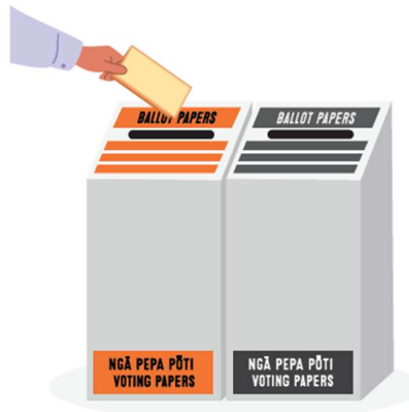




**ELECTORAL  
COMMISSION**  
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

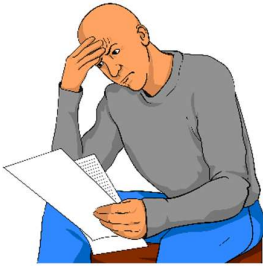


# Information about becoming a candidate in an election



**Published: February 2023**

# Before you read this document



This is a long document.



While it is written in Easy Read it can be hard for some people to read a document this long.



Some things you can do to make it easier are:

- read a few pages at a time
- have someone support you to understand it.



# What you will find in here

## Page number



What is this document about? .....4



The different kinds of candidates .....8



How to be nominated for a general election and a by-election .....16



How to make individual nominations .....18



How to make bulk nominations .....23





Information about being a list candidate .....25



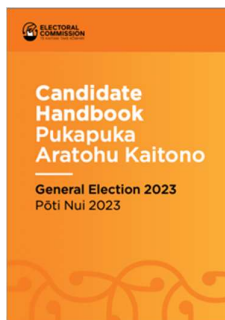
Other information for candidates in general elections and by-elections.....27



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Where to find more information .....57

# What is this document about?



This Easy Read document is from the **Electoral Commission**.



The **Electoral Commission** is in charge of running **elections**.



An **election** is the time when you can vote for the people you want to make important decisions about:

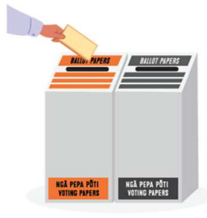
- things that affect how you live
- the country you live in.



This document is about how you can become a **candidate** in an election.



A **candidate** is someone that people can **vote** for in an election.



When you **vote** you get to have your say about who you think should win an election.



The candidate who gets the most votes becomes a **member of Parliament** called an **MP** for short.



An **MP** is someone who:

- works in Parliament
- works to **represent** the people of New Zealand
- usually represents a political party.



**Represent** means to stand / speak for someone.



When someone puts themselves forwards as a candidate it is also called **standing in an election**.



Before you stand in an election you need to know the rules about:



- nominations
- campaigning



- advertising
- expenses / expense limits



- donations.



Do not worry if you do not know what some of these words mean.



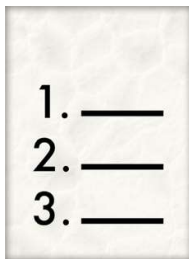
We will explain all these words in this Easy Read document.



The rules are the same for all candidates who want to stand in an election.



Some candidates may apply for funding from the **Election Access Fund**.



The steps to get funding from the Election Access Fund are different from putting yourself forward as a candidate.



You can find out about how to get funding from the Election Access Fund at the Elections NZ **website**:

**[www.elections.nz/getting-involved/election-access-fund/](http://www.elections.nz/getting-involved/election-access-fund/)**



# The different kinds of candidates



To become an MP you / your party must get enough votes to win a **seat**.



A **seat** is another way of saying an MP has won a place in Parliament.



New Zealand is **divided** into voting areas called **electorates**.

**Divided** means it is split into parts.



In a **general election** you can be:

- an **electorate candidate**
- a **list candidate**
- both.





A **general election** is when you vote for the political party / the people you think should run the country.



### **Electorate candidates:**

- represent their local voting area called an **electorate**
- become MPs by winning votes from people in their electorate.



### **List candidates:**

- are on a **registered political party** list of candidates
- can become MPs through the **party vote**.



A **registered political party** is a party that has:

- enough members
- has met the Electoral Commission's rules.



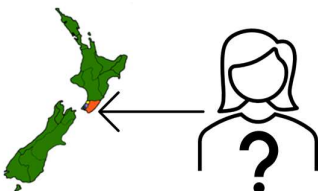
Your **party vote** means you vote for a political party.



Your party vote helps decide how many seats each political party has in Parliament.



