



**ELECTORAL
COMMISSION**
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

Party Registration Handbook

Pukapuka
Aratohu Rēhita
Pāti Tōrangapū

Published in September 2024
by Electoral Commission
Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri
Wellington, NZ

Contents | Rārangi Kaupapa

Foreword Kupu Tātaki	5
Overview Tirohanga Whānui.....	6
PART 1: Registering a party	
WĀHANGA 1: Te rēhita i te pāti tōrangapū	9
PART 2: Party registration process	
WĀHANGA 2: Te tukanga ki te rēhita i te pāti tōrangapū.....	23
PART 3: Registering a party logo	
WĀHANGA 3: Te rēhita i te waitohu o te pāti tōrangapū	26
PART 4: Variation of party name or logo	
WĀHANGA 4: Te panoni i te ingoa, te waitohu rānei, o te pāti tōrangapū.....	31
PART 5: Maintaining party registration	
WĀHANGA 5: Te pupuri i te mana rēhita mō te pāti tōrangapū	34
PART 6: Cancellation of a party or logo	
WĀHANGA 6: Te whakakore i te pāti tōrangapū, te waitohu o te pāti tōrangapū rānei	39
APPENDIX A: Quick guide to registered and unregistered parties	
TĀPIRIHANGA A: Puka whakarāpopoto mō ngā pāti kua rēhitatia, kāore anō kia rēhitatia, rānei	41
APPENDIX B: Forms and templates	
TĀPIRIHANGA B: Ngā puka me ngā tātauirā	43
APPENDIX C: Key dates for registered parties in election year	
TĀPIRIHANGA C: Ngā rā whakahirahira o te tau pōti mō ngā pāti kua rēhitatia.....	44
APPENDIX D: Quick guide for parties - common questions	
TĀPIRIHANGA D: Puka whakarāpopoto mō ngā pāti tōrangapū – ngā pātai e kaha pātaitia ana	46
APPENDIX E: Umbrella and component parties	
TĀPIRIHANGA E: Ngā rōpū tōrangapū korowai me ngā rōpū waehanga	48
APPENDIX F: Useful contacts	
TĀPIRIHANGA F: Rārangi whakapāpā	50



Foreword | Kupu Tātaki

Thank you for your interest in registering a new political party. Political parties play a vital role in the democratic process.

This handbook is designed to provide you with everything you need to know about how to register a political party and logo. It covers the registration process for party and logo registration including the forms and templates you need, how to vary a party name or logo, maintaining and cancelling party registration, and key dates. It is part of a series produced by the Electoral Commission to help people understand how parliamentary elections work. We provide registered parties with information and guidance in the Party Portal which they can access via elections.nz.

If you have questions about the process, please ask the Electoral Commission. We are here to help.

Our websites have more information

We have a website with the rules for all participants, a website for voters and a website for election results.

www.elections.nz

www.vote.nz

www.electionresults.govt.nz

Contact details:

Electoral Commission, PO Box 3220, Wellington

Level 4, 34-42 Manners Street, Wellington

Phone: 04 495 0030

Email: enquiries@elections.govt.nz



Karl Le Quesne, Chief Electoral Officer

Overview | Tirohanga Whānui

Under the Electoral Act 1993 political parties are able to register with the Electoral Commission to contest parliamentary elections. Registration is not compulsory for political parties. Parties can promote the election of their electorate candidates at parliamentary elections without being registered.

This guidance is intended to assist parties seeking to become a registered party to contest general elections and outlines the requirements for the registration, variation and cancellation of registration of parties and logos, and the ongoing obligations of registered parties.

If you are wanting to register a new or existing political party you should have completed the following steps before making an application to the Commission:

Step 1	Read the Party Registration Handbook
Step 2	Decide on the name and aims of the party
Step 3	Determine the party rules (including membership and candidate selection rules) and the governance structure of the party and appoint office holders (you may wish to seek independent legal advice on these matters)
Step 4	Invite people to join the party and complete a membership form. Have a system to record and check membership evidence so that you know when the party has more than 500 current financial members who are eligible to enrol.
Step 5	Appoint an auditor
Step 6	Finalise the party logo if also applying to register a logo

If you are thinking of registering a political party be aware that, in addition to the \$500 registration fee payable to the Commission, there are ongoing compliance costs as well as campaign costs associated with contesting elections for registered political parties.

There is no public funding of political parties, with the exception of the broadcasting allocation that can be used for advertising on radio, television and online in the month before a general election.

A summary table of the differences between a registered and unregistered party can be found at [Appendix A](#).

Registered parties

At a general election, only registered political parties are able to:

- submit a party list to contest the party vote, and
- be considered for an allocation of election broadcasting money.

A registered party is entitled to a share of MPs that is about the same as its share of the party vote if the party wins at least 5% of the nationwide party vote or at least one electorate seat at an election.

Registered parties have a party election expense limit (which increases for each electorate candidate they stand) that is separate to the expense limit available to every electorate candidate.

For the purposes of the election advertising rules, a ‘party’ is a party registered by the Commission under Part 4 of the Electoral Act and includes any party that has been registered at any time during the regulated period for a general election.

A registered party that does not contest the party vote at a general election is still required to comply with the election advertising rules, including the requirement to file an audited party expenses return after an election even if it is a nil return. Parties that receive an allocation of election broadcasting money must also file a return of allocation expenses after the election.

Registered parties also have ongoing statutory obligations, such as filing returns of donations and loans and maintaining records to ensure party membership details are accurately recorded and maintained.

Only registered parties are able to register a party logo, which appears on the ballot paper against the party name and any candidates who stand on behalf of the party.

Umbrella and component parties

Most registered parties operate independently and contest the party vote and/or electorate seats. However, the Electoral Act allows registered parties to jointly contest general elections by allowing one or more parties to be a component party of another registered party. For more information see [Appendix E](#).

Unregistered political parties

Unregistered parties can contest a general election, or by-election, by standing electorate candidates. They cannot contest the party vote.

A candidate standing on behalf of an unregistered party may have the name of the party listed on the ballot paper with their name, but not a party logo. For the name of an unregistered party to appear on the ballot paper, the Commission must be satisfied:

- the party exists
- the candidate is eligible to stand on behalf of the party, and
- the name of the party is not indecent, offensive, excessively long or likely to cause confusion.

Unregistered parties are not subject to the ongoing statutory requirements that registered parties must satisfy. For more information see [Appendix A](#).

PART 1: Registering a party | WĀHANGA 1: Te rēhita i te pāti tōrangapū



Application form

Applicants must complete the Electoral Commission’s party registration application form. The form can be downloaded from elections.nz. The form contains a checklist to help ensure documentation is complete before submitting the application to the Commission.

A hard copy of the application can be sent by post, courier or hand-delivered to:

Electoral Commission

Level 4, 34-42 Manners Street, Wellington

PO Box 3220, Wellington

Electronic documents can be emailed to:

enquiries@elections.govt.nz.

Who can apply on behalf of a party?

An application to register a political party can only be made by:

- the party secretary, or
- any MP who is a current financial member of the party.

Times when registration is prohibited

Applications cannot be processed at certain times. It is important to check when an application is submitted that the Commission is able to take action to register a party.

