

Information about the Māori Electoral Option - Te Kōwhiringa Pōti Māori Quick Guide



Developed with input from
People First New Zealand, Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi



About this booklet

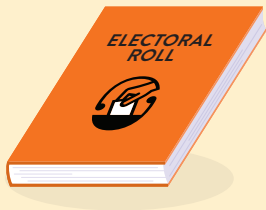


This booklet has information about:

- the Māori Electoral Option.



Enrolling to vote



Disabled people can enrol and vote in New Zealand elections.

In New Zealand there are some rules about who must enrol to vote.



You must enrol to vote if all of these things are true about you:

- at least 18 years old
- have lived in New Zealand for more than 1 year in your life
- are either a **New Zealand citizen** or a **resident for electoral purposes**.



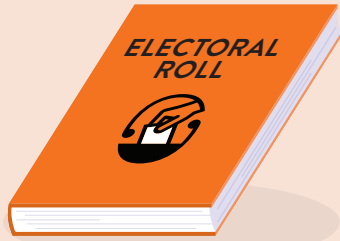
A **New Zealand citizen** is someone who can get a New Zealand passport.

Most New Zealand citizens were born in New Zealand.

A **resident for electoral purposes** is someone who:

- is not a New Zealand citizen
- has been told by the government they can live in New Zealand all the time.

Electoral roll

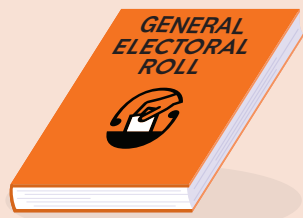
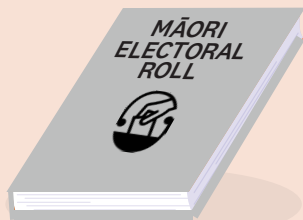


When you are enrolled to vote your name is on the **electoral roll**.

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

The electoral roll is **public**.

Being **public** means that other people can see it at places like libraries.



There are 2 electoral rolls:

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

No one can be on both rolls at the same time.

The Māori Electoral Option - what is it?



If you are Māori you can choose which electoral roll you want to be on.

This choice is called the **Māori Electoral Option**.



The Māori Electoral Option in te reo Māori is Te Kōwhiringa Pōti Māori.



If any of your whānau or friends have not heard about the Māori Electoral Option you can give them this information.

The Māori Electoral Option - History of the Option



The Māori Electoral Option is special to New Zealand.

Māori have been able to choose which electoral roll to be on for over 50 years.

Making this choice means you have a say in how you want New Zealand to work.

It is also a choice about who will be in Government that represents:



- you
- your whānau
- your community.

Making this choice is a way to acknowledge Māori from the past and future.

How to choose or change your roll



You can only choose or change which electoral roll you are on if you are Māori.

No one can tell you what roll to choose.



If you are Māori and enrolling for the first time you choose if you want to be on the Māori or the general roll.

If you are already enrolled and happy with the electoral roll you are on you do not need to do anything.

How to choose or change your roll



If you want to change which electoral roll you are on you can do it by:

- going to the website at:
vote.nz
- emailing:
enrol@vote.nz
- filling in a paper enrolment form and sending it back to us.



You might receive a letter in the post after **31 March 2026**.

This letter will tell you what roll you are currently enrolled on.

The letter has instructions on how to change your roll.



You can ask someone to support you to understand this letter and fill it in if you would like to change rolls.

How to choose or change your roll



We can also send you a paper enrolment form by post.

You can call us to ask us to send you a paper enrolment form on:

- **0800 36 76 56.**



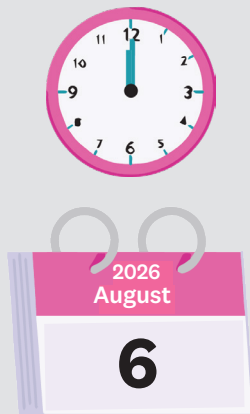
You need to have a form of ID like:

- a New Zealand driver licence
- a New Zealand passport
- a **RealMe verified** identity

A **form of ID** is an official document that you can use to prove who you are.

A **RealMe** verified identity is a type of computer account run by the government where they have checked your information to make sure it is true.

When to change your roll



In 2026 if you are Māori and want to change the roll you are on you need to do it by:

- **midnight on Thursday 6 August 2026.**

The times you cannot change which electoral roll you are on are:



- in the 3 months before a general election happens

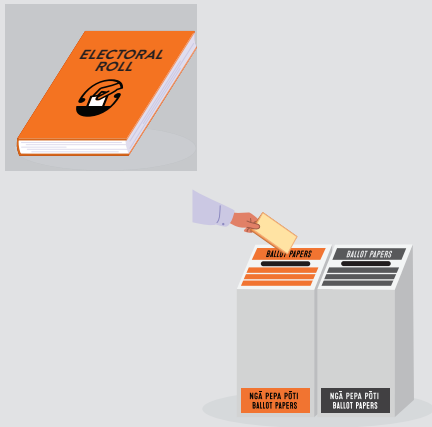
or

- in the 3 months before a local election happens

or

- before a by-election if it moves you into the electorate where the by-election is happening.

