



**ELECTORAL
COMMISSION**
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

Tāmaki Makaurau by-election Service plan

2025

Mihi

Haere mai, haere e te karere kawē pārongo ki ngā pito katoa o te rohe pōti o Tāmaki Makaurau. Kia mihi atu rā ki a tatou e tangi nei ki ō tatou mate huhua o te wā, inarā, ko Takutai Tarsh Kemp tērā te whawhati tata ka ngaro nei.

Kāti ake, he whakamahuki tēnei e whai ake nei mō ngā taipitopito e hāngai ana ki te pōtitanga pāerotanga o Tāmaki Makaurau. Kei raro iho nei te roanga atu. Heoi anō, he mihi noa tēnei ki koutou katoa, tēnā koutou.

Foreword

On Saturday 6 September a by-election will be held to elect a member of Parliament (MP) for the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate.

The by-election is being held to elect a member of Parliament for the Māori electorate of Tāmaki Makaurau following the passing of the sitting MP.

The Tāmaki Makaurau Māori electorate stretches across Auckland from the Waitākere Ranges to Bucklands Beach. It includes most of the southern and eastern suburbs and Waiheke Island. It does not include the North Shore.

Under the Electoral Act, from the date the vacancy was declared on Wednesday 9 July, voters of Māori descent enrolled on the general roll cannot change to the Māori roll to vote in the by-election. Māori who are not enrolled can still enrol and make their roll choice before the by-election.

Delivering a by-election is a significant logistical exercise. Our planning for the by-election has considered how to best provide services and information to voters in the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate, and I am proud of our kaimahi who have worked at pace to stand up services for this by-election.

This service plan sets out how we will deliver the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election. It details key by-election milestones, voter information and services, and post-election activities to declare a result.

We are committed to ensuring that voters can trust, value and take part in the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election.

Karl Le Quesne

Chief Electoral Officer

Contents

Mihi.....	2
Forward.....	3
Tāmaki Makaurau by-election at a glance.....	5
Overview.....	6
By-election milestones.....	8
Enrolment.....	10
Voter Services.....	11
Our people.....	14
Election resources and technology.....	16
Risk and assurance.....	18
Candidates and parties.....	20
Communications, education and engagement.....	22
Post election activities.....	24

Tāmaki Makaurau by-election at a glance



43,755 enrolled voters



115 advance and election day voting places



600 temporary election staff



Over 2,500 voting hours



Over 42,000 EasyVote packs sent



76,000 ordinary and 14,000 special voting papers printed



250 electoral rolls printed



700 voting screens and 440 ballot boxes sent to voting places



3 overseas voting places

Overview

The Electoral Commission is an independent, impartial Crown entity that works to inform, engage and educate New Zealanders about the value of participation.

We make it easy for people to enrol and vote and promote understanding of New Zealand's democratic processes.

We are responsible for delivering parliamentary elections and referendums.

Our statutory objective under the Electoral Act 1993 is to administer the electoral system impartially, efficiently and effectively, and in a way that:

- facilitates participation in parliamentary democracy; and
- promotes understanding of the electoral system; and
- maintains confidence in the administration of the electoral system.

Our vision is that: **New Zealanders trust, value and take part in parliamentary elections.**

We run every part of parliamentary general elections and by-elections. For a by-election, some of our main responsibilities are:

- candidate nominations
- guiding candidates to comply with electoral law
- helping the public to understand how to enrol and vote
- enabling people to vote at voting places and through other services
- counting and processing votes
- publishing timely and accurate election results.

The Commission delivers services for all by-elections as prescribed in the Electoral Act 1993 and Electoral Regulations 1996.

To make it easy to take part in the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election and support voters to know how to access electoral services that are most suited to their needs, the Commission will deliver a range of communication and engagement activities, including an advertising campaign delivered through various channels, face to face engagement with communities, direct communications to electors through EasyVote information packs, and engagement with key stakeholders.

Voters will have access to a variety of electoral services including voting at voting places during the advance voting period and on election day, mobile voting services, telephone voting for voters who are blind, partially blind or who have another physical disability that prevents them from marking their voting paper without assistance, the option for a friend or member of their whānau to collect voting papers on their behalf, or to apply for a postal vote.