An application to register a party or logo cannot be progressed during the period beginning with writ day and ending with the last day for the return of the writ for a general election. Writ day is usually a month before election day and the last day for the return of the writ is 60 days from writ day. An overview of key of dates for registered parties in an election year can be found at [Appendix C](#).

The Commission cannot progress logo applications from writ day to the return of the writ for a by-election.

Non-registration period	Registering a party	Registering a logo
General election (writ day to return of the writ)	X	X
By-election (writ day to return of the writ)	✓	X

Where the Commission cannot progress an application, the party will be notified in writing and informed of the date when the application can again be progressed.

Deadline for registration

A political party must be registered by writ day for the general election to be able to contest the party vote and submit a party list. A party must be registered by the date for dissolution of Parliament for a general election to receive a share of the money available under the broadcasting allocation.

Parties should allow a minimum of eight weeks for the Commission to process an application for party registration, including:

- one week for the Commission to complete an initial assessment of the application
- two weeks to undertake membership checks (including contacting members)
- one week to arrange for the public consultation advertisements to be published
- two weeks for public comment on the application, and
- two weeks to finalise the application if no objections are received.

If there are problems with the application which require the party to amend it, or if objections are lodged at the consultation stage, the processing time will be extended and include the time taken by the party to respond.

Although there is no statutory deadline for submission of a registration application prior to a general election, it is important to allow sufficient time for the application to be processed by the Commission before writ day. Accordingly, parties are encouraged to submit their application as early as possible when applying in an election year. Applicants should note that elections can be called at short notice.

Applying for registration

The Electoral Act requires an application for party registration must include:

- the name of the party secretary and their postal address. The party secretary must live in New Zealand
- an acceptable party name (and any abbreviation)
- satisfactory evidence of at least 500 current financial members who are eligible to enrol
- statutory declarations from the party secretary regarding membership evidence, the party's intention to contest general elections and component parties
- party membership and candidate selection rules (if the rules are not provided with the application, they must be provided within one month of registration)
- consent from the auditor appointed by the party to their appointment, and
- payment of an application fee of \$500.

Each of these requirements is explained in more detail below.

Notification of the application will be published on the Commission's website (elections.nz) and will contain the name of the party and the date the application was received. These details will also be published on the Commission's social media channels. The website will be updated to show what stage party registration and logo applications are at.

Details of the application will only be published on the website after the Commission has received the application fee, sufficient membership evidence and completed statutory declarations.

Party secretary

The party secretary in relation to a party means the person (whatever his or her designation or office) whose duties include responsibility for carrying out the administration of the party and conducting the correspondence of the party.

The application for registration must detail the name and postal address of the party secretary. It should also include contact telephone number and email address for communications.

Following the registration of the party, as well as being a point of contact, the party secretary has personal responsibility to complete certain compliance tasks such as providing an annual statutory declaration confirming continuing eligibility for registration, filing party donations and loans returns, authorising party election advertising, and filing the party expenses return. A party secretary who fails to meet these obligations may be committing an offence and face penalties, such as fines or imprisonment, under the Electoral Act.

The party secretary's contact details (including a contact address, email and telephone number) are published in the Register of Political Parties on the Commission's website. A link to the party's website is also included in the Register. The Commission will use these contact details to communicate with party secretaries for compliance purposes and during electoral events. Members of the public may also use these contact details to get in touch with the party secretary with enquiries or complaints about the party.

A newly registered party may also wish to appoint officials to assist the party secretary – although this is not a legal requirement. These may include a treasurer to oversee party finances and a membership secretary to manage new members and renewals.

Acceptable party name

A party name (and any abbreviation) will be accepted provided it:

- is not offensive or indecent
- is not likely to confuse or mislead voters
- is not excessively long (the name should not be longer than 52 characters including spaces and punctuation), or
- does not refer to an honour or title or similar form of identification.

An abbreviated name may be registered for use on the ballot paper. The abbreviation should be a shortened version of the party name. It may include, or be, an acronym, but it should not be an alternative name.

A party name (and any abbreviation) approved for registration will appear on the Register of Political Parties, ballot papers and other official publications exactly as submitted, including capitalisation, punctuation and any acronyms.

It is not possible to reserve a party name or abbreviation with the Commission before an application for registration is submitted. Registration of a party does not grant any intellectual property rights. It is for the Commission's Board to determine the acceptability of a party's name following the public consultation process (see Part 3). Commission staff may be able to provide guidance on the acceptability of a party name based on current registered party names and names that have been accepted or rejected previously.

The Commission recommends that a party name (and any abbreviation) is not changed just prior to the application for registration, or during registration. This is because it may lead to members being confused as to which party they have joined. Guidance about the process to change a party name or abbreviation can be found in Part 4 of this handbook.

Evidence of 500 members

For a party to be registered, the Commission's Board must be satisfied the party has at least 500 current financial members that are eligible to enrol as electors.

Who is an eligible member?

An eligible member is a current financial member who is eligible to enrol as an elector.

Current financial member - membership fee

A current financial member is someone who has:

- applied for membership in accordance with the party's rules
- paid the required fee on becoming a member, and
- has an obligation to pay a membership fee at specified intervals of not more than three years.

It is up to the party to decide what the fee should be and how frequently membership fees should be paid. However, a fee to renew the membership must be paid at least every three years. There is no statutory minimum fee, but to be an eligible member the person must have paid a fee. In setting the membership fee, a party should consider the ongoing costs that will be incurred by a registered party such as the cost of running an election campaign, the cost of engaging an auditor to audit all party returns and the cost of submitting a party list for a general election (\$1,000) or standing electorate candidates (\$300 per candidate).

Eligibility of members to enrol

The main eligibility requirements to enrol as an elector are the person:

- is a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident
- is aged 18 years or more, and
- has lived at some time in New Zealand continuously for one year or more.

The main grounds of disqualification from enrolment that could affect a member's eligibility are:

- a New Zealand citizen who has not been in New Zealand within the last three years*
- a permanent resident who has not been in New Zealand within the last 12 months*, or
- a person currently in prison serving a sentence of imprisonment of three years or more.

Section 80 of the Electoral Act sets out the other grounds of disqualification that affect a very small number of people.

Parties may have members who are not required to pay a membership fee or who are not eligible to enrol as an elector, for example, life members who either do not pay a fee or who pay a one-off fee, members who are under 18 years, and sponsored members.

These members do not count towards the minimum of 500 eligible members and their details should not be included with an application for registration.

What evidence is needed of 500 eligible members?

The applicant must submit membership evidence for at least 500, but no more than 550, eligible members. The Commission recommends applicants provide evidence of 550 members with the application. The application should record the total number submitted.

The Commission requires:

- membership evidence for each eligible member in the form of a signed declaration (usually the membership form) sorted alphabetically by surname, and
- an electronic spreadsheet of membership evidence sorted alphabetically by surname.

The membership form

The membership form should include the following information completed by each member:

- the member's name and residential street address
- confirmation by the member that they are a registered elector or are eligible to enrol as an elector

* This will be extended to 6 years for citizens and to 4 years for permanent residents from 31 March 2023 until one month after the last day appointed for the return of the writ for the 2023 General Election.