In a **by-election** you can only be an electorate candidate.

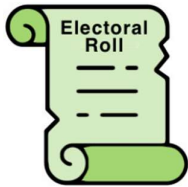


A **by-election** happens when a seat held by an electorate MP becomes empty between general elections.



This usually happens when an MP:

- **resigns** which means they say they do not want to work as an MP any more
- **retires** which is when someone chooses to stop working.



You can be an election candidate if you can say yes to these 3 things:

- you are a **New Zealand citizen**
- your name is on the **electoral roll**
- you will be 18 years old by **nomination day**.



A **New Zealand citizen** is someone who can get a New Zealand passport.



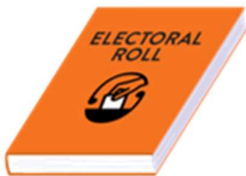
Many New Zealand citizens are born in New Zealand.



Some people who come to live in New Zealand from overseas also become New Zealand citizens.



You may need to show proof that you are a New Zealand citizen.



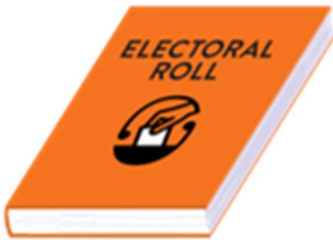
The **electoral roll** is a list of all the people who have **enrolled** to vote.



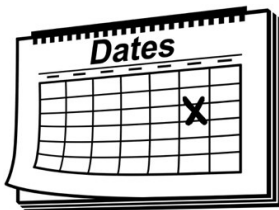
Being **enrolled** to vote means:

- your name is on the electoral roll
- you can vote in an election.

The electoral roll is split into 2 lists:



- the **Māori roll** that is open to voters who are Māori
- the **general roll** that is open to all voters.



**Nomination day is:**

- the last day your **nomination application** will be accepted by the Electoral Commission
- usually about a month before **election day.**



A **nomination** is when someone else puts your name forward for a job / position.

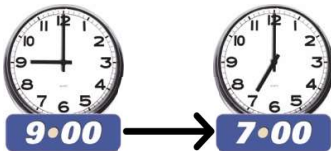


A **nomination application** is a form that must be filled in before a candidate can be officially added to a voting paper / party list.



**Election day** is the last day people can vote.

People can vote on election day:



- from 9 am in the morning
- to 7 pm in the evening.



You cannot **campaign** on election day.



A **campaign** is when a person / a group of people does things to make other people aware of what things they are planning to do to get people to vote for them.



In a general election you can:

- **contest** 1 electorate
- be on 1 party list.



If you **contest** an election this means you:

- take part in it
- try to win it.





# How to be nominated for a general election and a by-election



A candidate can be nominated to contest an election by:

- people who vote called **voters**
- political parties.



There are 2 ways you can be nominated to stand as an electorate candidate:

- you can be nominated as an **individual** candidate
- you can be nominated as part of many nominations made at 1 time by a registered political party called **bulk nomination**.





**Individual** means only 1 person.



You can find out more about **bulk nomination** on **page 23** of this document.



The steps for being nominated are the same for all candidates including those who get funding from the Election Access Fund.



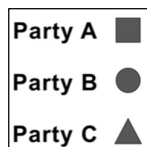
In a by-election all candidates are nominated as individual candidates.

# How to make individual nominations



Individual nominations are made for:

- **independent** candidates
- candidates for a political party that is not a registered party
- candidates for a registered political party that is not making a bulk nomination.



An **independent** candidate is a candidate who does not represent any political party.



All individual candidates must fill in a nomination form.



You can download the nomination form from:

**[www.elections.nz](http://www.elections.nz)**



You **cannot** nominate yourself.



A candidate must be nominated by 2 voters who are enrolled to vote in the electorate area that is to be contested.



The 2 voters who nominate you must fill in their part of your nomination form.



You can send your nomination form along with any information to support your nomination by email to:



**[nominations@elections.govt.nz](mailto:nominations@elections.govt.nz)**

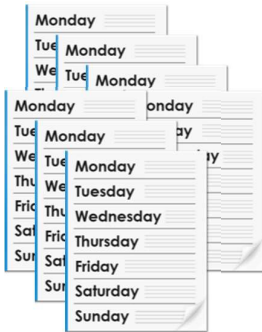


## Sending us your individual nomination



3

We will start accepting nominations for individual candidates about 3 weeks before nomination day.



