

21 October 2025

By email to: [REDACTED]

Kia ora [REDACTED]

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2025/79

On Thursday, 16 October you made a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA) for the following information:

any internal communications related to people being moved onto the "dormant roll" for no clear reason, ie not having moved address or having updated their address but still being moved to the dormant roll, between January 1, 2025 and October 15, 2025.

The Commission does not have any internal communications related to people being moved onto the dormant roll for no clear reason, i.e not having moved address or having updated their address but still being moved to the dormant roll, between January 1, 2025 and October 15, 2025. The Electoral Commission does not remove people from the main roll for no reason. As this information does not exist, we refuse your request pursuant to section 18(e) of the Official Information Act, but have provided further information to explain the dormant roll process.

The Commission is responsible for the registration of electors and maintaining the electoral rolls in accordance with Part 5 of the Electoral Act 1993 (the Act).

A person is eligible to enrol and vote if they are 18 years or older, a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident, and have lived in New Zealand continuously for 12 months or more.

By law, eligible electors must enrol, and it is their responsibility under the Act to keep their enrolment details up to date.

It is important for the accuracy and integrity of the electoral rolls that they are kept up to date to ensure voters are correctly enrolled to vote in the electorate (or ward or area for local elections) where they have lived for the last month. By law the Commission must write to all registered electors before a general election and the triennial local body elections to check electors' details are up to date.

During an enrolment update campaign, we receive large numbers of returned mail from NZ Post marked "Gone no address" (GNA). A GNA notifies the Commission our correspondence could not be delivered to an elector at their address on the roll. The Commission is not able to write to electors to tell them they have been put on the dormant roll, as their current address is not known. However, where we have mobile numbers or email addresses, we will attempt to contact electors by text and email to encourage them to update their details prior to them being made dormant.

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www.vote.nz | www.elections.nz

Where we get a GNA and the elector's whereabouts is not known, electors remain on the roll while we try to contact them through email, text or an alternate address if we have this information. After four weeks, if we have not heard from the elector, e.g. the elector has not updated their details through a form or the online enrolment system, they will be put on the dormant roll.

The dormant roll is a 'safety net' for electors to move onto when we have not been able to contact them at their registered address. There is a dormant roll for every Māori and general electoral district. Anyone that has updated their details since being made dormant is added back onto the main roll. People on the dormant roll are still able to vote in parliamentary elections for up to three years after they are placed on the dormant roll, but need to cast a special vote because they do not appear on the printed roll.

The Commission enables electors to check their enrolment details on vote.nz to help electors check if their enrolment details are up to date. However, electors on the dormant roll will not be able to find themselves using this service because their details are out of date.

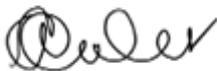
If a person is unable to find themselves they can call freephone 0800 36 76 56 or send an email to enquiries@elections.govt.nz. We can then look into their situation and either confirm they are enrolled, or give them advice about how to re-register on the main roll. An example we have been made aware of is a situation where an elector was moved to the dormant roll in accordance with legislative requirements because correspondence was returned to us by New Zealand Post 'Gone no address' — notwithstanding the elector in fact still resided at the address. The circumstances of that case were unusual, as we do not expect correspondence to be returned as 'Gone no address' where an elector still resides at the address. This elector got in touch with the Electoral Commission, and we were able to investigate, seek an explanation from New Zealand Post, and restore them to the main roll.

The dormant roll has been a declining over the years as we use alternative methods like texting to remind electors to update their details. For example, at the time of the October 2025 local elections the dormant roll is 116,990 compared to 192,566 at the October 2016 local elections.

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



Anusha Guler
Deputy Chief Executive, Operations