- the amount of the membership fee that has been paid to the party
- the member's signature
- authorisation for the party to record them as a financial member of the party, and
- authorisation for the party to release their membership details to the Electoral Commission for the purpose of the application to register the party under the Electoral Act.

A template party membership form is available for download, see [Appendix B](#). Text marked bold contains the minimum requirements that each member should complete. The template membership form also includes supplementary information that will assist the party and the Commission to check a member's eligibility to enrol as an elector.

The Commission is happy to check your proposed form before you use it to ensure that the completed membership forms satisfy the evidential requirements.

If you would like your proposed form checked please contact the Commission at enquiries@elections.govt.nz or phone 04 495 0030.

If the mandatory information is not included on the membership form, it will not be acceptable. The Commission will notify the party in writing and advise them of the next steps, including what further evidence may be required.

The party can collect membership evidence using paper forms or electronically (i.e. via a website or an app) or both. The Commission will accept the following types of signatures captured electronically for party membership purposes:

- images of signatures that are electronic replications of actual 'pen-and-paper' signatures, such as scanned or photographic images, and
- images of signatures that are produced and captured electronically using technologies such as signature pads, trackpads/touchpads or the mouse, light pens, or similar devices
- The Commission cannot accept typed signatures or digital certificates.

The Commission will accept original forms or signed forms that have been submitted to the party and provided to the Commission electronically. Applicants may also submit membership forms via an online drop-box.

However, the memberships forms must be in the same order as the spreadsheet and the applicant must notify the Commission if any additional forms are submitted to the drop-box.

NOTE: You should ensure when you collect new memberships, the individual is aware that they are joining a political party as a member, rather than making a donation or supporting a specific cause.

Spreadsheet of membership evidence

The spreadsheet should include each eligible member's:

- name (first names and surname)
- residential address
- date of birth (if provided)
- contact details
- enrolment status or eligibility to enrol, and
- the membership fee paid and the date the membership fee/application was processed.

A template spreadsheet is available for download from elections.nz, see [Appendix B](#). Members must be sorted alphabetically by surname in the spreadsheet.

Joint memberships

Some parties' membership forms allow for joint or household memberships. Where multiple members are included on one membership form, it must be clear that each member has paid a membership fee (i.e. the form should make it clear how much is paid by each member). In addition, each individual member must sign the membership form.

Overseas members

Some parties may have members that reside overseas and these members may be included in the 500 membership evidence. However, the party must provide the Commission with clear evidence that these members are eligible to enrol as electors in New Zealand. Evidence will need to be provided that an overseas member is:

- a New Zealand citizen who has been in New Zealand within the last three years^{**}, or
- a permanent resident who has been in New Zealand within the last 12 months^{**}.

This evidence may be provided via the membership form by the overseas member stating on the form the date of their last visit to New Zealand.

Privacy and membership information

A member's consent is not required before their name is released to the Commission, but the member's consent must be obtained before any other information about the member is released to the Commission (such as the member's address which is required by the Commission, or information not needed for the Commission's purposes but which may be on the form).

^{**}This will be extended to 6 years for citizens and to 4 years for permanent residents from 31 March 2023 until one month after the last day appointed for the return of the writ for the 2023 General Election.

Applicants should be aware that the Commission may be asked under the Official Information Act 1982 to release the application documents provided to the Commission for the purposes of registration.

The Commission must consider each request on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982 and the Privacy Act 2020. In general, the Commission does not release the documents unless it is satisfied that it is necessary to do so in the public interest, based on its responsibility to ensure the integrity of the registration process. Parties should be aware that a refusal to release the documents can be appealed to the Ombudsman. Applicants may wish to seek their own legal advice on the privacy issues involved in providing application information including membership information to the Commission.

The Commission will return the hard copies of membership forms to the party secretary following the determination of the party registration process. All electronic information with regard to individual party members' details held by the Commission will be deleted six months from the date the application was determined. If an application is put on hold, i.e. at the party's request, the Commission will return or delete membership evidence six months after the application is put on hold.

Checking membership forms

The Commission initially checks the membership evidence to be satisfied there is valid evidence of at least 500 members submitted with the application. The Commission aims to complete these initial checks within five working days, but this will depend on the quality of the membership evidence submitted.

If there is not valid evidence of 500 memberships, the process is stopped and the party is notified.

Where there are fewer than 500 valid members after the initial check of membership evidence, or if any membership evidence has been invalidated, the Commission will allow the applicant one opportunity to supply additional membership evidence to make the number of members up to 550 (excluding those found to be invalid). This is the only point during the registration process that additional membership evidence can be supplied by the applicant.

Additional membership evidence must be supplied within the time specified by the Commission (this will normally be within a two week period). Where there are fewer than 500 valid memberships and the applicant does not provide additional membership evidence within the specified period the Commission will return the application to the applicant on the basis the application does not meet the statutory requirements. Where there are more than 500 valid memberships, and the applicant does not supply any additional membership evidence, the application can continue to be processed. Additional membership evidence cannot be added at a later stage.

Reasons completed forms are not counted

Membership forms will not be counted that:

- do not include the member's full name and/or residential street address
- do not include confirmation by the person that they are enrolled or are eligible to enrol as an elector
- do not confirm that the person has paid a membership fee
- do not clearly differentiate between sponsored or multiple memberships
- are not legible
- have not been signed by the person
- are from people under the age of 18, or
- are duplicates.

Membership checks

When the Commission is satisfied there are more than 500 valid memberships, it will proceed with the enrolment and membership authentication checks. The Commission aims to complete the enrolment and authentication checks within ten working days, but this can take longer if we experience difficulties contacting members or determining a member's eligibility to enrol.

Generally, public consultation will proceed once electoral and authentication checks have been completed and no significant issues have arisen.

However, in election year, the Commission may conduct public consultation at the same time as enrolment and authentication checks are taking place. This may occur where a prospective party has a realistic chance of being registered before writ day, but that waiting to initiate public consultation could mean that there is insufficient time for a decision on the application to be made before the writ day deadline.

Enrolment checks

The Commission will randomly select a number of valid forms to check if the members are on the electoral rolls. This confirms that the member is eligible to enrol.

The number of members that need to be confirmed as enrolled, or eligible to enrol, for the Commission to be confident the party has at least 500 members who are eligible to enrol is determined by the size of the sample checked and the number of valid memberships provided with the application to register.

If a member is not on the electoral rolls, the Commission needs to establish that the person is eligible to enrol. To be satisfied that any member who is not enrolled is eligible to enrol the Commission will try and contact the member to check their eligibility. The Commission may also check whether the member is disqualified from enrolment under any of the grounds listed in section 80 of the Electoral Act.

Where a member cannot be found on the electoral rolls and their eligibility to enrol cannot be confirmed they will be recorded as a 'fail'. If, after checking the random sample of members, the number of fails is above the maximum number of permitted fails for the sample size the application will have prima facie failed the electoral checks. The applicant will be notified at this stage of the number of fails and the application will generally be referred to the Board for consideration.

A party is not able to provide additional membership evidence at this stage. Where a party wishes to submit further membership evidence after electoral checks have been completed a new application must be made.