7

This date will be about 7 weeks before election day.

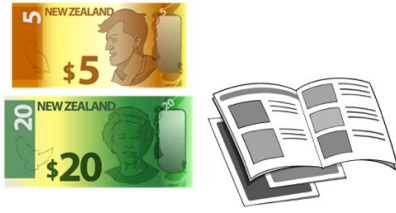


You must send us your nomination form by 12 pm midday on nomination day.



You should send us your nomination as soon as possible so we:

- have time to check it
- can make sure we can accept it.



You must pay a **deposit** of 3 hundred dollars with your individual nomination.



A **deposit** is money that is paid for something / a service.

Sometimes a deposit can be given back to you.



The deposit can be paid by online banking into the following bank account:

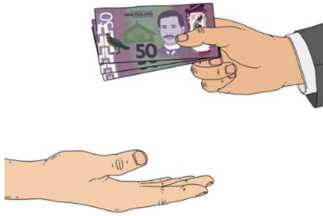


**Electoral Commission Trust  
Account BNZ  
02 0506 0077208 00**



You must include your name when you make this payment so we know who the money is from.

If you cannot pay the deposit by online banking you can pay it:



- by **direct credit**
- in cash.



**Direct credit** is when you go to the bank to transfer money from your account to the person you need to pay.

# How to make bulk nominations



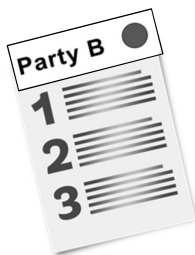
Only registered political parties can make a **bulk nomination**.



**Bulk nomination** is when the **party secretary** nominates all the candidates who represent the party at 1 time.



The **party secretary** is someone who does important paperwork for a political party like:



- writing important letters
- keeping a list of all the members of the party
- managing money / accounts.







Other important things the **party secretary** does are:

- reporting financial information to the Electoral Commission
- making sure the party is following the law.



Your party secretary will ask you to sign a form that says you **consent** to be an electorate candidate.



**Consent** means you choose to say yes to something.



Your party secretary will include your consent form with the nomination.



Your party secretary must send us a deposit of 3 hundred dollars for every candidate they bulk nominate.

# Information about being a list candidate



Only registered political parties can:

- have list candidates
- contest the party vote.



If you are a list candidate your party secretary will add your details to the party list.



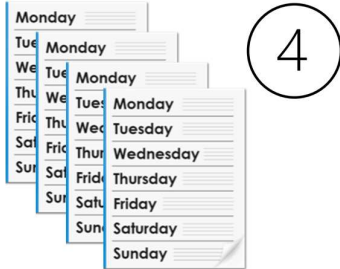
Your party secretary will give you a form to sign that says you give your consent to be a list candidate.



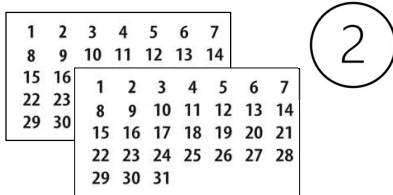
Your party secretary will include your consent form with the party list.



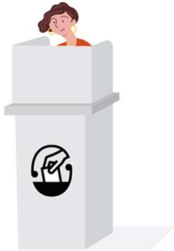
## How to become a list candidate



Nominations for list candidates open about 4 weeks before nomination day.



This is about 2 months before election day.



We will tell you these dates when we know when election day will be.

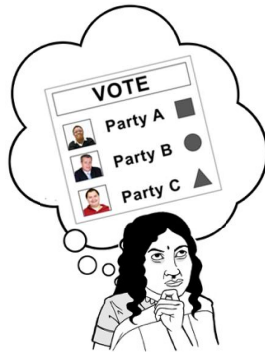


Your party secretary will manage the nominations of candidates for a registered party.



Bulk nominations must reach the Electoral Commission by 12 pm midday on nomination day.

## Other information for candidates in general elections and by-elections



### Choosing the name you will use on the ballot paper

You can choose any of the following names to appear on the **ballot paper**:



- the name that is on your birth certificate
- the name an **adoption order** gave you
- a name you have chosen by **deed poll**
- a name you have been known as for the last 12 months.





The **ballot paper** is a piece of paper that a voter uses to make a vote.



An **adoption order** is a legal document that says someone is the legal parent of an adopted child.



A **deed poll** is a legal document that you can use to prove you have changed your name.

You cannot use any titles on the ballot paper like:



- Dr

- Ms

- Mrs

- Mr.



