

Getting ready for the 2026 General Election



2 March 2026

2026 is election year when we vote for the people and parties who will represent us in Parliament and form a government. Election day is 7 November 2026.

Parliament has passed the Electoral Amendment Act 2025, bringing in some changes to enrolment and how elections are run.

You need to be enrolled before voting starts

Enrolment will close 13 days before election day, on 25 October 2026.

You must enrol or update your address if you've moved before voting starts on 26 October 2026.

You won't be able to enrol at a voting place. If you are not enrolled, you won't be able to vote.

This is different to the last two elections when you could enrol and vote at the same time.

Other key changes in the legislation

- The ban on voting for prisoners serving sentences of more than 3 years has been extended to include newly sentenced prisoners (for offences that happened after 20 December 2025).
- It is an offence to improperly influence a person's roll choice - Māori roll or general roll - when enrolling or switching roll types, for example by offering money or a gift.
- Free kai can't be offered at voting places. It is an offence to offer free food, drink or entertainment within 100m of the entrance to a voting place during voting hours.
- The legislation lays the groundwork for modernising election services over time, starting with greater use of digital communications from the Electoral Commission in 2026.

A summary of the changes is available on [elections.nz](https://www.elections.nz)

The Māori Electoral Option in election year

You choose the Māori roll or general roll when you first enrol to vote.

After that, you can change rolls any time, except in the three months before an election.

In election year, the deadline for enrolled voters to change rolls is midnight, 6 August 2026.

If you miss the deadline, you'll stay on your current roll until after the election.

We will write to all enrolled voters of Māori descent with a reminder that you can change rolls before the election if you would like to. By law, we need to write to people by 31 March.

We'll have advertising and community engagement to reach people who aren't enrolled or have changed their address. We'll also have resources that can be shared with communities.

How to enrol

You can enrol, check or update your details online at [vote.nz](https://www.vote.nz) using your NZ driver licence, NZ passport or RealMe verified identity.

You can also call freephone 0800 36 76 56 to ask for an enrolment form to be sent to you.

Or text your name and address to 3676 and we'll send you a form.

Help us keep in touch with you about enrolling and voting by giving us your email and phone number as well as your address.

Check your enrolment details

You can search for your enrolment details online at vote.nz/enrol

For privacy reasons the details you enter need to be an **exact match** for the details we have on file. If they're not, the search may not find your enrolment.

If you can't find your record, it doesn't necessarily mean you're not enrolled – it means we couldn't match your details.

If your address is not kept up to date and we receive returned mail from your old address, you may be placed on the dormant roll.

This means you will not receive mail from us, and eventually could be removed from the electoral roll. We may text or email you to update your details if this happens.

It's easy to correct by updating your address with us, and you'll be placed back on the main roll that you're enrolled on (Māori or general).

If you have any problems, call freephone 0800 36 76 56 and our team can check for you.

We're gearing up for the election

The Electoral Commission will be looking for voting place locations and recruiting staff to work on the election.

You know your community best. If there's a venue in your community that you think would be a suitable voting place, get in touch with us at enquiries@elections.govt.nz

We employ more than 20,000 people and are looking for people to work in voting places who are from the community. Register your interest at work.elections.nz

Help us let people know about the change

The Electoral Commission's focus in 2026 will be on ensuring people enrol by 25 October so their vote counts.

Before the election, we will undertake a nationwide information and education programme to let you and your community know when you need to enrol by, and how to do it.

It will include advertising and community engagement.

We'll have digital resources as well as posters and brochures you can share with your communities to support people to enrol.