By-election milestones

Wednesday 9 July	Vacancy declared by the Speaker. From this date, voters of Māori descent cannot change from the general roll to the Māori roll if it would move them into the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate
Thursday 10 July	Regulated period for election expenses starts day after notice of vacancy published
Wednesday 30 July	Writ Day Governor-General issues writ directing the Electoral Commission to hold the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election Electoral Rolls close for printing Voters enrolled after this date cast a special declaration vote
Noon, Tuesday 5 August	Nominations close for candidates in the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election
Tuesday 5 August (Afternoon)	Tāmaki Makaurau by-election candidates announced by the Electoral Commission Voting paper printing starts
Wednesday 20 August	Overseas voting starts
Monday 25 August	Advance voting starts
Friday 5 September	All political advertising ceases and election signs taken down by midnight Last day for overseas voters to enrol
Saturday 6 September	Election day for Tāmaki Makaurau by-election Last day for voters in New Zealand to enrol Voting places open from 9am to 7pm
Saturday 6 September	Preliminary Results progressively available from 7pm on www.electionresults.govt.nz . Targets for release are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by 9pm results from 50% of voting places • by 10.30pm results from 95% of voting places <p>These are targets not guarantees</p>

Wednesday 17 September	Official Results declared (including special declaration and overseas votes)
Monday 22 September	Deadline for applications for judicial recount
Tuesday 23 September	Return of Writ by Electoral Commission naming successful candidate (presuming no recount)
Monday 15 December	Deadline for Returns of Candidate Election Expenses and Donations to Electoral Commission

Enrolment

As at Writ Day, Wednesday 30 July, there were 43,755 electors enrolled to vote on the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate roll.

To vote in the by-election, you need to be enrolled in the Tāmaki Makaurau Māori electorate. Māori enrolled on the general roll cannot change to the Māori roll to vote in the by-election after Wednesday 9 July.

If you're Māori and not yet enrolled, you can choose either the Māori roll or general roll. You need to have lived in the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate for at least one month and be enrolled on the Māori roll to vote in the by-election.

Eligible voters can enrol or update their details up until and on election day, Saturday 6 September.

You can enrol or update your details at **vote.nz** using your New Zealand driver licence, New Zealand passport or RealMe verified identity, or call **0800 36 76 56** to ask for an enrolment form to be sent to you. You can also enrol at any voting place, from Monday 25 August.

You will need to cast a special vote if you enrol after Wednesday 30 July.



Voter services

Turnout of enrolled voters for the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate at the 2023 General Election was 63.4%. The Māori community of the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate skews young, with 49% of enrolled voters under the age of 40.

Advance voting

Advance voting will start on Monday 25 August until Friday 5 September. The days and hours advance voting places are open vary. Locations and open hours of advance voting places are included in EasyVote packs, published at vote.nz, or by calling **0800 36 76 56**.

54 advance voting places will be open in the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate.

Mobile voting services

In person voting will be provided at Auckland South Corrections Facility, Mt. Eden Corrections Facility, and Auckland Regions Women's Corrections Facility in the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate.

Election day voting

Voting on election day, Saturday 6 September, will be available from 9am to 7pm at voting places across the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate, including on Waiheke Island.

There will be 84 voting places open on election day. Voting place locations will be included in EasyVote packs, available at vote.nz, or by calling **0800 36 76 56**. A searchable map is available at vote.nz to help voters find their nearest voting place.

Kaupapa Māori voting services

The Commission has been working closely with venues where, in their day-to-day work, they deliver services to Māori communities and are Māori led. While all voting places for this by-election are of significance to Māori, we have been able to provide 14 voting places that will offer a community-led service, which includes the opportunity for voters to engage in a te reo Māori whānau centric experience.

Selecting voting places

The Commission seeks to use venues that are easy for voters to access and takes several matters into consideration when selecting venues to be used as advance voting places and voting places on election day.