Membership authentication checks

The Commission will also randomly select a sample of valid forms and contact those members to authenticate that they are members of the party and that they have paid a membership fee on joining the party. This check is a basic authentication check rather than a statistical exercise.

If there are significant issues raised during this stage of the process, the applicant will be notified of the issues and asked to provide a response. If these issues cannot be resolved, the application may go straight to the Commission's Board for consideration.

Statutory declarations

The party secretary is required to make statutory declarations that accompany the application to confirm:

1. that the party has at least 500 current financial members who are eligible to enrol as electors, and
2. that the party intends at general elections to submit a party list, or have one or more electorate candidates stand for the party (or for a related party), or both, and
3. whether or not the party has any component parties and, if so, naming them.

The Commission interprets the declaration required under 2. above as relating to an overall intention to contest general elections rather than an intention to contest any particular general election.

A template declaration is provided for adaptation and use by applicants, which is included with the application form and is available for download from elections.nz, see [Appendix B](#). The template uses the form for statutory declarations required by the Oaths and Declarations Act 1957. The statutory declaration needs to be witnessed by a solicitor, Justice of the Peace or other person authorised to take a statutory declaration.

Party rules

The supply of the party rules to the Commission allows the public to be satisfied the party has rules regarding party memberships and democratic processes for the selection of candidates.

Apart from the requirements for membership rules and democratic candidate selection, the Electoral Act has no rules regulating how parties operate and how they are governed. Any organisation seeking to become a registered political party may wish to seek independent legal advice on its governance structure and rules.

The supply of party rules (sometimes referred to as the party's constitution) is required by the Electoral Act within one month of registration being notified in the Gazette, and the Commission is required to make them available for public inspection (on [elections.nz](https://www.elections.nz)).

The supply of these rules with an application for registration helps the Commission confirm the definition of current financial member for that party. Rules may be supplied in hardcopy and/or an electronic version. The rules must include:

- the date of their adoption by the party, and
- a democratic process for the selection of constituency and list candidates for general elections.

Copies of the rules provided by currently registered political parties are included with the Register of Political Parties, available at [elections.nz](https://www.elections.nz).

Auditor

The application for registration must detail the name and postal address of the person or firm the party has appointed as auditor. The auditor must be a chartered accountant who holds a Certificate of Public Practice. The auditor should complete and sign the consent to appointment on the application form.

A partnership may be named as auditor. A body corporate may not be named as auditor, but an employee of a body corporate can be.

Parties and prospective auditors are referred to the relevant provisions of the Electoral Act 1993, the Financial Reporting Act 2013 and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of New Zealand Act 1996 (and the Institute Rules), which set out the requirement of who may be an auditor and what they must do in auditing and reporting on the annual returns of party donations and loans and returns of party expenses.

The Commission must be satisfied that the auditor appointed by the party is eligible to act in that capacity.

Section 206K of the Electoral Act provides that the following persons are not eligible to be appointed as an auditor:

- a constituency candidate
- a list candidate
- an employee or partner of a constituency or list candidate
- an officer or employee of a party
- a body corporate that is not a registered audit firm (within the meaning of the Auditor Regulation Act 2011 and is not recognised for the purposes of section 36(1)(f) or (g) of the Financial Reporting Act 2013)
- a person who, by virtue of section 36(1) of the Financial Reporting Act 2013, may not be appointed or act as an auditor of a company, or
- a Returning Officer.

A member of the party who is not an office holder is eligible to act as an auditor.

Parties wanting to find an auditor should contact Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand at www.charteredaccountantsanz.com.

The Commission will check with Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand to confirm that the auditor is a chartered accountant who holds a Certificate of Public Practice. The party will be notified by the Commission if the auditor is not a chartered accountant or there is any other reason why the auditor is not eligible to act in that capacity.

An eligible auditor must be appointed and have provided written consent to appointment before the registration application can be considered by the Commission's Board.

It is up to the party and the auditor as to how payments for services are negotiated. A party member may provide auditing services free of charge, but as noted above, they cannot be an officer or direct employee of the party.

Financial statements date

Registered parties must file an annual financial statement annually from 2024. The date the annual financial statement is due will depend on the status of the party (incorporated or not).

You will need to specify in your application:

- the legal status of the party
- the date the annual financial statement is due, and
- whether the financial statement has to be audited.

Application fee

Each application to register a party must include payment of the application fee of \$500 (inclusive of GST) by direct credit.

Payment by direct credit should be made into the Electoral Commission's bank account:

02-0506-0077435-00

Please include the name of the party as the reference. The fee is non-refundable.

A fee is payable for each application made to register a party, including a subsequent application made following the cancellation of registration of a party or if a processed application is returned to the party and the party subsequently submits a new application.

PART 2: Party registration process | WĀHANGA 2: Te tukanga ki te rēhita i te pāti tōrangapū



This section provides an overview of the Commission’s processes once the statutory requirements in Part 1 have been satisfied.

Public consultation

Prior to public consultation, a sample ballot paper with the applicant’s party name (or party abbreviation) and logo (if any) will be provided for review.

Once the party is satisfied with how the logo appears with the party name on the ballot paper, public consultation can take place.

The Commission will prepare notices to advertise the party name and any abbreviation (and party logo where a party wishes to register a logo at the same time).

The purpose of the public consultation is to establish whether there is any reason to refuse the registration, under section 65 of the Electoral Act, because the name of the party, or any proposed abbreviation, is:

- indecent or offensive
- excessively long
- likely to cause confusion or mislead electors, or
- contains any reference to a title or honour or similar form of identification.

The Commission will give notice in the following ways:

Email to the party secretaries of all registered parties

Information posted on elections.nz website and social media

A period of ten working days is provided for public comment from the date the public notice is published.

At the end of the consultation phase the Commission will write to the party to confirm whether any comments were received. Where comments are received the party will be provided with an extract of any comment.

To protect the privacy of natural persons, the name and contact details of any individual who has commented will not be disclosed.

The party will be provided with at least five working days to respond to any comments.

Determining the application

The Commission's Board is responsible for determining the application to register a political party. Matters the Board will consider include:

- the outcome of the membership checks and any comments from the party where membership checks indicate any non-eligible members
- whether other registration requirements have been met, and
- responses to the public consultation and any comment from the party (if any).

An application will be considered as soon as practicable at the next scheduled Board meeting or by written resolution.

The applicant does not attend the Board meeting where the application is determined.

After the party registration decision

If the party registration is approved the Commission will:

- update the Register of Political Parties, available at elections.nz
- notify the applicant in writing that the Commission has registered the party
- publish notice of registration in the Gazette
- arrange for the party secretary to obtain access to the Commission's Party Portal (a secure area of the website for parties to access guidance and forms and upload documents), and
- offer the party secretary an induction session and provide induction information.

If the party registration application is refused the Commission will notify the party in writing and set out the reasons for the refusal. Notification will be given no later than ten working days after the date of the Board's decision.

The Commission will also notify any submitters, who commented on the application as part of the public consultation exercise, of the decision.

