and signatures on the declarations can also be compared.

Dual votes are extracted and not included in the official count.

In the interests of transparency, we release responses to Official Information Act requests every 3 months. We will publish this response with your personal details redacted.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to make a complaint to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Kristina Temel
Manager Legal and Policy