The suitability of all voting place venues used for the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election were assessed using the Commission’s voting place assessment criteria, which considers venue availability, significance for communities, accessibility, parking facilities, security, workplace health and safety, conflicts of interest, and political neutrality.

The Commission sought feedback from registered political parties on the proposed locations of voting places before confirming the final list of advance and election day voting places.

Voting place locations include marae, kura, and wānanga, as well as schools, universities, churches, community halls, libraries, cultural venues, and shopping centres.

Overseas and remote voting

You can vote from overseas from Wednesday 20 August. The easiest and quickest way to vote from overseas is to download and complete your voting papers and then upload them at **vote.nz**.

Overseas voting using the download service closes at 7pm, Saturday 6 September (NZ time).

You may also be able to vote in person at an overseas voting place in London, Sydney or Brisbane or ask them for postal voting papers. Overseas voting places close at 4pm (local time) Friday 5 September. Locations and hours for overseas voting places are available at **vote.nz**.

If you’re voting from overseas, you must be enrolled by midnight Friday 5 September.

Remote voting services

Information about our remote voting services was sent to agencies that may have personnel in remote locations including fishing vessels, New Zealand Defence Force, Department of Conservation, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. In many cases, personnel who will be in a remote location can vote in advance or use overseas voting services. If these are not accessible, voters can apply to vote using our remote voting services. In these cases, voting papers may be issued by email, post, or telephone dictation.

Unable to get to a voting place

If you’re unable to get to a voting place, you can still vote. If you’re unable to vote in person, for example because of poor health or mobility, a friend or whānau member can bring you your voting papers. Your vote will be counted if your voting papers are completed and returned to a voting place before 7pm on election day, Saturday 6 September.

Need help to read or mark your voting papers?

A friend, whānau member or election workers can help you to read or mark your voting papers. That person can:

- go behind the voting screen with you
- read out the words and information on the voting paper
- mark the voting paper according to your directions if you ask them to.

They can't tell you who you should vote for.

Apply for voting papers to be sent to you

If there's no one who can collect your voting papers on your behalf, we may be able to deliver them to you. Call us on **0800 36 76 56** for more information.

Working on election day

You're legally allowed to have time away from work to go and vote on election day. You can also vote early at any voting place from Monday 25 August.

Telephone dictation voting

If you're blind, partially blind, or have a physical disability that means you can't mark your voting paper without help, you can vote by telephone dictation.

You need to register to use this service. You can register from Thursday 31 July by calling **0800 028 028**. Dictation voting starts on Wednesday 20 August.

Care homes

If you're in a care home, the Electorate Manager will contact the manager of your care home to arrange voting services.

Our people

Our staff are key to delivering voting services to the people eligible to vote in the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate.

The Electoral Commission centrally plans, coordinates and oversees delivery of the by-election through its workforce based in Wellington.

By-elections are delivered under a decentralised model, with temporary election workers responsible for delivering election services in the electorate. The Electoral Commission maintains oversight of the election services and works closely with the Electorate Manager and other temporary election staff.

Electoral Commission

Our people coordinate the delivery of the by-election through a structured planning process and programme of work under the oversight of Electoral Commission's by-election programme board.

Electorate Manager

At a local level, an Electorate Manager is employed to deliver the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election, with additional temporary staff employed to undertake various functions to support delivery of the by-election.

The Electorate Manager's responsibilities for the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election include:

- identifying, assessing, and securing venues for advance voting places and voting places on election day
- recruiting and training temporary election staff
- distributing and returning voting papers, supplies and materials to voting places
- deliver voting services to voters
- managing post by-election activities including scrutiny of the rolls, processing special votes, and completing the official count.

Temporary election staff

For the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election, the Electoral Commission will recruit approximately 600 temporary election staff. These staff will fill roles including voting place managers, issuing officers, and counters.

Temporary election staff deliver election services directly to voters by setting up advance voting places and voting places on election day, marking voters off the electoral roll, issuing voting papers, and counting votes following the close of polling.

A smaller team of temporary staff also support the Electorate Manager to complete the post-election activities including processing special votes and the Official Count.