Where the party's membership and candidate selection rules have not been submitted prior to registration the rules must be supplied within one month of the date notice of registration is published in the Gazette. The rules will be published with the Register of Political Parties at elections.nz.

PART 3: Registering a party logo | WĀHANGA 3: Te rēhita i te waitohu o te pāti tōrangapū



Introduction

Only parties applying to be registered or existing registered parties may apply to the Electoral Commission to register a logo.

A party can apply for both party and logo registration at the same time, in which case the two applications will be processed together and will take approximately eight weeks provided the applications meet all of the legal requirements. Where a logo application is made separate to an application to register a party it usually takes about one month to process from the date the Commission receives an application that meets all the legal requirements.

There is no fee to apply to register a party logo with the Commission.

Parties are free to use unregistered variants of the logo in different formats (e.g. advertising, letterhead, etc.) for campaign purposes.

Party logos on the ballot paper

A registered party does not have to register a logo, but only registered logos can appear on a ballot paper.

On the ballot paper, the logo is reproduced within an area 14mm wide and 7mm high using the process colour printing technique (four colour printing, as in a newspaper or magazine). Parties should ensure the registered logo is designed to be reproduced at this size.

We can provide you with a mock up of how the party logo will appear on the ballot paper.

Electorate candidates are arranged alphabetically by surname on the right-hand side of the ballot paper with a registered logo to the right of the name (the electorate vote).

If the candidate's party is contesting the party vote, the name of the party is printed opposite the name of the candidate on the left-hand side of the ballot paper (the party vote) with the party logo to the left of the party name.

If the candidate is an independent or contesting on behalf of an unregistered party, the space on the left-hand side opposite the candidate's name is left empty, and no logo appears next to the candidate's name.

Parties contesting the party vote but not the electorate vote are listed alphabetically on the left-hand side of the ballot paper, after the other parties standing candidates, with the party logo to the left of the party name.

Deadline for registration

A party logo must be registered before writ day for an election for it to appear on the ballot paper. The Electoral Act prevents the Commission processing an application between writ day and the return of the writ for a general election and by-election.

Although there is no statutory deadline for submitting a logo application prior to an election, there are a number of steps the Commission must complete when processing an application to register a logo.

Please allow sufficient time for a logo application to be processed if an application is made in the run up to an election.

Applying for logo registration

The party secretary or an MP who is a current financial member of the party must make the application to register a party logo. The application must be in writing and must be signed by the applicant.

Where the application is made in conjunction with an application to register a party, the application form for a party can also be used to apply to register the party's logo.

Where an application to register a logo is progressed on its own, the applicant should provide a covering letter that includes the following:

- name of the party
- name and address of the applicant and the capacity in which he or she makes the application, and
- name and address of the party secretary, if that is not the person making the application.

A hard copy of the application can be sent by post, courier or hand delivered to:

Electoral Commission

Level 4, 34-42 Manners Street, Wellington

PO Box 3220, Wellington

Electronic documents can be emailed to enquiries@elections.govt.nz.

A party logo cannot be reserved with the Commission before an application is made. However, Commission staff may be able to comment on draft applications if desired by the party.

Intellectual property declaration

A logo application must be accompanied by a statutory declaration made by the applicant stating that the use of the logo by the party will not be an infringement of an intellectual property right of any person or a breach of any enactment.

Information on intellectual property rights and searches can be made using the Intellectual Property Office website www.iponz.govt.nz.

There is no requirement that a party has a registered trademark over their proposed logo. Registration of a party logo does not grant any intellectual property rights.

Electronic copies of logo

An application must include two identical electronic copies of the colour logo and a black and white version of the logo in each of the following formats (for use on the ballot paper, official publications, and the [elections.nz](https://www.elections.nz) website):

- high resolution .eps (5cm wide, 350dpi, CMYK)
- high resolution .jpg (5cm wide, 350dpi, RGB)
- low resolution .jpg (300 pixels wide, 72 dpi, RGB).

One of the colour logo copies must be marked up with PMS (Pantone Matching System) codes for the colours, with each element of the logo labelled with its respective PMS code.

Checking the application

The documents and enclosures are checked for compliance with the law and Commission requirements. The party secretary is notified in writing of the acceptability or otherwise of the application within five working days of receipt.

Public consultation

Public comment is sought before the Commission considers the application against statutory criteria.

A party logo must not be:

- indecent
- offensive
- likely to cause confusion or mislead electors, or
- contain any reference to a title or an honour or a similar form of identification.

Additionally, a party logo must not infringe any person's intellectual property rights.

The Commission's consultation process for logos follows the same process as for party registration applications, see Part 2.

Where the application to register a logo is made with a party registration application, consultation on both occurs at the same time.

A period of ten working days is provided for public comment and the applicant will be invited to respond to any comments.

Determining the logo application

The Commission's Board is responsible for determining the application to register a logo.

Matters the Board will consider include:

- a decision to refuse to register the party (because only registered parties can have a registered logo)
- any reasonable cause the Board has to believe the intellectual property declaration is not correct
- whether other registration requirements have been met, and
- responses to the public consultation and any comment from the party (if any).

After the logo application decision

If the party logo registration is approved the Commission will:

- update the Register of Political Parties available at elections.nz
- notify the applicant in writing that the Commission has registered the party logo, and
- give notice of registration in the Gazette.

If the logo application is refused the Commission will notify the party in writing and set out the reasons for the refusal. Notification will be given no later than ten working days after the date of the Board's decision.

The Commission will also notify any submitters, who commented on the application as part of the public consultation exercise, of the decision.

**PART 4: Variation of party
name or logo | WĀHANGA 4:
Te panoni i te ingoa, te
waitohu rānei, o te pāti
tōrangapū**



Registered parties can apply to vary the party name, abbreviation or logo registered with the Electoral Commission.

Variation of party name

An application to change the name or the abbreviation of the name of a registered political party must be in writing and made by the party secretary or an MP who is a current financial member of the party.

There is usually no need for the applicant to re-submit membership evidence or the statutory declarations for an application to vary the party name. However, you should check with the Electoral Commission if the name is changing significantly.

The applicant may submit a change of logo application at the same time. Please seek the advice of the Commission if you want to vary the name of a party that is in the process of registering as a political party. The Commission may require additional evidence from the applicant where an unregistered party has changed names since membership evidence has been collected.

Variation of party logo

A party secretary or an MP who is a current financial member of the party can apply to change the party logo. An application can be to:

- vary the form of the current party logo
- substitute a new party logo, or
- amend the party logo to refer to the new name of the party where there has been a change in the party name.

The documents to be submitted for a variation application are the same as for a logo application (see Part 3).

If registered parties merge to form umbrella and component parties, the umbrella party may register a different logo from any component party. For more information on umbrella and component parties, please see [Appendix E](#) of this handbook.

Process for variation of party name or logo

There is no fee for an application to vary a party name or logo.

The Commission will undertake the same public consultation process, decision making and notification processes for a change of name application or logo variation as for an application to register a party or logo (see Part 2).

Public notice in newspapers may not be required if the Commission determines that the proposed name or logo change is a minor amendment to the party's currently registered name or logo.