What the roll choice means for voting



It is important to know the electoral roll you are on.

This is because it decides which candidates you can vote for in elections.

Here is an example:



If you live in Rotorua and choose the Māori roll you will vote in the Waiariki electorate.

The person who wins the most votes in the Māori electorate of Waiariki will become your local MP.

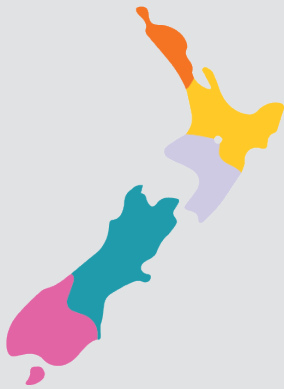
If you choose the general roll you will vote in the Rotorua electorate.

The person who wins the most votes in the general electorate of Rotorua will become your local MP.

What the roll choice means for voting

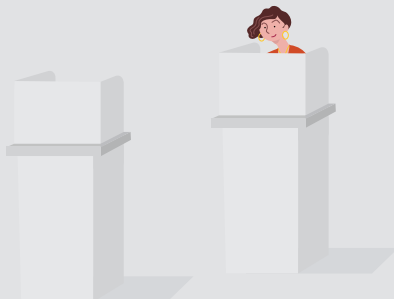


Your roll choice can also shape the number of Māori and general electorates in Parliament.



The number of Māori on the Māori electoral roll can also change how many Māori electorates there are by:

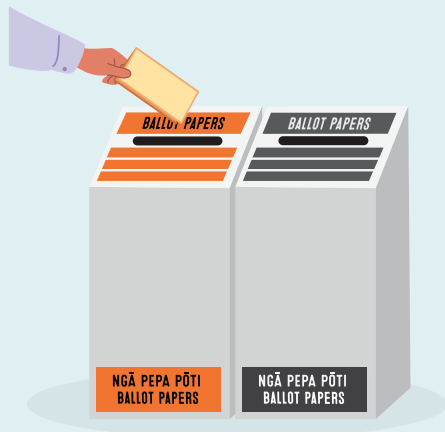
- making more
- making less
- keeping the same amount.



This choice does not affect your party vote.

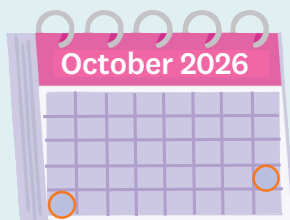
You vote for the same list of political parties whichever roll you're on.

2026 General Election



There is a general election in 2026.

This means you will vote for who you want to be in Government for the next three years.



You need to be enrolled to vote in the 2026 General Election by:

- **midnight on Sunday 25 October 2026.**

Voting in the General Election starts on:

- **Monday 26 October 2026.**

The last day to vote is:

- **Saturday 7 November 2026.**



If you want to change the roll you are on you need to do it by:

- **midnight on Thursday 6 August 2026.**

This date is important because you cannot change rolls in the 3 months before the election.

If you miss this date you will stay on your current roll until after the election.

If you are happy with the roll you are on you do not need to do anything.



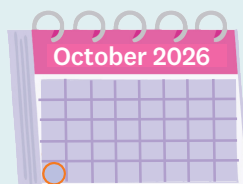
If you are Māori and enrol for the first time between:

- **Friday 7 August 2026**

and

- **midnight on Sunday 25 October 2026**

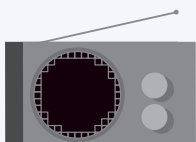
you can choose what electoral roll you would like to be on but you cannot change it before the election.



You cannot enrol once voting starts on:

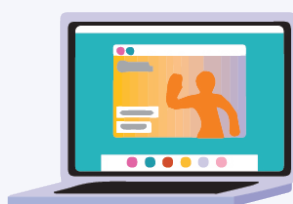
- **Monday 26 October 2026.**

The Māori Electoral Option - where to find information



Here is a list of where you might find more information about the Māori Electoral Option:

- a letter in the post
- websites
- social media
- newspaper
- television
- radio
- public meetings
- at school or work
- your friends
- your family.



Our website has more information on the Māori Electoral Option.

The website address is:

- **vote.nz.**



You can also call us with any questions you have on:

- **0800 36 76 56.**

It will not cost you any money to call this number.



34-42 Manners Street,
PO Box 3220, Wellington 6140.