For the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election, employment opportunities were promoted to temporary staff through the venues we are using as voting places so that kaimahi are familiar to the people voting at each location. We also worked through the Ministry of Social Development and community-based organisations to recruit staff with a focus on rangatahi Māori.

Delivery partners

The successful delivery of a by-election is reliant on the Electoral Commission's relationships with suppliers, who become critical partners in event planning and delivery. NZ Post is a key partner and will deliver EasyVote packs to everyone enrolled to vote in the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate.

Other partners include BlueStar to print voting papers in short timeframes, Mainfreight to ensure timely delivery of materials and supplies to voting places across the electorate, and others who support essential services including technology and communications for voters.

These partnerships are critical to the successful delivery of the by-election.

Election resources and technology

Large volumes of materials, equipment and technology are required to support delivery of voting services for the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election. Resources include voting place materials, voting papers, and ICT equipment.

Election materials

In preparation for the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election, the Commission will distribute materials to each of the 115 advance and election day voting places. This includes:

- 700 voting screens
- 440 ballot boxes
- 250 electoral rolls.

The Commission will oversee printing and distribution of 76,000 ordinary and 14,000 special voting papers between the close of nominations, on Tuesday 5 August, and the start of advance voting on Monday 25 August.

A significant amount of planning, testing, and quality assurance checks go into this process to ensure materials arrive in time for the start of voting.

ICT equipment

The technology needs of the Commission's temporary workforce for a by-election requires a scaling up and delivery of hardware, including the deployment of 275 mobile handsets to support election staff for the delivery of voting services.

Electorate headquarters

The Electorate Manager established a temporary electorate headquarters in Manukau City with two logistics hubs within the electorate to support the distribution and return of supplies and equipment. The training of our temporary election staff will take place in five locations across the electorate. Many key election processes are undertaken at the electorate headquarters including scrutiny of the rolls, processing of special votes, and the official count.

Election systems

The delivery of an election relies on several critical technology assets including software used for payroll, recruitment, finance, and custom-developed software used for election management and enrolment activities.

The Electoral Commission's Election Management System (EMS) is the primary system used to support the administrative processes necessary to deliver an election. It provides functionality to manage:

- voting places and advance voting places
- temporary election staff
- candidate nominations
- election results
- management of materials and supplies.

The Electoral Commission's MIKE system is the primary system used to manage enrolment. The MIKE system provides functionality for:

- management and integrity of the electoral roll
- online enrolment for voters to check, enrol, or update their details
- 0800 service Call Centre Application
- voting place eRoll application.

The functionality of the Election Management and MIKE systems is critical to produce EasyVote information packs and the printed electoral rolls, and to qualify special votes.

Risk and assurance

Assurance for the Commission's processes

The Electoral Commission undertakes readiness planning and preparation for a by-election with a focus on resilience, risk, and assurance within an increasingly complex environment.

Justices of the Peace

Independent Justices of the Peace are present during the official count which takes place after election day.

During the official count, certificates of results are signed by the Electorate Manager, and witnessed by a Justice of the Peace, to declare that results are complete and final.

Candidate scrutineers

Scrutineers play an important role in providing independent assurance to voters that elections are being conducted fairly. Scrutineers appointed by candidates play an important role in maintaining the integrity of the electoral system. Scrutineers can observe the conduct of a parliamentary by-election, including the issue of voting papers and the counting of votes, and provide assurance that everyone has followed the electoral rules and procedures.

Electoral integrity

The Commission takes electoral integrity extremely seriously. The Commission takes a proactive approach to ensuring factual information about electoral processes is accessible to voters through its media releases, on its website at [vote.nz](https://www.vote.nz), on its social media channels, and through other channels.

Mitigating and responding to security risks

The security context for elections has changed markedly over recent elections. The Commission's physical security preparations for elections includes reviewing all points of vulnerability and implementing security initiatives.

The Commission maintains controls to detect, prevent, and respond to cyber-attacks in preparation for elections. These activities include internal risk assessments and certification activities, working in-depth with government security agencies for assessment and planning, and strengthening and maintaining its technology security capabilities.

