

VOTER ENROLMENT



The rights available to Victorians did not come easily and for this and other reasons they need to be protected. Various events over the years have shown that citizens must be 'eternally vigilant' to see that their representatives are delivering good democratic government.

The opportunity to make your judgement known arises every four years when an election occurs. In order to vote, you must first enrol on the electoral enrolment register.

The electoral enrolment register

The electoral enrolment register is an alphabetical list of all people who are enrolled to vote. The enrolment register includes the names and addresses of electors. By enrolling, you are registered to vote in State, Federal and local government elections. To enrol, you need to:

- be an Australian citizen;
- be 18 years of age or over; and
- have lived at your current address for at least a month.

Failure to enrol is an offence.

Closing the roll at election time

When a State election is called, people have three days to enrol or update their enrolment details. Those electors whose enrolment details are up-to-date do not need to take any action as they are registered to vote at the election.

After the close of roll, the electoral roll is produced containing all those who are entitled to vote at the election.

If your name is not on the roll, you cannot vote.



Provisional enrolment of 17-year-olds

Provisional enrolment allows 17-year-olds to enrol. When you turn 18, your provisional enrolment automatically becomes full enrolment.

An advantage of provisional enrolment is that if you turn 18 on, or just before, an election day you will be able to vote, even if the rolls have closed. If provisional electors do not turn 18 by election day, they are not entitled to vote.

How does someone enrol to vote?

A person can obtain an enrolment form in the following ways:

- pick up an enrolment form from any Coles or Bi-Lo supermarket or Post Office;

- download an enrolment form from the VEC's website at www.vec.vic.gov.au; or
- call the VEC on 13 18 32 to be sent an enrolment form.

At the time of a State election or by-election, you can also enrol in person at any election office up to the time that the roll closes, or at the VEC at Level 8, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne.

Who has access to enrolment information?

It is possible for the public to inspect the enrolment register at the VEC's office at Level 8, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne.

It is not possible for the public to obtain the roll in an electronic form for marketing purposes.



Class discussion

1. Who is legally obliged to enrol to vote at elections?
2. What action do people need to take in order to enrol to vote?
3. What is the earliest age at which you can enrol to vote?
4. To what extent is electoral enrolment information accessible to the public?
Do you think this is desirable? Give reasons for your opinion.
5. What advice about enrolment would you give to any members of your family or friends who have just had their seventeenth birthday?

Case studies

Students should form into groups of two or four and prepare advice on the rights and obligations of each of the young people in the cases below.

A spokesperson for each group should report to the class on what they advise each of the questioners.

Carol's question

My name is Carol, and my manager asked me to request a copy of the electoral enrolment register in electronic format so that our company can do an advertising mail-out to all the people on the enrolment register who live in this suburb. What should I tell my manager?

Eva's question

G'day, My name is Eva. I am 18 years of age, and I moved to Australia with my parents from Hungary. I want to enrol to vote so that I can have my say in the elections. Do you think I am eligible?

Greg's question

Hello, my name is Greg. I'm 17 years old and I want to enrol to vote. I've just moved from Frankston to Burwood four weeks ago and I was sent an enrolment form by the VEC. Do you think I am eligible to enrol, even although I am not 18 yet?

Steve's question

Hi, I'm Steve. I turn 17 in two months time. Mum thought it would be a good idea for me to enrol to vote now while I remember, because I forget to do stuff all the time. What do I need to do to get onto the electoral roll?

Enrolling to vote

Obtain an enrolment form in one of the ways outlined above.

How easy is the form to complete?

Are there any costs involved?

Think about whether there are any members of your family or any friends who have:

- just turned 17 and can provisionally enrol;
- turned 18 and have not yet enrolled; or
- recently changed address without changing their enrolment.

You might like to advise these people about how they can enrol.

Encouraging young people to enrol to vote

Students can produce promotional materials to encourage young people to enrol to vote.

(i) Produce a promotional sketch on video

To do this activity, students need to have access to a video camera and TV monitor.

1. Discuss:

- the various techniques (interview, role play, speech etc) that students could use to get a message across;
- the approaches (e.g. use of humour, drama, heroes etc) that will be effective for this particular 'target audience';
- what approaches are unlikely to get a message across.

2. Form into groups of four or five to write a script, and then perform (and in the case of the video, film) their sketch. Each group should allocate specific roles to their members such as:

- Director (who will be responsible for organising the group);
- Producer (who will assist in getting any equipment or material needed);
- Writer/editor (who will edit the final draft of the script);
- Camera person (in the case of a video) who will operate the camera and help edit the video; and
- Actor/s or subjects (who will perform the sketch).

3. Each group must develop and write a script for their sketch and provide it to the teacher for assessment prior to the performance. Each of the group's members should be able to participate in more than one role in the production of the video.

4. Show the completed videos to the class and discuss their effectiveness in encouraging young people to enrol to vote.



(ii) Design a magazine advertisement

1. Discuss what themes would work best to motivate young people to enrol (e.g. use of heroes, glamour, excitement, participation etc).
2. Design a magazine advertisement to encourage young people to enrol to vote.
3. Have a class vote on the most effective advertisement and send it to the VEC to consider for future advertising.