A party is only able to register one name, abbreviated name and logo at any given time for use on the ballot paper. Where a registered party varies its logo the previous registered logo is shown with the Register of Political Parties at elections.nz

PART 5: Maintaining party registration | WĀHANGA 5: Te pupuri i te mana rēhita mō te pāti tōrangapū



Introduction

Once a party is registered it has ongoing statutory requirements which must be met. In particular, new parties should note that all registered parties must by 30 April each year file with the Electoral Commission:

- an annual return of party donations and loans, and
- a statutory declaration under section 71A of the Electoral Act.

A party secretary must also:

Keep proper records of party expenses, donations and loans and comply with the financial reporting and auditing obligations for parties.

Ensure the Commission is notified if the party's membership falls below 500 current financial members who are eligible to enrol at any time.

Notify the Commission of any change of auditor.

Provide the Commission with a copy of the membership rules within one month of any changes being adopted by the party.

Ensure there is a party secretary at all times and inform the Commission of any change to the party secretary's contact details or when a new party secretary is appointed.

File a statutory declaration with the Commission if any separate political parties become component parties of the party.

Authorise all advertisements that may reasonably be regarded as encouraging voters to vote for the party, including party advertising published by candidates and others.

Keeping proper records

Party secretaries must take all reasonable steps to keep records of all party election expenses, donations and loans from the point the party is registered. For the purposes of filing returns of expenses, donations and loans newly registered parties only have to disclose expenses, donations and loans made and received from the point at which the party was registered.

Party secretaries must keep invoices and records for all election expenses of \$100 or more for three years after the election.

Parties need to have systems in place to record donations, expenses and loans and to manage the aggregation of donations and loans from the same person.

Parties that have electorate branches need to have systems in place to ensure that party expenses incurred and party donations received at branch level are appropriately authorised and recorded.

Returns of donations, loans and expenses

All registered parties have reporting obligations for party donations, loans and expenses and from 2024 have to file annual financial statements.

Detailed guidance and the return forms are available via the Party Portal, which can be accessed by party secretaries via elections.nz.

Annual section 71A statutory declaration

By 30 April each year registered parties are required to make a statutory declaration under section 71A of the Electoral Act. The declaration must:

- state that the party intends, at general elections –
 - to submit a list of candidates under section 127, or
 - to have one or more constituency candidates stand for the party or for a related political party, or
 - both, and
- state whether the party has at least 500 current financial members who are eligible to enrol as electors.

In election year we will also ask party secretaries to confirm if they are intending to use the bulk nomination process.

As well as the declaration, the Commission also asks party secretaries to provide information about the processes and procedures they have in place to ensure party membership records are accurate, allowing them to make reliable statements concerning membership and to ensure that parties maintain an accurate membership total for the purposes of the Electoral Act.

Further information on submitting the section 71A statutory declaration and the template declaration is available in the Party Portal.

Maintaining 500 current financial members eligible to enrol

The party secretary is responsible for ensuring that proper membership records are kept. In particular, the party secretary should ensure there are systems in place to ensure that:

- the party's membership database clearly identifies those members fitting the definition of "current financial member eligible to enrol as an elector"
- the financial status of each member is accurately recorded

- there is a process by which to exclude members aged under 18 years from the count of eligible members
- there is a process by which members who are outside New Zealand can be identified as remaining eligible to enrol
- individuals are not counted twice as a member through, for instance, membership of two branches
- membership applications and renewals and associated fees are correctly processed and recorded
- the termination of membership (including expiry of membership, resignation or death of a member) is correctly recorded, and
- there are management or audit systems to ensure that any regionally/electorate managed membership systems/counts are reliably maintained.

The party secretary of a registered political party has a continuing obligation under the Electoral Act to notify the Commission if the number of current financial members of the party who are eligible to enrol falls below 500. If the number of current financial members fall below 500, the party secretary should inform the Commission at the earliest opportunity in writing.

The Electoral Act states that the Commission shall cancel the registration of any political party on being satisfied that the number of current financial members of the party who are eligible to enrol as electors has fallen below 500. For the purposes of exercising this power, the Commission may require a political party to supply a list of the current financial members.

Changes to the party secretary

A registered political party should have a person in post at all times to fulfil the responsibilities of the party secretary under the Electoral Act.

If the position of party secretary becomes vacant, the party secretary must ensure that, within five working days of the vacancy occurring:

- a new secretary is appointed, or
- a person is appointed to act in the position of secretary until a new secretary can be appointed.

We have a form in the Party Portal that registered parties can use to notify us of a change of party secretary.

If the position of party secretary is not filled, either permanently or with an interim replacement, the Commission may cancel the registration of the party. Parties are encouraged to contact the Commission as soon as possible if they encounter any issues with replacing their party secretary.

The outgoing party secretary may be required to provide the Commission with the name and contact details of the new party secretary as well as evidence (such as Board meeting minutes) of the change of party secretary.

The Commission will contact the new party secretary to confirm their appointment, contact details and provide them with information they may require for future compliance.

Party secretaries should regularly check the Register of Political Parties at elections.nz and notify the Commission if any of the information contained in the register needs updating.

Change of address or party secretary and promoter statements

The party secretary's name and street address must be included in election advertisements promoted by the party. The address included in a party secretary's promoter statement is usually the party headquarters.

Where there is a change of address or party secretary there is no need to change the content of promoter statements on items published or continuing to be published providing the promoter statement contains the name and address of the party secretary that initiated the advertisement at the time of printing. Where changing a promoter statement is straightforward, for example through the addition of a small sticker, parties may still wish to do so to avoid complaints.

PART 6: Cancellation of a party or logo | WĀHANGA 6: Te whakakore i te pāti tōrangapū, te waitohu o te pāti tōrangapū rānei



Applying for cancellation

The party secretary or an MP, who is a current financial member of the party, can apply to cancel the registration of a party and/or logo. The application should be made in writing to the Electoral Commission.

Cancellation initiated by the Electoral Commission

The Commission must cancel a party's registration upon being satisfied that the party has less than 500 current financial members. Where the party's registration is cancelled, the Commission will also cancel the party's logo. A party's logo will also be cancelled where the Commission is satisfied the use of the logo by the party constitutes an infringement of an intellectual property right or a breach of an enactment.

A registered party having less than 500 members

The Commission may require a party to provide a list of the party's current financial members where it is considering the cancellation of the registration of the party because the number of current financial members of the party who are eligible to enrol may have fallen below 500.

Any request for the party list of members will be made to the party secretary in writing specifying when the list should be provided. If the party requests more time the Commission may allow the party up to a further twenty working days for the party to supply the list of members.

Process for cancellation

Where a party applies for the cancellation of registration the Chief Electoral Officer can approve the request. In all other cases the Commission's Board determines the cancellation of registration of a party or a logo. Where the party has not initiated a party or logo cancellation, the Commission will raise its concerns with the party and provide an opportunity to comment before the matter is determined by the Board.

Following a decision to cancel a party registration, the Commission will:

- update the Register of Political Parties available online at [elections.nz](https://www.elections.nz)
- notify the party secretary (if he or she is not the applicant) in writing that the party is to be cancelled and the reason for cancellation, and
- give notice of cancellation in the Gazette and on the Commission's website
- where membership evidence has been supplied in hard copy, consult with the party as to whether the forms should be returned or destroyed within 6 months of the application being determined.