Support is provided to the Commission within the all-of-government national security system on inter-agency protocols which cover a coordinated inter-agency approach to communications, managing disruptions, and intelligence agencies to manage security threats to the by-election.

The inter-agency protocols developed for the 2023 General Election will be applied to the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election. The protocols are published online and available here:

<https://elections.nz/guidance-and-rules/election-protocols/>



Candidates and parties

During the by-election, the Commission works closely with candidates to facilitate the nominations process and support compliance with legislative obligations. The Commission produces a range of resources, including a candidate handbook, a factsheet on the rules once voting starts, and a candidate hub on elections.nz, to explain the rules that apply to candidates including the nomination and compliance requirements.

Candidate nominations

Candidate nominations for the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election were open from Tuesday 15 July to noon on Tuesday 5 August. A notice for candidate nominations was published in the New Zealand Herald on Thursday 17 July and Thursday 31 July 2025.

The Electorate Manager has conducted an online candidate briefing which outlines to the candidates how the by-election will work and their responsibilities as a candidate.

Candidate spending limits

There is a limit on how much candidates can spend on election advertising during the regulated period for the by-election. The candidate expense limit covers the cost of election advertising that promotes a candidate published by the candidate, or by someone else with the candidate's consent, during the regulated period. The regulated period runs from Thursday 10 July to Friday 5 September 2025.

The candidate expense limit for the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election is \$69,500 (including GST).

Election expenses include:

- the costs incurred in the preparation, composition, printing, postage and publication of a candidate advertisement, and
- the reasonable market value of any material used or applied towards the advertisement provided to a candidate for free or below reasonable market value.

Other campaign related costs, such as the candidate's nomination deposit, travel, hall hire and refreshments are not election advertising expenses and are not subject to this limit. Find out more about election expenses in the candidate handbook.

Candidate returns

After a by-election, all candidates are required to file a return of donations, expenses and loans. Candidate returns for the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election are due 5pm, Monday 15 December 2025. The Commission provides guidance and templates to candidates to support their compliance.

Election Access Fund

The Commission administers the Election Access Fund Te Tomokanga – Pūtea Whakatapoko Pōtitanga that supports disabled people who wish to stand as candidates in Parliamentary by-elections and general elections.

The purpose of the Fund is to reduce the barriers disabled people face by covering disability-related costs. It can cover costs for both those seeking selection, and those campaigning as a candidate.



Communications, education and engagement

The Commission is committed to ensuring all voters have the information they need to take part in elections. For the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election, we will deliver a broad range of activities to raise awareness of how to enrol and vote and support voters to be confident to participate.

Authoritative information

The Commission provides authoritative information about enrolling and voting in the by-election across different channels.

The Commission's website **vote.nz** is the primary source of information about the by-election. All advertising, physical collateral and digital resources direct people to **vote.nz** for more information about the by-election.

An EasyVote information pack has been sent to over 42,000 people who are enrolled in the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate. The pack includes a personalised EasyVote card that helps voting place staff to quickly find names on the printed roll when issuing votes. The pack also includes key information about candidates, voting place locations and details, and a brochure about how to vote.

Physical and digital collateral in English and Ngāpuhi dialect about enrolling and voting in the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election will be sent to external stakeholders to share with their communities and distributed through the Commission's local community engagement teams.

Paid and organic information is published through the Commission's official social media channels, including key dates and locations of voting places.

Information about voting in the by-election will be available in alternate formats including New Zealand Sign Language on **vote.nz**. Information for those with vision impairments will be available in large print, Braille and audio formats and on the Blind Low Vision's telephone information service. An Easy Read Guide for the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election will also be available.

The Commission's 0800 service provides a channel for people to ask for more information and to enrol, check or update their details. The service is available 24 hours a day. The 0800 service will use an on-demand interpretation service for people who ask to interact in te reo Māori. This service involves a three-way conversation between the 0800 provider, the caller and the interpreter.

Activity to raise awareness

Activity to raise awareness about the by-election will be delivered through paid advertising, news media, social media, and community and stakeholder engagement.