## Contesting an electorate



You can contest any electorate even if it is not the electorate you are enrolled to vote in.

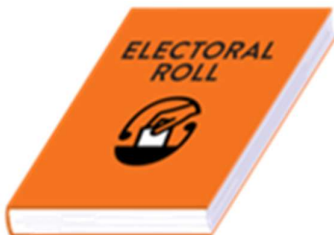


Any candidate can contest:

- a Māori electorate
- a general electorate.



A **Māori electorate** is a voting area in which only people who are on the Māori electoral roll can vote.



You do not have to be Māori to contest a Māori electorate.

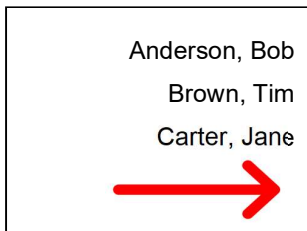


## What the ballot paper will look like.

The names of the electorate candidates are shown on the ballot paper:

Anderson, Bob  
Brown, Tim  
Carter, Jane

- in **alphabetical order** by the last name of the candidates
- on the right-hand side of the paper.



**Alphabetical order** means the order letters are arranged in the English alphabet.




The English alphabet:

- starts with A
- ends with Z.

Anderson, Bob  
**Party B**

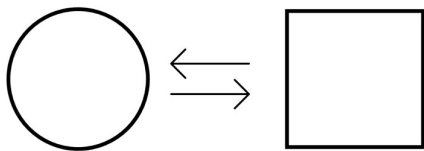
If you represent a political party the name of the party will be shown underneath your name.

Anderson, Bob 


If your party is a registered party with a registered logo the logo will be shown to the right of your name.

**Party B** Anderson, Bob 

If your party is contesting the party vote the name of your party will be **opposite** your name on the left side of the ballot paper.



**Opposite** means 2 things that are across from each other.

**Party B** Anderson, Bob   
Carter, Jane

If you are an independent candidate there will be a blank space opposite your name.





## What happens after you have been nominated



When all the nominations have been checked we will publish the names of the candidates on our website at:

**[www.vote.nz](http://www.vote.nz)**



We will **not** publish any personal information about candidates like:

- the date they were born
- if the candidate is married
- if the candidate is:
  - a man
  - a woman
  - someone of another gender.





We will also **not** publish information about the candidates like their:

- **policies** which are what they think about different subjects
- phone numbers
- email addresses.



Sometimes people who work for the **media** like news reporters ask us for ways to get in touch with a candidate like:



- a telephone number



- an email address.



We may also get asked to give out contact information for other reasons like to organise a public gathering so voters can meet candidates.



We will **not** share any information on how people can contact you if you tell us not to.

## Information about scrutineers



All electorate candidates can choose a **scrutineer**.



A **scrutineer** is someone who watches how an election is run to make sure it is fair to everyone.



You can find more information about scrutineers in the **scrutineer handbook** at this website:



<https://elections.nz/guidance-and-rules/for-candidates/scrutineer-handbook-by-elections/>

# Information about advertising and campaigning



If you are an electorate candidate you can do things that might encourage people to vote for you like:

- advertising
- campaigning.



**Advertising** is when someone puts out notices to the public to:

- get their attention
- support someone.



There are different rules about different types of advertising.



The rules about advertising look at things like:

- who the advertisement is about
- what type of advertisement it is.



You must make sure you do not spend more money than is allowed on advertising.



The amount of money you spend on advertising is called your **election expenses**.



You must keep a record of:

- how much money you spend
- how much money is **donated** to your campaign.





**Donated** means someone gives you money to support you.

You can find out more information about donations on **page 49**.



After the election you must tell us:

- how much money you spent on advertising
- how much money you got in donations
- how much money you got in loans.



Some things are not part of your advertising or election expenses like:

- paying for transport costs like taxis / petrol to get to meetings
- paying for places to hold meetings in.



Things you pay for with money from the Election Access Fund are also not advertising / election expenses.

# What is an election advertisement?



An **election advertisement** is an advertisement that tries to encourage a voter to vote / not vote for a:

- candidate
- party

Election advertisements about electorate candidates are called **candidate advertisements**.

Election advertisements about parties are called **party advertisements**.





An election advertisement can try to change how voters think about how they might vote in:

- a **direct way** like asking the voter to vote for a candidate
- an **indirect way** like making it seem like something bad could happen if the voter does not vote for the candidate.



Different types of election advertisements could be:

- a printed notice / poster
- a leaflet that is sent by post to people living in the electorate
- online on a website / social media page like Facebook.





An election advertisement:

- does not need to cost any money
- does not need to name a candidate / party.



Advertisements that have been published / have been seen by other people must follow the rules for election expenses.



If you are a list candidate the amount you spend on election advertising is an expense for your party.



You must agree how much you can spend on advertising with your party secretary.

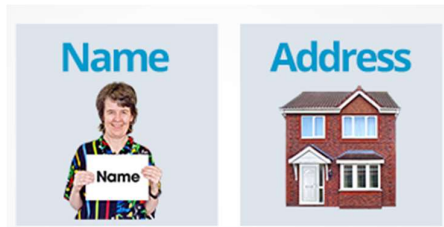


You must also agree with your party secretary that you are okay to advertise.



## Promoter statements

All your election advertisements must include a **promoter statement**.



A **promoter statement** shows information about the person who is **promoting** the advertisement like their:

- name
- address.



**Promoting** means to support someone / something.



A promoter could be:

- you
- your party
- someone else.



Your promoter statement must be:

- easy to see / hear
- clearly displayed in your advertisement.





We recommend that you show your promoter statements in the following way:

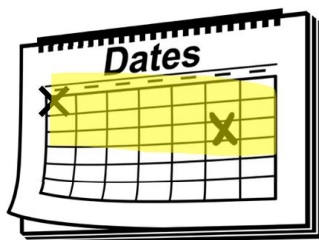
Promoted / authorised by:

- the full name of the promoter
- the full street address of the promoter.

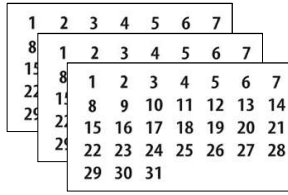
## Rules about spending money



There is a maximum amount of money an electorate candidate can spend on advertising that is published in the **regulated period**.



**Regulated period** means an amount of time that is set out in agreed rules.



3

The regulated period is usually 3 months until election day.



We will tell you how much money you can spend on advertising.



This amount of money is called your **expense limit**.

Election advertising expenses include the amount of money spent on:



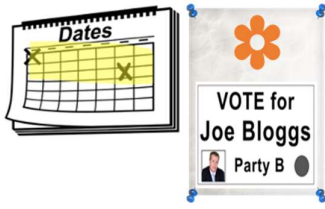
- **creating** the advertisement which is deciding how it will look / what it will say



- making the advertisement
- any materials needed to make the advertisement



- publishing the advertisement.



Any advertising you put out in the regulated period is part of your expense limit.



Other people can promote you as a candidate if you say it is okay for them to do so.



Other people promoting you as a candidate is also part of your expense limit.



If you are also advertising a registered party you must check with your party secretary it is okay to do so before advertising.



Sometimes an election advertisement promotes both:

- a political party
- a candidate.



If this happens then the money spent on the advertisement is counted as part of both the:

- party expense limits
- candidate expense limits.



You must keep a record of how much money you spend on advertising as you spend it.



After the election you will need to tell us how much money you spent.





3

You must keep records for:

- all election expenses of 50 dollars / more than 50 dollars
- 3 years after you have told us about your expenses.

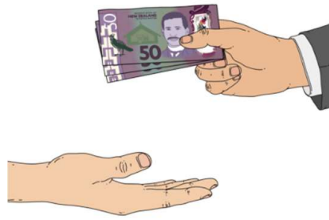


These records can be things like:

- **invoices** that show someone asked you to pay for something
- **receipts** that show you paid someone else money.



## Information about donations and loans

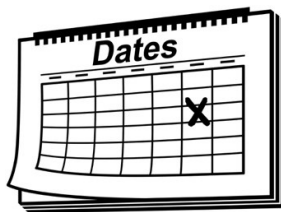


A **donation** is when someone gives you something like money / resources to support you.

A donation does not have to be paid back to the person who gave you it.

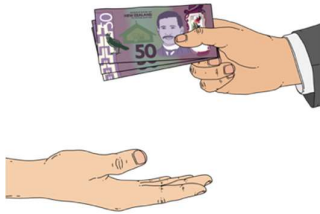


A **loan** is when you borrow / are given money to pay for something.



You have to pay this money back at a later time.

A donation can be things like:



- money
- **goods** like materials:
  - you can sell
  - use to make advertisements with
- **services** like someone offering to support you by using skills they have.



You must send any donations that are given to your party to your party secretary.



If you are a list candidate all donations you get are for the party.



It is important that you know if a donation is:

- for you
- for your party.



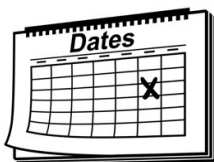
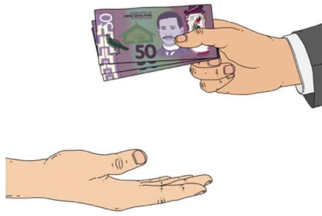
You should ask the person who gave you the donation if you are not sure.



This is very important if the person sends the donation to you through someone else / a group like a committee.



This is called getting a donation from a **transmitter**.



If someone gives you / pays for something that would have been an advertising expense for you then it is both:

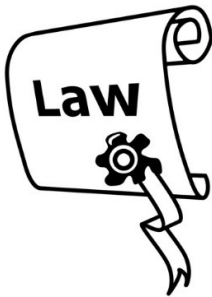
- a donation
- part of your expense limit.

You should make a record of information about a donation as soon as you get it that includes:

- the name of the person who sent the donation
- the address of the person who sent the donation
- what / how much they gave you
- the date you got the donation.



You must also make it clear in your record if the person who gave you the donation is outside New Zealand.



A new law means you must tell us about any loans you get for your campaign from 1 January 2023.

After the election you must also tell us about:



- all donations you got of more than 15 hundred dollars



- if 1 person gave you 2 / more than 2 donations that add up to more than 15 hundred dollars



- any donations from a person outside New Zealand that are more than 50 dollars.



You should make a record of all the donations you get even if they are less than 15 hundred dollars.

## Things that are against the law

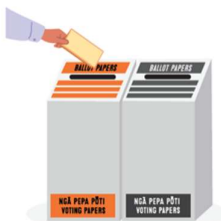


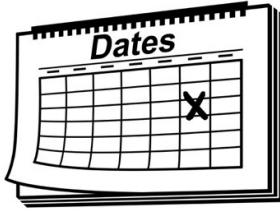
You may get into legal trouble if you break any of the rules about elections.



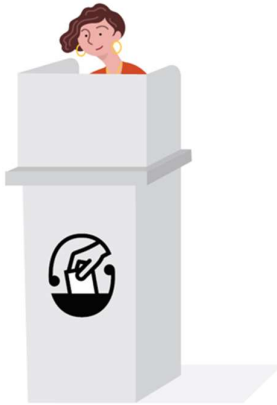
It is against the law to do some things that might affect how a voter chooses to vote if it is:

- in a place where people can make **advance votes**
- within 10 metres of a place where people can make advance votes
- anywhere on election day.





**Advance votes** are votes made before election day.



The list of things in the following yellow box tells you what you cannot do:

- on election day
- within 10 metres of a place where people can make advance votes.



You cannot:

- advertise yourself / your party
- make public statements / speeches
- act in a certain way in public that could affect how voters might choose to vote.





You also cannot wear / have on display:

- your candidate name
- your party name
- any images / words that you have used to represent you / your party.



You must remove all your election advertising that can be seen in / from a public place before election day.



You can wear a party badge / rosette on the collar of your clothing called your **lapel** at any time including:

- while you are voting
- on election day.

## Where to find more information



To find out more information about becoming a candidate you can:

- visit this website:



<https://elections.nz/guidance-and-rules/for-candidates/>

- send an email to:

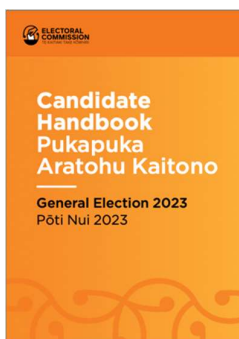


[enquiries@elections.govt.nz](mailto:enquiries@elections.govt.nz)

- call:



**0800 36 76 56**



You can also read the Candidate Handbook online at:

<https://elections.nz/guidance-and-rules/for-candidates/candidate-handbook-2023/>



The Candidate Handbook is **not** in Easy Read.



To find out more information about how to apply for the Election Access Fund you can:



- visit this website:

**<https://elections.nz/getting-involved/election-access-fund/>**



- send an email to:

**[electionaccessfund@elections.govt.nz](mailto:electionaccessfund@elections.govt.nz)**



- call:

**0800 36 76 56**



This information has been written by the Electoral Commission.



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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