

18pt

# **COVID-19 Safety Measures**

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## **COVID-19 safety measures**

The 2020 General Election and referendums will be different because of COVID-19. We have processes in place to protect you and your whānau while you vote.

### **We're making voting places safer**

A range of measures will be in place to help keep voters safe at the October election including contact tracing, using hand sanitiser on the way in and out of voting places, managing queues and allowing more room for physical distancing inside voting places.

We will be increasing the size and number of voting places to give everyone more space. Advance voting will start in New Zealand on 3 October and voting will end at 7pm on election day, Saturday 17 October.

We encourage you to bring your own pen to mark your voting papers, but there'll be pens available if you forget.

### **Vote close to home if you can**

If you can, vote close to home. It will be quicker and easier. You can vote at any voting place in Aotearoa, but you may need to fill in an extra form if you vote outside your electorate.

## **If you are unable to go to a voting place**

If you are unable to go to a voting place because of poor health or mobility, contact us on 0800 36 76 56 to talk over your options. If you have already applied for postal voting, you can use that service, or you can ask someone to bring you your voting papers.

## **Ask someone to collect your voting papers**

You can authorise someone to pick up your voting papers from a voting place for you. They will then bring back your voting papers to complete.

Your voting papers must be returned to a voting place before 7pm, Saturday 17 October.

## **Postal voting**

Applications for postal voting have now closed. You can still call 0800 36 76 56 if you're unable to go to a voting place.

Arrangements will be made by your local Returning Officer for postal voting if there is still time, or for a friend, family member or electoral official to bring you voting papers.

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Postal voting packs will arrive from Saturday 3 October up until Friday 9 October.

Completed postal votes must be in the mail by Wednesday 14 October so they reach us in time to be counted, or you can ask someone to drop off your voting papers at any

advance or election day voting place by 7pm on Saturday 17 October.

## **Your postal or takeaway voting pack**

The pack includes:

- voting papers for the election and referendums
- a declaration form
- a pre-paid envelope for you to return your completed voting papers and declaration
- instructions on how to complete your voting papers and declaration.

You must complete a declaration form because postal or takeaway voting is a form of special voting. Make sure you complete all the steps on the form.

The form will ask you to confirm the reason why you are not able to vote at a voting place. Reasons can include illness or disability. If there is some other reason why you can't go to a voting place without suffering hardship or serious inconvenience you will need to include the reason on the form.

## **You can still vote if you are in a rest home**

If you are in a rest home and you won't be able to go to a voting place, you don't need to contact us. Your local Returning Officer will contact the manager of your rest home to arrange voting services.

## **You can still vote if you are in hospital**

If you are unable to go to a voting place because you are in hospital, a friend or family member can bring you your voting papers when advance voting starts. Call 0800 36 76 56 for more information.

If you're scheduled to go into hospital prior to election day, it's best to vote in advance from 3 October if you can.

## **You can still vote if you are in a managed isolation or quarantine facility**

People in managed isolation or quarantine will be able to vote using a telephone dictation service. Information on the service will be provided to people when they arrive at the facility.

The dictation service will be available from 30 September until the end of voting on election day, Saturday 17 October. Registration and voting hours will be weekdays from 9am to 7pm until Friday 2 October, weekdays and weekends from Monday

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5 October between 9am and 7pm. On election day, registrations will close at 5pm and voting at 7pm.

## **Voting if you're in self-isolation**

If you are self-isolating at home, you should not leave the house to vote. Please call us on 0800 36 76 56 to talk over your options.

## **You can still vote from prison if you're eligible**

If you're a prisoner who's eligible to vote, we'll work with Corrections to provide you with voting services.

## **You can vote from overseas**

You can vote from overseas from Wednesday 30 September until 7pm, Saturday 17 October (NZ time). The easiest and quickest way to vote from overseas is to download and print your voting papers for the general election and referendums.

You may also be able to vote at an overseas voting place or ask us to send postal voting papers to you overseas. These options may depend on the COVID-19 situation in your area.

## **We have plans for different COVID-19 Alert Levels**

We will be running the election with Alert Level 2 measures in place.

As part of our contingency planning we are working with the Ministry of Health on how these measures would need to be adapted if areas of the country are at higher alert levels. We also have increased capacity for takeaway and postal voting if we need it.

The Chief Electoral Officer has some emergency powers to adjourn election day voting by up to 7 days at a time if necessary.

## **Enrol now and make sure you're ready to vote**

You can enrol any time, including on election day. Once voting starts on 3 October, you can enrol and vote at the same time at any voting place.