An advertising campaign will be delivered in the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate to raise awareness amongst eligible voters about when, where and how to enrol and vote. We will reach voters through a mix of channels such as outdoor, radio and online audio, online display, social media and print. We will also partner with local media and community influencers to create and share content that builds understanding and help to reduce any confusion.

Key milestones of the public information programme will be supported by media releases, which will be sent to all national, Māori and Auckland regional media. A media kit will be produced for journalists with a by-election timeline and will provide answers to frequently asked questions to support accurate reporting.

To reach voters in the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate, we will seek media coverage in the New Zealand Herald, and on the local iwi radio station, Radio Waatea, as well as TVNZ's Te Karere and Whakaata Māori's Te Ao News.

Community engagement

Community engagement is an important channel to reach Māori in the Tāmaki Makaurau electorate. The Commission's Strategic Partnerships and Engagement team will work with partners and local networks to share information and resources about enrolling and voting in the by-election. Teams will play a key role in helping to build understanding about how to take part in the by-election.

Stakeholder materials

Stakeholders play an important role in sharing information with their communities about the importance of voting in the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election. Stakeholders include libraries, marae, kura, iwi, MPs, electorate offices, and community groups and organisations.

We send stakeholders information about the by-election along with physical and digital materials to make it easy to share information with their communities.

Post election activities

Following the close of voting at 7pm on Saturday 6 September, a range of post-election activities will commence including the preliminary count, scrutiny of the rolls, processing of special votes, official count, and declaration of the final results.

Preliminary count

Preliminary counts of ordinary votes will be released progressively on election night from 7pm at electionresults.govt.nz. Ordinary votes cast during advance voting are counted on election day in a secure area at the electorate headquarters and reported from 7pm. By contrast, ordinary votes cast on election day are counted on election night from 7pm with the results phoned into electorate headquarters to be entered into the national election management system.

Most election night counts take place at voting places after they have closed. It is expected that results for 50% of all ordinary votes will be released by 9pm and 95% will be released by 10.30pm.

Preliminary results on election night will be fed instantly online to media through the Commission's media feed and directly to the public and stakeholders at electionresults.govt.nz.

Scrutiny of the rolls

Before the official count can begin, we scan all the rolls used in voting places to issue ordinary votes. These rolls are used to create a master roll for the electorate, which also includes a list of special voters for the district.

The scrutiny of the rolls, and the names of voters removed from the rolls after writ day, identifies which votes have to be removed from the official count. This includes where the:

- vote was cast before election day and the voter has died
- voter was not eligible to vote in the by-election
- voter has voted more than once (dual votes). Where a voter appears to have voted more than once, their votes are not included in the official count and people who vote more than once may be referred to police.

Processing and checking special votes

After election day, special votes are processed. To process a special vote, we must:

- check the declaration has been correctly completed by the voter and witnessed
- check the special voter's enrolment to confirm they are qualified to vote.

This process is time-consuming as several steps are involved, with additional controls to maintain the secrecy of the ballot. The qualification process also depends on enrolment applications made up to and on including election day having been processed. Special votes are included in the official count only once these checks have been completed.

Official count

As with the preliminary count, the official count is conducted by hand. We do not use vote counting machines. The official count involves counting ordinary votes again and counting special votes. Because special votes are now included and because votes can be removed from the count during the scrutiny process, the preliminary results and official results are not directly comparable.

Overall responsibility for the official results rests with the Electorate Manager who carries out quality assurance checks. Once the voting place results have been confirmed as correct, the totals are recorded on a certificate of results and the Electorate Manager and a Justice of the Peace sign the certificate.

Further quality assurance checks are carried out at the Commission's national office to identify any errors the Electorate Manager may not have picked up. Once all checks are complete, the Electorate Manager and Justice of the Peace sign final results certificates for the electorate.

Declaration of final results

Official results for the Tāmaki Makaurau by-election will be published on electionresults.govt.nz and a media release summarising the results will be sent to media.

Recounts

Following the release of the official results on Wednesday 17 September, candidates will have 3 working days to apply for a recount. Recounts are led by a District Court judge, and final decisions are available on the District Court website.



2025