Where a party has had its registration cancelled and subsequently applies to register as a party this will be treated as a new application. The \$500 application fee will apply and all the documentation for a new application must be provided to the Commission.

APPENDIX A: Quick guide to registered and unregistered parties
TĀPIRIHANGA A: Puka whakarāpopoto mō ngā pāti kua rēhitatia,
kāore anō kia rēhitatia, rānei

Registered Parties	Unregistered Parties
Can contest the party vote at general elections and stand electorate candidates at general elections and by-elections	Can stand electorate candidates at general elections and by-elections
Can have a party logo next to the party and candidate names on the ballot paper at a general election or by-election	Cannot have a party logo on the ballot paper, but can have the name of the party under its electorate candidate(s)
Is able to spend up to the party expense limit at a general election	Each candidate that stands for an unregistered party can spend up to the electorate candidate limit If the unregistered party pays for candidate advertising published during the regulated period this will be a candidate donation and count towards the candidate's limit
Must file an audited party expenses return after each general election, even where the party does not contest the election or incur election expenses	N/A
Can apply for a share of the broadcasting allocation to purchase advertising time on television, radio and the internet in the month before election day	N/A
Must file an audited return of party donations and loans every year by 30 April (from 2024 the annual return does not have to be audited for parties that have donations totalling \$50,000 or less and no loans)	N/A
Must appoint and retain an auditor	N/A

Registered Parties	Unregistered Parties
Must declare party donations of more than \$20,000 received in election year before election day (alone or in aggregate from the same person) within 10 working days of receipt.	N/A
Must declare party loans of more than \$30,000 (alone or in aggregate from the same person) within 10 working days of receipt	N/A
Must keep records of election expenses for three years after an election	Each candidate must keep their own records and file a return of expenses, donations and loans
Must maintain at least 500 current financial members who are eligible to enrol at all times and submit a statutory declaration by 30 April each year confirming the party continues to satisfy this requirement	N/A
Must provide the Commission with a copy of the party's rules for publication online and submit an up-to-date version when there are any changes	May be asked to provide a copy of the party rules when candidates contest an election on the party's behalf
Contact details for the party and its party secretary are published on the Commission's website	N/A
Must file annual financial statements for the party each year (accompanied by an audit report if one is required by law or the party's constitution)	N/A

APPENDIX B: Forms and templates

TĀPIRIHANGA B: Ngā puka me ngā tātauirā

Party registration application form – includes a checklist and templates for the statutory declarations required under section 63 of the Electoral Act in conjunction with the registration of a party and the statutory declaration required under section 71C of the Electoral Act for the purposes of registering a party logo

- This form and the statutory declarations must be completed by an applicant wanting to register a political party (and logo).

Template party membership form

- The template form can be used by a party seeking registration to provide evidence that it has at least 500 current financial members who are eligible to enrol as electors. The template is in Word format, which can be readily formatted into a party's personalised membership form.

Template spreadsheet for membership evidence

- The spreadsheet should be populated with details of the 500+ members submitted with the party registration application, sorted alphabetically by surname.

Statutory declaration for logo application or variation required under section 71C of the Electoral Act.

APPENDIX C: Key dates for registered parties in election year
TĀPIRIHANGA C: Ngā rā whakahirahira o te tau pōti mō ngā pāti kua rēhitatia

Event	Dates	Notes
Parties give notice to be considered for broadcasting allocation	Generally in February in election year	Parties are required to notify the Electoral Commission that they want to be considered for the broadcasting allocation (parties do not have to be registered at this point).
Annual reporting by parties	30 April (for previous calendar year)	Deadline for filing annual return of party donations and loans return and section 71A statutory declaration (also a requirement in non-election years).
Start of regulated period	3 months before election day	Election advertising published during the regulated period is subject to expense limits and must be included in the party and/or candidates' expense returns.
Dissolution of Parliament	Confirmed when election announced	Parties must be registered by this date to be eligible for the broadcasting allocation.
Writ day	7 days max after dissolution of Parliament	Parties must be registered by writ day to contest the party vote. Once the writ has been issued the Commission can receive the nomination of candidates and the lodgement of party lists.
Nomination day	At least 20 days before election day	Noon on nomination day is the deadline for individual nominations. The deadline for bulk nomination of candidates and submission of party lists by registered parties is noon the day before nomination day.
Election day	Must be on a Saturday	Preliminary election results are released on election night.
Official results declared	20 days after election day	

Event	Dates	Notes
Return of the writ	60 days max after writ day	The writ is endorsed with the names of candidates who won electorate seats and are returned to Parliament. The allocation of list seats by the Commission and the election of list members typically occurs on the same day.
Electorate candidates' returns of expenses, donations and loans due	70 working days after election day	This is the last date for filing candidate returns for the election.
Parties' returns of election expenses and broadcasting allocation due	90 working days after election day	This is the last date for filing audited party returns for the election.

APPENDIX D: Quick guide for parties - common questions

TĀPIRIHANGA D: Puka whakarāpopoto mō ngā pāti tōrangapū – ngā pātai e kaha pātaitia ana

The quick guide helps to answer the commonly asked questions about registering a party and logo.

The Electoral Commission is also happy to answer any questions.

Question	Answer
Does the party need to be incorporated or have special status before we apply for registration?	No. It is up to each party to decide how the party is organised or structured.
Do I need to have a registered trademark over the logo?	No. The applicant must, however, make a statutory declaration that their use of the logo will not be an infringement of an intellectual property right of any person or a breach of any enactment.
What party officials do I need to have?	A party must, at the very least, have a party secretary in order to submit the application for registration. Other party officials you may wish to appoint include a treasurer (to take care of finances) and a membership secretary (to keep membership records).
How long will it take to process my party registration application?	Applications take approximately 8 weeks to process. However, where issues arise, it may take longer.
When should I apply before a general election?	Any party wanting to register in an election year should make their application with sufficient time for it to be processed before writ day and allowing at least 8 weeks for the Commission to process the application. It may take longer if issues arise with the application.
Is there a minimum fee I should charge members?	There is no minimum fee; it just has to be more than \$0. However, when setting membership fees, parties should consider the cost of campaigning, ongoing administrative costs of running a party and the costs of submitting a party list and electorate candidates in a general election.

Question	Answer
Can I include overseas members?	Yes, but you must be able to show that each overseas member remains eligible to vote by providing evidence that each overseas member has visited New Zealand in the last 12 months (for a permanent resident) or three years (for a New Zealand citizen).*
How can I find an auditor?	You can contact Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand at www.charteredaccountantsanz.com
What is the application fee?	The application is \$500 which can be paid by direct credit into the Electoral Commission's bank account.
Can the Commission tell us what an acceptable name is?	No. This is a decision for the Commission's Board following the public consultation process. However, Commission staff may be able to provide guidance on the acceptability of a party name based upon current registered party names and names that have been accepted or rejected previously.
Can I reserve a party name?	No. It is not possible to reserve a party name or abbreviation with the Commission before an application for registration is submitted.
Do we get any public funding?	The only public funding available for registered parties is from the broadcasting allocation which provides funding for advertising on television, radio and the internet for general elections. Further information can be found at elections.nz .
Can an unregistered party have its logo on the ballot paper?	No, but a candidate may have the name of an unregistered party on the ballot paper provided the Commission is satisfied the party exists, the candidate is eligible to stand on behalf of the party and the name of the party is not indecent, offensive, excessively long or likely to cause confusion.

* This will be extended to 6 years for citizens and to 4 years for permanent residents from 31 March 2023 until one month after the last day appointed for the return of the writ for the 2023 General Election.

APPENDIX E: Umbrella and component parties

TĀPIRIHANGA E: Ngā rōpū tōrangapū korowai me ngā rōpū waehanga

Most registered parties operate independently and contest the party vote and/or electorate seats. However, the Electoral Act allows registered parties to jointly contest general elections by allowing one or more parties to be a component party of another registered party.

The Electoral Act defines a component party as a political party that is a member of the registered party or the applicant party (the umbrella party), or a political party that has combined some or all of its membership with that of another political party and thereby formed the registered party or the applicant party or augmented the membership of such a party. [Section 3 of the Electoral Act]

As the definition suggests, there are different ways that a component party/umbrella party situation can arise.

For example:

- several unregistered parties could unite under an umbrella and the umbrella party registers to contest the party vote
- registered parties could unite under an umbrella party
- a combination of registered and unregistered parties could unite under an umbrella party
- a registered party could become part of another registered party.

If a new umbrella party is formed, the new party must apply to be registered and must include a declaration that it has component parties. The new party must meet all the requirements for registration, including providing evidence that it has at least 500 current financial members. Membership fees already paid by current members of a component party would not be sufficient to be a current financial member of the new party.

Examples of parties that have jointly contested elections under an umbrella party include:

- The Alliance (consisting of component parties NewLabour Party, the Democrat Party, Mana Motuhake, the Greens and the Liberal Party) at the 1993, 1996 and 1999 general elections.
- Internet MANA (consisting of the Internet Party and MANA Movement component parties) at the 2014 general election.
- Advance NZ (umbrella party) and NZ Public Party, the New Zealand People's Party, Reset NZ, and Direct Democracy New Zealand (as unregistered component parties) contested the 2020 general election.

In terms of contesting electorates, candidates from the umbrella party will usually contest electorates under the umbrella party name and logo. In which case, the candidate will appear in alphabetical order on the electorate vote side of the ballot paper with the umbrella party logo to the right of their name and the umbrella party name will appear opposite on the party vote side of the ballot paper, with the same logo to the left of the party name. Alternatively, component party candidates may contest the electorates under the component party name and any registered logo of the component party. Where an umbrella party contests the party vote, the party list may also include candidates from any component parties.

Where a component party stands candidates to contest the electorate vote, the space on the party vote side of the ballot paper opposite the candidate is blank and the umbrella party logo does not appear next to the candidate's name. If the component party has a registered logo, this is the logo that would appear next to the candidate's name. The umbrella party would be listed alphabetically on the party vote side of the ballot paper with the other parties not contesting the electorate vote.

Under the Electoral Act, for the purpose of determining whether an umbrella party has won an electorate seat, a winning candidate that stood for a component party of that umbrella party can be counted as long as the component party did not contest the party vote.

APPENDIX F: Useful contacts
TĀPIRIHANGA F: Rārangi whakapāpā

For information on....	Agency & Contact
<p>Administration of enrolment and voting services. We produce a range of resources, in different languages, about enrolling and voting which can be ordered via our website or by email</p> <p>Purchase of printed rolls and electronic roll data</p> <p>Nominations, parliamentary elections, by-elections and list vacancies</p> <p>Advice about election rules including advisory opinions on whether material is an election advertisement</p> <p>Parliamentary electoral boundaries</p>	<p>Electoral Commission Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri</p> <hr/> <p>Helpline: 0800 36 76 56 National Office: 04 495 0030</p> <p>General enquiries or requests for resources: enquiries@elections.govt.nz</p> <p>Requests for rolls and roll data: data@elections.govt.nz</p> <p>Requests for advisory opinions: advisory@elections.govt.nz</p> <p>Election Access Fund Te Tomokanga Pūtea Whakatapoko Pōtitanga</p> <hr/> <p>Email electionaccessfund@elections.govt.nz or call 0800 36 76 56.</p> <p>Electoral Commission websites: www.elections.nz www.vote.nz www.electionresults.govt.nz</p>
<p>Accessing legislation including the Electoral Act 1993</p>	<p>Parliamentary Counsel Office Te Tari Tohutohu Pāremata</p> <hr/> <p>www.legislation.govt.nz</p>
<p>Administrative and support services to MPs and funding entitlements for MPs</p>	<p>Parliamentary Service Pāremata Aotearoa</p> <hr/> <p>Ph 04 817 9999 publicity@parliament.govt.nz</p>

For information on....	Agency & Contact
<p>How to contact local councils regarding, for example, signage rules</p>	<p>Local Government New Zealand Te Kahui Kaunihera o Aotearoa</p> <hr/> <p>A list of all councils, maps and websites are available at:</p> <p>www.lgnz.co.nz/local-government-in-nz/new-zealands-councils/</p>
<p>Having your say on the law relating to parliamentary elections through the Inquiry into each election conducted by the select committee</p>	<p>Justice Select Committee</p> <hr/> <p>ju@parliament.govt.nz https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/scl/justice/</p>
<p>Information and complaints regarding advertising</p>	<p>Advertising Standards Authority</p> <hr/> <p>www.asa.co.nz</p>
<p>Information and complaints regarding broadcasting</p>	<p>Broadcasting Standards Authority Te Mana Whanonga Kaipāho</p> <hr/> <p>www.bsa.govt.nz</p>
<p>Information and complaints regarding press</p>	<p>Media Council Te kaunihera ao pāpāho o Aotearoa</p> <hr/> <p>www.mediacouncil.org.nz</p>
<p>Information and resources on how to protect yourself online</p>	<p>CERT NZ</p> <hr/> <p>www.cert.govt.nz</p>
<p>Election year guidance: Information on state servants being candidates</p>	<p>Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission</p> <hr/> <p>www.publicservice.govt.nz</p>

For information on....	Agency & Contact
Language translation services	<p>Straker Translations <hr/> www.strakertranslations.com</p> <p>Te Tari Taiwhenua Department of Internal Affairs <hr/> www.dia.govt.nz/Translation-Service</p>
Providing information in accessible formats for blind electors	<p>Blind Low Vision NZ <hr/> www.blindlowvision.org.nz</p>
Deaf advocacy and sign language services	<p>Deaf Aotearoa Tāngata Turi <hr/> www.deaf.org.nz</p> <p>Deafradio <hr/> www.deafradio.co.nz</p> <p>Sign language Interpreters Assoc of NZ <hr/> www.slianz.org.nz</p> <p>National Foundation for Deaf and Hard of Hearing <hr/> www.nfd.org.nz</p>
Domain names	<p>Domain Name Commission <hr/> www.dnc.org.nz</p>



**ELECTORAL
COMMISSION**
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI