

2026 State election

Region candidate handbook

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Glossary

Election personnel

Campaigner	A person who canvasses for votes, including on behalf of a candidate, political party or organisation.
Candidate	A person who is nominated under section 69 of the Act to stand for election to Parliament. This includes: - party-endorsed candidates who have been nominated in an election by a registered political party - independent candidates who are not endorsed by a registered political party and have nominated in an election.
Deputy registered officer	For this handbook, the deputy registered officer (DRO) is one of the specified representatives of a registered political party, nominated on the Register of Political Parties.
Election manager	The person appointed by the Electoral Commissioner to be responsible for the administration of a district election. Each election manager in a region is responsible for administering the region election.
Election official	A person appointed by the VEC to work at an election.
Elector	A person enrolled to vote at an election.
Electoral Commissioner	The statutory officer appointed by the Governor-in-Council with responsibility for the proper conduct of parliamentary and local council elections.
Field compliance officer	Field compliance officers will monitor behaviour outside voting centres during voting hours. These officers are specially trained election officials who will work to ensure that everyone around a voting centre is complying with their obligations. Their focus will be on generating co-operation consistent with the VEC's constructive compliance approach, and facilitating prompt escalation and referral for more complex matters that cannot be resolved locally.
Registered officer	The specified representative of a registered political party, nominated on the Register of Political Parties.
Scrutineer	A person appointed by a candidate to represent the candidate during electoral activities and to make sure the election is conducted according to the law.
Silent elector	A person who has been granted silent elector status by the VEC (or by the Australian Electoral Commission on behalf of Victoria) having satisfactorily shown that printing their address on an electoral roll would place their or their family's personal safety at risk.

Election terms

The Act	The <i>Electoral Act 2002</i> (Vic)
Authorised period	The period starting 10 hours before the close of voting on election day in which the VEC may begin extracting and sorting early votes and postal votes within a designated restricted area.
Ballot paper	An official paper listing the names of all the candidates contesting the election, on which a voter records their preference for each candidate in the election.
Body corporate/ corporation	A person, association or group of people legally incorporated in a corporation as registered with ASIC. A body corporate has either an Australian Business Number (ABN) or Australian Company Number (ACN).
Canvassing	Campaigning for votes at an election for a candidate or political party.
Centralised activity site (CAS)	A central VEC venue which houses election activities including postal vote processing, telephone assisted voting, and extraction and counting activities.
Close of roll	The last date people can apply to be enrolled or update their enrolment details prior to an election. The roll closes at 8 pm on the day the writs are issued. For the 2026 State election, this will be on Tuesday 3 November.
Designated entrance	The nominated entry point to a voting centre as specified by the VEC. Permitted conduct outside a voting centre depends on the distance from the designated entrance. A voting centre may have more than one designated entrance.
District	An electorate for the Legislative Assembly, not to be confused with a Legislative Council region. There are 88 districts in Victoria, each electing one member. Each region contains 11 districts.
Early vote	A vote cast before election day at an early voting centre.
Election day	The official day of an election, named in the election writ. Voting closes at 6 pm on election day. Election day for the 2026 State election is Saturday 28 November.
Election hub	A single venue combining 1–4 election offices for nearby districts.

Election Management System (EMS)	The VEC's computerised election management system. EMS is used by election managers to capture election data such as nominations, how-to-vote cards and results.
Election office	The location where the election manager conducts the election. There is one election office for each district election, and it may be located in an election hub containing election offices for multiple districts. Details of each election office will be on the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au and in election advertisements.
Electoral material	Electoral material includes: • paid advertisements containing electoral matter • printed materials containing electoral matter, including a leaflet, flyer, pamphlet, notice or poster • materials produced by or on behalf of political parties, candidates, groups, elected members, associated entities, third-party campaigners and donors, even if it is not paid or printed.
Electoral matter	Any content which is intended or likely to influence how someone votes at an election.
How-to-vote card (HTVC)	Any electoral material that: • includes a representation of a ballot paper, including partial or purported partial representations of a ballot paper - or • lists the names of any or all of the candidates for an election with a number indicating an order of voting preference against the names of any or all of those candidates.
Mobile billboard	Any billboard that is capable of being displayed while being transported by any means.
Nomination	The process by which a person becomes a candidate at an election.
Ordinary vote	A vote cast at an election day voting centre within the voter's enrolled district.
Penalty unit	A unit used to define the amount payable for fines for many offences under Victorian legislation. The dollar amount of a penalty unit is published on 1 July every year.
Postal vote	A vote cast by a voter who had their ballot papers mailed to them. Postal voters are provided with an envelope to securely return their ballot papers to be included in the count.

Publish	To publish by any means, including print, audio-visual or electronic.
Recount	A re-examination and count of one or more parcels of ballot papers by an election manager before the declaration of the result.
Region	An electorate for the Legislative Council, not to be confused with a Legislative Assembly district. There are 8 regions in Victoria, each electing 5 members. Each region contains 11 districts.
Registered political party	A political party that is on the VEC's Register of Political Parties. Registration entitles a political party to have the registered party details, including a registered logo, placed next to its candidate(s) names on district ballot paper(s) or above the group name above the line on region ballot paper(s).
The Regulations	The Electoral Regulations 2022 (Vic).
Telephone assisted voting	A secure voting facility provided by the VEC for prescribed cohorts of electors to cast a secret vote over a telephone service.
Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC)	The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) is responsible for the conduct of parliamentary and local council elections in Victoria. The Electoral Commissioner is the head of the VEC.
Voting centre	A venue appointed by the VEC for voting at an election, including: - early voting centres, available to all electors until 6 pm the day before election day - election day voting centres, available to all electors from 8 am to 6 pm on election day - mobile voting centres, temporarily available to specified classes of electors who may experience barriers to accessing other voting methods.
Writ	An order by the Governor to the Electoral Commissioner that an election be held. The writ specifies key election dates.

Introduction

This *Candidate handbook* is for anyone who wishes to nominate as a Legislative Council election candidate in the 2026 Victorian state election. The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) administers this election and has produced this resource.

The handbook outlines the electoral law that directly relates to candidates. It is not a substitute for the law and should be read in conjunction with the *Electoral Act 2002* (Vic) (the Act) and the Electoral Regulations 2022 (Vic) (the Regulations). You can access current Victorian legislation at legislation.vic.gov.au

We hold information sessions in the lead up to the election for anyone wishing to nominate. We also have a series of short videos covering the same information available on the VEC website at: vec.vic.gov.au/candidates-and-parties/become-a-state-election-candidate/state-election-candidate-resources. A *Candidate kit* with important handbooks and forms for you, your campaigners and your scrutineers will be available online at vec.vic.gov.au

Please remember that while the VEC can provide you with information on how to become a candidate, we cannot provide legal advice. We encourage you to seek independent legal advice on your eligibility, campaign activity and other relevant matters. You should also be aware of the responsibilities and obligations of campaigners, donors and scrutineers.

It is your responsibility to make sure you comply with all electoral law.

The election timeline is defined in the Act and the Regulations.

The election timeline is available on the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au

Changes to legislation

Recent amendments to the Act have changed some of the timelines and processes for Victorian state elections. You should be aware of these changes, as some of them impact deadlines, requirements, procedures and offences for election candidates.

What has changed

Political party registration

The deadline to apply to register a political party was brought forward by 60 days. Political party registration now closes 180 days before the date of a general election.

Applications to register a new political party for the 2026 State election, or to change a registered political party's registered name or logo, closed on 1 June 2026. Applications cannot be processed during a state election period or before the writ is returned although political parties can still prepare and submit applications to register, or to change a name or logo, during this time.

Applications for registration of political parties that do not meet Victoria's registration requirements may be refused.

To reduce the risk of misleading voters, registered political parties cannot use a name, logo or abbreviation that closely resembles those of another registered political party from the previous 10 years.

Silent elector details

Silent electors will have their address removed from the public electoral roll and, where possible, from documents currently or previously published by the VEC.

Close of roll

The electoral roll will now close at 8 pm on the day the writ for an election is issued.

For the 2026 State election, voters must enrol or update their enrolment details by 8 pm on Tuesday 3 November (Melbourne Cup public holiday).

Candidate nominations

The close of all types of candidate nominations (party-endorsed and independent) is now 6 days after the issue of writs. Legislative Council region election group registration closes at the same time.

For the 2026 State election, the close of all types of candidate nominations and Legislative Council region election group registration is 12 noon on 9 November 2026. See **1.2 How to nominate**.

Dis-endorsement of candidates

A registered political party can now withdraw the nomination of an endorsed candidate before nominations close.

To do this, the party must lodge a notice with the VEC, provide written notice to the candidate and confirm with the VEC the candidate is aware the party intends to withdraw their endorsement.

Ballot draw

The ballot draw is now expected to be held at 4 pm on Monday 9 November 2026.

Group voting tickets

Group voting tickets have been removed from Legislative Council region elections. Voters who choose to vote above the line (ATL) are now instructed to place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in the boxes for groups above the line on the ballot paper.

Groups will be required to submit an order for their candidates to appear below the line on ballot papers when making their request for group registration.

These changes are supported by new savings provisions for ballot paper formality, updated registration requirements for Legislative Council how-to-vote cards (HTVCs), and modified voting instructions included on Legislative Council region election ballot papers.

Electoral material

There are new rules to regulate which kinds of electoral material need to be authorised.

The requirement for electoral material to include printer details has been removed, with the exception of how-to-vote cards (HTVCs) (registered, unregistered, printed and electronic).

Early voting period

Early voting cannot start earlier than 10 days before election day.

For the 2026 State election, early voting cannot start earlier than Wednesday 18 November 2026.

Candidate journey

Before you nominate

1.1 Eligibility to nominate



Prepare nomination form

1.2 How to nominate



Finalise nomination

1.2 How to nominate



Register a group on the ballot paper

1.6 Group registration



Ballot draw

1.7 Ballot draw and the ballot paper



Check electoral material rules

3. Electoral material and authorisation



Prepare how-to-vote cards

4. How-to-vote cards



Appoint scrutineers

6.4 Scrutineers



Result declared

6.3 Counting the votes

1. Nominating as a candidate

This chapter explains the eligibility requirements all state election candidates must meet and has information on how to nominate, including, if you are an independent candidate, how to prepare your *Nomination form* using Candidate Helper.

Eligibility	Nomination forms	Nominators and endorsement
Check you are eligible to stand as a candidate by consulting the rules and using the VEC's 'check my enrolment' to confirm your details are correct on the roll.	Create your <i>Nomination form</i> by entering your details into Candidate Helper (independent candidates) or providing them to your registered political party to populate using the VEC's endorsed nominations tool (endorsed candidates).	Print your form and collect the details of at least 50 nominators on Part 1 of the <i>Nomination form</i> (independent candidates) or receive your pre-completed <i>Nomination form</i> from your registered political party, confirm your details are correct and sign the declaration on Part 2 of the form (endorsed candidates).
Deposit	Nomination appointment	Nomination
Organise your \$350 deposit by cash or bank cheque. Registered political parties may do this on behalf of endorsed candidates.	Make an appointment to nominate (independent candidates). Registered officers of registered political parties must make an appointment to nominate in bulk.	Lodge your <i>Nomination form</i> and pay your deposit at the election office (independent candidates) or VEC head office (registered political party registered officers on behalf of endorsed candidates).

1.1 Eligibility to nominate

Please read sections 44 to 61A of the *Constitution Act 1975* (Vic) for more detail on candidate eligibility. We strongly encourage you to do this before completing your *Nomination form*. It is your responsibility to make sure you are qualified to be a candidate. Seek legal advice if you are unsure.

Qualifications

You are eligible to nominate as a candidate if, at the close of rolls, you are:

- a Victorian resident
- enrolled to vote in Victoria
- not disqualified from being a member of Parliament (see **Disqualifications**).

British subjects who were on an Australian electoral roll between 26 October 1983 and 26 January 1984 are also eligible to nominate.

Independent candidates are also required to demonstrate that they have the support of 50 people enrolled in the region in which they are nominating. For more information, see **How to nominate for independent candidates** later in this chapter.

You are strongly encouraged to check your enrolment and ensure your details are up to date by visiting vec.vic.gov.au/enrolment. You need to provide your enrolled address when completing your *Nomination form* so it must be up to date.

Enrolment conditions

To nominate for a state election, you must be enrolled to vote in Victoria.

Make sure your enrolment details are up to date before you begin the nomination process. You must be correctly enrolled before the close of roll. Late enrolment changes cannot be accepted.

You must enrol to vote if you:

- are an Australian citizen
- are 18 years or older, and
- have lived in Victoria for longer than a month.

To enrol, check or update your enrolment, visit the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au/enrolment

Disqualifications

You cannot nominate as a state election candidate or be elected to the Victorian Parliament if you:

- are not enrolled to vote in Victoria
- are a judge of a court of Victoria
- are a member of either House of Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
- are an undischarged bankrupt
- have been convicted or found guilty of an indictable offence:
 - which is punishable by imprisonment for life, or a term of 5 years or more, on first conviction
 - and
 - when you were 18 years or over
 - and
 - that was an offence under Victorian law or the law of any other part of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

If you hold an office of profit under the Crown, including if you are an employee in the Victorian Public Service or Australian Public Service, you can nominate as a candidate for election to state Parliament, but you will need to leave that office if you are elected.

If you are a local councillor, you can nominate as a candidate for election to state Parliament, but you will become ineligible to continue as a councillor if you are elected.

You cannot be elected to or sit as a member of both houses of Parliament simultaneously.

Multiple nominations

You cannot nominate as a candidate for more than one election that will be held on the same day. If this occurs, all your nominations as a candidate will be void and any deposits you paid to nominate will be forfeited.

1.2 How to nominate

How to nominate for party-endorsed candidates

If you are a candidate endorsed by a registered political party, the registered officer of the party will prepare your *Nomination form*. You must complete and sign the declaration. The registered officer will submit your nomination at VEC head office.

For the 2026 state election, nominations for party-endorsed candidates will open at **9 am on Wednesday 4 November 2026** and close at **12 noon on Monday 9 November 2026**, including appointments available on Saturday 7 November from 9 am to 1 pm.

Registered political parties must submit nominations for their endorsed candidates by appointment at VEC head office.

We provide an online endorsed nominations tool to assist registered political parties to prepare candidate nominations. A separate user guide for the endorsed nominations tool will be provided to registered political parties.

How to nominate for independent candidates

If you are nominating as an independent candidate, you must complete and lodge a *Nomination form*. You can prepare this:

- online using our Candidate Helper tool – this is the fastest and easiest way to complete your *Nomination form*
- by using a hard copy *Nomination form*.

You will need to make an appointment to nominate with a district election manager within the region you are nominating for. It is a good idea to make an appointment early in the nomination period to discuss any questions you have and ensure there is time to resolve any issues with your nomination or forms.

You can book your nomination appointment by calling the VEC's Candidate Services team on 03 8620 1316 before nominations open, or directly with the relevant election office from the first day of the nomination period. Phone numbers for election offices will be listed on the VEC website.

If you are unable to lodge your nomination in person, you should contact Candidate Services or a district election manager within your region to discuss other options. You may be able to authorise a person to lodge your nomination in person on your behalf or lodge your nomination by post. Any person you authorise should carry evidence containing your signature that you have authorised them to be your representative.

❗ Important: You cannot submit your *Nomination form* by email.

For the 2026 state election, nominations for independent candidates will open at **9 am on Wednesday 4 November 2026** and close at **12 noon on Monday 9 November 2026**, including appointments available on Saturday 7 November from 9 am to 1 pm.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your *Nomination form* is received by the election manager before the deadline. Late nominations cannot be accepted.

Candidate Helper

The online Candidate Helper tool guides independent candidates through completing each part of the *Nomination form*.

Candidate Helper will be available on the VEC website 2–3 weeks before the opening of nominations. You can save and make edits to your form in Candidate Helper – you do not need to complete it in one session.

When you have entered all your details you can save your information and generate a pre-completed *Nomination form* to print. You must print your *Nomination form* before your nomination appointment. You will not be able to use any printers at the election office.

Candidate Helper does not check your enrolment or verify your eligibility to nominate.

You can call the Candidate Services team on 03 8620 1316 if you need assistance using Candidate Helper.

1. Nominating as a candidate

Using Candidate Helper does not submit or approve your nomination. You must still attend an appointment with a district election manager within the region with your completed *Nomination form* and nomination deposit, unless you have authorised another person to attend the appointment or you are nominating by post.

Paper Nomination form

You can get a paper *Nomination form* in the *Candidate kit* from us before the nomination period begins. The *Candidate kit* can be downloaded from the VEC website, or you can contact the Candidate Services team on 03 8620 1316 to request a hard copy.

You can also pick up a hard copy *Candidate kit* from the election office after it opens on Tuesday 3 November 2026.

Forms completed by hand are entered into our Election Management System during your nomination appointment. Because of this there may be a significant wait time if you nominate with a hand-written form, especially on the final day of nominations.

Nominators

On Part 1 of your *Nomination form*, you must collect the full name, signature, enrolled address and date of birth of at least 50 people enrolled to vote in the region for which you are nominating.

You are encouraged to provide the signatures and details of more than 50 nominators in case any of your nominators cannot be found on the electoral roll during your nomination appointment.

Completing the *Nomination form* – all candidates

The *Nomination form* is made up of 2 parts. Part 1 is where you will collect the details of nominators to support your nomination or be endorsed by your registered political party. Part 2 is where you enter your personal details.

When you nominate you must provide:

- your silent elector status
- your date of birth as it appears on the electoral roll
- your full name as it appears on the electoral roll
- your enrolled residential address
- your postal address (if different to your residential address)
- your name as you wish for it to appear on the ballot paper (refer to **Candidate name on ballot paper** later in this chapter)
- your contact details (refer to **Contact information** later in this chapter)
- details of a public contact person on behalf of your campaign (refer to **Contact information** later in this chapter)
- details of a designated contact person for signage matters (refer to **Contact information** later in this chapter).

If you are a silent elector, you will still be required to provide your enrolled address on your *Nomination form*.

The *Nomination form* requires you to sign a declaration stating that you are qualified to be elected under the *Constitution Act 1975* (Vic).

For independent candidates, the election manager will give you an opportunity to confirm your nomination details have been correctly entered into our Election Management System before your nomination is finalised.

Penalties for incorrect nomination information

There are strict penalties for providing false or misleading information or submitting an unlawful nomination. See **Chapter 9. Election compliance** for detailed information on election offences.

Candidate name on ballot paper

On the *Nomination form*, you will confirm how your name will appear on the ballot paper. We may ask you to amend your ballot paper name if it does not meet the requirements, which may delay the processing of your nomination or your endorsed candidate's nomination.

You may use an acceptable alternative to your full given name that appears on the electoral roll. Acceptable alternatives include:

- your middle name or second given name
- initials standing for any of your given names
- a commonly accepted variation of your first name, including an abbreviation or an alternative form of that name. For example, Tom instead of Thomas, or Peg instead of Margaret
- a name you are commonly known by but is not your legal first name. For example, a middle name or an Anglicised first name. You must provide evidence with your *Nomination form* that confirms you are known by the name
 - Acceptable evidence may include, for example, a business card or ID card, work email address, news publication or utility bill.
 - Social media profiles or posts are not sufficient evidence to demonstrate that you are known by a different name.

If the evidence is not satisfactory, you may be required to use your enrolled name on the ballot paper.

If you have changed your family name (surname), we strongly encourage you to update your enrolment before the close of roll.

❗ Important: You may not vary your family name on the ballot paper from how it appears on the electoral roll.

1. Nominating as a candidate

Your name will appear on the ballot paper in the format:

FAMILY NAME, First name

or

FAMILY NAME, F. Name

or

FAMILY NAME, F. N.

When specifying how you want your name to appear on the ballot paper, you must:

- print your FAMILY NAME and any INITIALS in capitals (for example SMITH, T. E.)
- if the family name has any lower-case letters or special characters such as accents, please specify them clearly on the *Nomination form* (for example McALISTER, van LEW or GLASÉ)
- make sure any initials include a full stop with a space between each initial if there are more than one (for example T. E.)
- print your given names in title case (for example McALISTER, John P. or de FRIES, Joan Anne).

No affiliations or allegiances (for example ALP, Liberal, Australian Greens), titles (for example Dr., Prof.), professional memberships (for example FRACP, CPA, MIPAA), qualifications (for example PhD, MA, DipEd), or honours (for example AO, PSM, OBE) are allowed to appear as part of any candidate's name on the ballot paper.

For independent candidates, our Candidate Helper tool will help you format your name for your *Nomination form*. If your name needs a special character like an accent applied to a letter, you must inform the election manager during your nomination appointment.

Registered officers submitting *Nomination forms* to VEC head office staff should alert staff to candidates with accents in their ballot paper name and check this carefully during the quality assurance steps.

Contact information

Candidate contact details

All candidates, whether independent or party-endorsed, must provide an email address and at least one phone number for the VEC to contact you. We will use this to contact you regarding your nomination, provide candidate communications and election-related information, and to provide independent candidates with electoral roll data. See 2.1 **Entitlement to access enrolment information** for more information on electoral roll data access.

You should provide an email address and phone number that you will use even after the election has concluded.

These details will only be used for official purposes. They will not be made publicly available, but they will be passed on to the Department of Parliamentary Services, to contact you and arrange your onboarding requirements should you be elected.

Public contact details and recount contact details

If you will be nominating as an independent candidate, you must provide a name, email address and telephone number that will be published on the VEC website and accessible to the public. The contact person can be you, or you can provide the name and contact details of another person on behalf of your campaign. These details will also be displayed at the election office.

We will also use these details to notify you by email if we intend to conduct a recount in the election where you are a candidate.

Carefully check your public contact person details before your nomination appointment. If your public contact is not you, make sure you have permission to publish that person's details. If providing a work email address, make sure this is permitted by the relevant workplace. Once contact details are published on the VEC website it is not possible to make any changes.

For endorsed candidates, the registered officer of the registered political party must provide the details of a public contact person who can receive media and public enquiries. In the event of a recount in a district or region election, the VEC will formally notify the registered officer of each registered political party that has an endorsed candidate in the relevant election.

Designated contact person for electoral signage

If you are nominating as an independent candidate, you must provide the name, email address and telephone number for a contact person for the VEC to reach regarding enquiries or complaints about your electoral signage. This contact person must be available and ready to respond to issues during the busy periods of the election, including at short notice and outside business hours.

Each registered political party will be required to designate a person for enquiries or complaints about the electoral signs displayed by the party and its endorsed candidates. These details will be collected during the endorsed nomination process for registered political parties.

Nomination deposit

Each nomination must be accompanied by a nomination deposit of \$350. The nomination deposit must be paid in cash or bank cheque. The VEC cannot accept online or electronic payments, or money orders.

The nomination deposit will be refunded for candidates who:

- are elected
- receive at least 4% of the first preference votes in the region election
- are in a group that receives at least 4% of the first preference votes in the region election
- retire or are dis-endorsed before the close of nominations
- die before 6 pm on election day
- are candidates in a failed election.

In all other circumstances, nomination deposits are not refunded.

Lodging your nomination at the election office – independent candidates

When you arrive at the district election office for your appointment, a staff member will check that you have your completed *Nomination form* and have brought the nomination deposit with you.

The district election manager will check your *Nomination form* to ensure it is complete. If there are any issues with missing or incorrect information, the election manager will discuss this with you. You must initial any changes you make to your *Nomination form*.

The election manager will send Part 1 of your *Nomination form* to the VEC's head office. Head office staff will confirm the details of the nominators you provided against the electoral roll and advise the election manager once this is complete. This process can take some time depending on the number of nominations being processed from candidates across Victoria. Please be prepared to wait at the election office while these checks are performed.

When your 50 nominators have been confirmed, the election manager will lodge your *Nomination form* information in our Election Management System. You will have the opportunity to confirm that the information entered is correct.

Once your nomination is lodged at the election office, VEC head office staff will conduct further checks. If we identify an issue, the election manager will contact you to resolve it.

List of nominations on display

A summary of nominations will be displayed on the VEC website. This summary will be updated at the end of each business day during the nomination period and will include each candidate's ballot paper name, registered political party (if endorsed) and their public contact person's details.

1.3 Retirement or dis-endorsement of a candidate

If you have nominated and wish to retire, you may withdraw your nomination by lodging a notice of retirement with a district election manager within the region you have nominated at any time before the close of nominations (12 noon on Monday 9 November 2026).

If a registered political party wishes to dis-endorse a candidate, the party may withdraw the candidate's nomination by lodging a notice with the VEC at any time before the close of nominations. The party must notify the candidate in writing that they intend to dis-endorse the candidate and must provide confirmation that they have notified the candidate when lodging the notice with the VEC.

If a notice of retirement or withdrawal is received by the deadline, the nomination will be cancelled and the VEC will refund the nomination deposit.

After the close of nominations, there is no provision in the Act for an endorsed candidate to be dis-endorsed. The VEC cannot change a candidate's nomination details once nominations are finalised.

At the close of nominations, any candidates who have been successfully nominated are final and will appear on the ballot paper. The names of endorsed candidates will appear on the ballot paper with the registered name or abbreviation selected by the registered political party that endorsed them.

1.4 Death of a candidate

If a nominated candidate dies before the close of nominations, the nomination deadline is extended to the next day.

If a Legislative Council region election candidate dies between the close of nominations and 6 pm on election day (**Saturday 28 November**), or if a successful candidate dies after 6 pm on election day and before being declared elected, the election continues. A vote marked on the ballot paper for a deceased candidate will be counted to the next candidate in order of the voter's preference and the subsequent preference will be altered accordingly.

1.5 Uncontested elections

An uncontested election occurs if only five candidates have nominated for a region election by the close of nominations. If this occurs, the VEC will declare those candidates elected shortly after the close of nominations.

1.6 Group registration

Two or more candidates in a region election may request that their names be grouped together on the ballot paper. A group can be:

- a group of candidates endorsed by a single registered political party
- a composite group of candidates endorsed by multiple registered political parties
- a group of independent candidates.

A request to register a group must specify the order in which the candidates in the group are to be printed below the line on the ballot paper.

How to request a group on the ballot paper

To form a group of candidates on the ballot paper you must submit a *Request for group registration* form to the VEC. This is available in the *Candidate kit* or on the VEC website.

❗ Important: Requests must be lodged with the VEC before 12 noon on Monday 9 November.

A group may amend, withdraw or replace its request up to the close of group registration on **12 noon on Monday 9 November**. The same candidate may not be included in more than one group.

All candidates wishing to be included in a group must first have completed the nomination process.

For independent candidates, the election manager will provide you with details on how to submit a group registration form to the VEC as part of your nomination appointment. The *Request for group registration* form must be signed by every candidate in the group. Any candidate included in the group may submit the form to a district election manager within the relevant region.

Groups of party-endorsed candidates

When registering a group, registered political parties can request that the registered name or abbreviation of the party be printed on the ballot paper above the line. The form of the party's name is specified by the party when filling in Part 1 of the *Nomination form*.

If multiple registered political parties wish to form a composite group, the registered officers of the relevant parties must submit a joint request. They may also request for a composite group name formed from the relevant parties' registered names or abbreviations to appear above the line on the ballot paper.

Where a group is registered by one (or more than one) registered political party (or parties) the registered logo of the party (or logos of each party) will appear above the line on the ballot paper. If a registered political party has not registered a logo, no logo will appear.

Political parties that are not registered on the VEC's Register of Political Parties are not entitled to have a party name, abbreviation or logo printed on ballot papers, no matter how the party is constituted.

Requests for Group Registration forms for endorsed candidates must be signed by the registered officer of the registered political party or the registered officer of each registered political party for a composite group.

We strongly encourage registered political parties to submit group registration forms as part of their nomination appointments at VEC head office.

1.7 Ballot draw and the ballot paper

Order of names on the ballot paper

Grouped candidates will appear on the ballot paper in the order specified in the request for group registration. The order of groups on the ballot paper (from left to right) and the order of ungrouped candidates are determined by a random computerised draw after nominations close.

Additional descriptions

If 2 or more candidates have similar names that are likely to cause confusion, we may include additional descriptions to distinguish them from one another.

The ballot draw

The randomness of the computerised draw has been independently audited. More information is available on the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au/candidates-and-parties/become-a-state-election-candidate

In rare cases, such as a technological outage, a manual draw may be necessary.

The ballot draw button will be pressed once to initiate the following ballot draws:

- First draw, to determine the order of groups (from left to right on the ballot paper)
- Second draw, to determine the order of ungrouped candidates.

An assigned district election manager within each region will conduct the ballot draw for each region at an election hub following the close of nominations.

Ballot draws are planned to take place at 4 pm on Monday 9 November 2026.

A ballot draw is a public event.

Ballot draws for each region will be conducted in the following election offices:

Region	District responsible for conducting the ballot draw for that region
Eastern Victoria	Morwell
North-Eastern Metropolitan	Ringwood
Northern Metropolitan	Melbourne
Northern Victoria	Shepparton
South-Eastern Metropolitan	Dandenong
Southern Metropolitan	Hawthorn
Western Metropolitan	St Albans
Western Victoria	Geelong

After the ballot draw, the VEC website will be updated to show the candidate names and groups listed in ballot paper order.

Format of ballot papers

The ballot paper for a Legislative Council region election directs voters to choose to vote either:

- above the line (by marking preferences for at least 5 groups)

or

- below the line (by marking preferences for at least 5 individual candidates).

Groups are printed first on the ballot paper followed by ungrouped candidates. Groups are printed from left to right along the ballot paper in the order they were drawn in the ballot draw for the region election. If there are 20 or more groups in a region election, ballot papers will be 'double depth', with two rows of group names above the line and two corresponding rows of candidates' names below the line.

A box will appear above the line for each group and a letter of the alphabet is assigned to each group. Voters' preferences for groups above the line are counted as if they are votes for candidates in those groups below the line, in the order that candidates appear on the ballot paper for each group preferred by the voter.

1. Nominating as a candidate

Directions		Ballot paper Sample Metropolitan Region Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council					
For your vote to count, you must vote in either one of the two ways described below. Either Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.	A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D
	☐  Sample group name 1		☐  Sample group name 2		☐  Sample group name 3		☐
Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.	A	B	C	D	Ungrouped		
	☐ CANDIDATE, One Sample group name 1 Suburb ☐ CANDIDATE, Two Sample group name 1 Suburb	☐ CANDIDATE, One Sample group name 2 Suburb ☐ CANDIDATE, Two Sample group name 2 Suburb	☐ CANDIDATE, One Sample group name 3 Suburb ☐ CANDIDATE, Two Sample group name 3 Suburb	☐ CANDIDATE, One Suburb ☐ CANDIDATE, Two Suburb	☐ CANDIDATE, One Suburb ☐ CANDIDATE, Two Suburb		

Registered political party candidates **in a group** on the ballot paper

Independent candidates **in a group** on the ballot paper

These independent candidates are not in a group and are listed under the heading 'ungrouped' on the ballot paper

Locality name

The suburb or locality for which candidates are enrolled on the electoral roll will also be printed under the corresponding candidate's name on the ballot paper.

2. Enrolment information for candidates

This chapter explains how to access the electoral roll and the rules governing your management of this data.

2.1 Entitlement to access enrolment information

Independent candidates are entitled to receive a copy of the electoral roll for the Legislative Council region election you have nominated in after your nomination has been accepted.

Registered officers for registered political parties are entitled to receive a file containing a copy of the electoral roll for every Legislative Assembly district election. Registered political parties receive data files year-round as part of an agreed schedule of roll products.

To receive a copy of the electoral roll, independent candidates and registered officers of registered political parties will need to complete a request form. The electoral roll will be made available via our secure data exchange portal (see **2.3 Accessing the electoral roll**) as 11 separate district files which make up the Legislative Council region.

Electoral roll data files contain the name and postal address of electors entitled to vote in the election for the relevant electorate(s). The files will not contain contact details of electors, the enrolled addresses of itinerant electors or overseas electors, or any details relating to silent electors.

2.2 Using the electoral roll

We take our custodianship of the enrolment information of Victorians very seriously. As a candidate you must treat the enrolment data provided to you with the greatest care as it contains electors' personal information. Enrolment data may only be used for purposes related to your election campaign for the election for which it was provided and must not be shared, retained or distributed with any person for any other purpose.

Strict penalties apply for the misuse of enrolment information, which could also jeopardise public trust in the election process. We also have obligations to protect electors' information.

Some of the permitted uses of enrolment information are:

- to send voters electoral material
- for door-knocking campaigns
- to provide a mail house with the details of electors so that it may directly mail out your campaign material. If the mail house misuses the information, you will be responsible.

2.3 Accessing the electoral roll

We use a secure data exchange portal called DEx (dex.vec.vic.gov.au) to provide enrolment information to registered political parties and independent candidates.

Electoral roll products will be uploaded to DEx as soon as possible after the close of nominations. Registered political parties and independent candidates who have requested roll products will receive an email notification when the roll products are available.

Candidates can request the electoral roll by submitting a *Request for Electoral Roll Access and Confidentiality Agreement* form which will be provided via a Candidate Bulletin after the close of nominations. Roll Data will be provided as a single data file in comma-separated values (CSV) format, which can be opened in spreadsheet and database programs, such as Microsoft Excel. Please note that we do not provide technical support for using electoral roll data, however email support can be provided should you not be able to access or download the file.

2.3.1 Secure use and destruction of the electoral roll

Independent candidates, registered political parties and their endorsed candidates are only permitted to use the roll data in connection with an election or monitoring the accuracy of information contained on the electoral roll.

As misuse of electoral roll data is a serious offence, you are strongly encouraged to promptly delete roll data once the election is over. Candidates will receive a reminder email, and it is recommended that you acknowledge this communication by advising that the roll data has been securely deleted.

3. Electoral material and authorisation

The chapter explains what electoral material is and how to ensure it is properly authorised in accordance with legislative requirements.

3.1 Electoral material

There are three categories of 'electoral material' that require authorisation:

- paid advertisements containing electoral matter
- printed material containing electoral matter, including a leaflet, flyer, pamphlet, notice or poster
- electoral material produced by or on behalf of registered political parties, candidates, groups, elected members, associated entities, third-party campaigners and donors, even if it is not paid or printed.

Electoral matter is any content that is intended, or likely, to influence how someone votes in an election.

Content will also be electoral matter if it mentions:

- an election
- current and former members of Parliament, including as government and opposition members
- a political party
- a candidate
- an issue put to voters at the election.

To decide whether material is intended or likely to affect the way someone votes, we may look at when it is published and what it is about.

As a candidate, all materials you produce need to be authorised, except for exempt items (see **3.5 Material that does not need to be authorised**).

Electoral material can take many forms, including:

- a pamphlet, flyer, handbill or notice
- a billboard, poster or sign
- any paid or unpaid print, digital or online advertisement
- a social media post or profile
- a website
- some electronic communications, such as email or SMS.

Material made expressly for academic, artistic, educational or satirical purposes that is not intended or likely to affect voting in an election is not regulated by the VEC.

3.2 Why authorisation matters

Authorisation requirements apply to everyone – not just candidates, registered political parties and members of Parliament. They exist to:

- enhance electoral transparency and trust by helping the public to know the origins of electoral material
- allow someone to decide for themselves how much they value or trust the electoral material.

To authorise something is to include a name and address somewhere visible on the electoral material – that's what forms the 'authorisation statement'.

How-to-vote cards must also include the printer's name and place of business.

It doesn't matter if there is an election happening or not, electoral material must always be authorised.

The penalty for failing to authorise electoral material is 10 penalty units for an individual and 50 penalty units for a body corporate.

3.3 Who authorises electoral material

The person responsible for printing, publishing or distributing the electoral material is responsible for authorising the material.

A person 'printing, publishing or distributing' electoral material (or responsible for doing so) includes if they:

- cause electoral material to appear on an electronic billboard, electric road sign or other similar device; or
- post electoral material on a website or social media platform accessible by the public or a section of the public; or
- send electoral material to a group (or groups) of strangers by electronic transmission, such as an email, text message, messaging or social media.

3.4 How to authorise electoral material

Electoral material must include the name and address of the person who authorised the material. This person can be a natural person, or a body politic or body corporate (e.g. a registered political party, company or organisation).

For how-to-vote cards (HTVCs), the name and place of the business of the printer must also appear.

In the case of electoral material that is published or distributed online, the authorisation statement must be easily located. For example, a website may contain an authorisation statement as a footer or on an 'About' page, or posts on social media can be authorised by a post pinned to the top of the person's social media feed or appearing on the 'About' section of the author or author's page. Posts can also link to a website which has an authorisation statement.

Names in authorisation statements

The full or registered name of the person, body politic or body corporate who authorised the electoral material is required. A person, body politic or body corporate may use a name they are generally known by, provided they can be easily identified by the public, unless they are a registered political party (**see below**).

An abbreviated name or alias, account name, username or social media handle is not a name, unless it is clearly attributable to the full name of a person. An initial and last name is accepted as clearly attributable to the full name of a person.

You cannot use a position name or job title as an authorisation name.

A registered political party's name is the registered name or abbreviation published on the Register of Political Parties on the VEC website.

Addresses in authorisation statements

The geographical address of the person or organisation (typically a street address and suburb) should be visible in the authorisation statement.

While the address should be the person's usual address, it does not need to be a residential address. It can include the address of an office, such as a company or business address, or the address of an election campaign office.

For example:

John Citizen, 1 Democracy Way, Melbourne, Victoria.

Democracy Matters Corporation, Level 2, 100 Voters Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

A post office box is not acceptable as an address in an authorisation statement. An address in an authorisation statement cannot be an email address, domain name, URL or similar.

The person authorising the material needs to have more than sporadic or ad hoc access to the address, and the address must not be for a vacant parcel of land at the time of the authorisation.

Printer details for how-to-vote cards

In some cases, the printer and authoriser of some HTVCs may be the same person. In this case, the statement may be written as:

Authorised and printed by John Citizen, 1 Democracy Way, Melbourne, Victoria

For a printer who is not also the authoriser, the geographical place of business must be provided in the authorisation statement.

If a person prints out a HTVC that was published online in order to distribute it, that person is the printer.

Authorisation in languages other than English

An authorisation statement must be in accordance with the following language requirements:

- if the material is only in English, the authorisation statement must be in English

3. Electoral material and authorisation

- if the material is in a language other than English, the authorisation statement must be in English and the language used in the material
- if the material is in 2 or more languages, the authorisation statement must be in English and all other languages used in the material.

Social media, blogs and emails

Any electoral material published on social media must comply with the requirements of the Act. It must also meet the terms and conditions of the platform it is published on. All electoral material posted to social media (such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), blogs, websites and other social media sites) must carry or directly link to an authorisation statement.

Electronic mailing list communications sent by email or SMS must also either contain an authorisation statement or link to another source such as a website with an authorisation statement.

Messages sent through social media that defame, threaten or harass another person are against the law, and any messages of a threatening nature may be referred to Victoria Police. Significant penalties apply, including prosecution and imprisonment, for any person convicted of threatening or harassing another person.

Leaflets and direct mail

Leaflets, flyers and other forms of unaddressed mail delivered to households or handed out in public locations must be authorised if they are electoral material.

Australia Post has previously advised that electoral material is permitted in mail that is exempt from letterboxes marked 'No Junk Mail'. You should be aware of all Australia Post rules about handling and delivering unaddressed direct mail.

Contact Australia Post at auspost.com.au or 13 76 78 for more information.

3.5 Material that does not need to be authorised

Certain materials are exempt from authorisation requirements. These include:

- car stickers, clothing, lapel buttons and badges, fridge magnets, pens, pencils or balloons
- letters or cards which bear the name and address of the sender, provided they don't include a representation of a ballot paper for an election
- opinion polls or other research relating to voting intentions at an election
- communications for personal purposes
- internal communications of an entity
- communications at a meeting, provided the identity of the person communicating and the entity on whose behalf they are communicating is apparent to the meeting attendees. This includes meetings broadcast live, but not any later communication of that meeting
- communications solely for the purpose of announcing a meeting.

If in doubt, authorise

If you are unsure if your content or material needs to be authorised, you are encouraged to seek independent advice. Our general advice is when in doubt, authorise.

3.6 Electoral material during the relevant period

The Act defines the 'relevant period' as the time that starts on the day a writ is issued for the election and ends at 6 pm on election day. For the 2026 state election it will run from **Tuesday 3 November to 6 pm on Saturday 28 November 2026**.

During the relevant period, all articles, reports, or letters containing electoral matter which are printed, published, or distributed in a newspaper, circular or pamphlet must include the name and address of the author at the end. As with other authorisation requirements, an address does not include a post office box.

However, letters in a newspaper must simply include the author's name and the suburb or locality in which the author's address is located.

The identification requirement does not apply to a newspaper leading article or an article that is solely a report of a meeting.

A penalty of 5 penalty units for a natural person and 25 units for a body corporate applies.

3.7 Misleading or deceptive material

During the relevant period, it is an offence to print, publish, distribute, or allow or authorise to be printed, published or distributed electoral material that is misleading or deceptive, being:

- any matter or thing that the person knows or should reasonably be expected to know is likely to mislead or deceive a voter in relation to the casting of their vote
- an electoral advertisement, handbill, pamphlet or notice that contains a representation or purported representation of a ballot paper that is likely to induce a voter to vote other than in accordance with the directions on the ballot paper.

The terms 'misleading' and 'deceptive' in this context have been narrowly defined by the courts. They refer to the effect and understanding of a voter's vote rather than influencing how the voter decides who to vote for.

For example, the statement 'A vote for Candidate X is really a vote for Party Y' could influence how the voter understands the effect of their vote. This would be misleading or deceptive if it is untrue.

A statement like 'Candidate X is lying about living in this region for 20 years' would not be thought of as misleading or deceptive even if it is untrue. This is because while it may influence who a voter decides to vote for, it would not influence what they understand the effect of casting their vote will be.

3. Electoral material and authorisation

Examples of ballot paper representations likely to induce a voter to vote other than in accordance with the directions on the ballot paper include:

- giving misleading or incomplete instructions for how to correctly complete the ballot paper
- telling voters to tick boxes or indicate their preferences using letters of the alphabet
- leaving boxes on a representation of a Legislative Assembly district election ballot paper blank without clearly stating that voters should number every box.

This includes HTVCs which, if followed by a voter, would lead the voter to cast an informal vote. For more information, see **4.4 Requirements for how-to-vote card registration**.

If you are unsure, seek independent legal advice.

A penalty of 60 penalty units or 6 months imprisonment for a person and 300 penalty units for a corporation applies.

3.8 Other laws

Candidates should be aware that they have rights and responsibilities under other laws beyond those outlined in this handbook.

❗ Important: Candidates must not defame, threaten or harass any person.

Television and radio broadcasts

All electoral material broadcast on radio or television (including election advertisements) must comply with the requirements set out in Schedule 2 of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* (Cth). We are not able to give advice regarding the operation of Commonwealth legislation.

Please contact the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) if you have any questions about this legislation:

Post

PO Box 13112
Law Courts
Melbourne VIC 8010

Phone

1300 850 115

Email

info@acma.gov.au

Online

acma.gov.au/contact-us

Posters and billboards

All posters and billboards which are electoral material must be authorised.

If you plan on producing, distributing and displaying posters and billboards you should check with:

- the owner and, if relevant, resident of any private property or business where you want to display the poster or billboard
- the relevant local council about any local laws that may apply to the display of electoral material (including rules around public and private property)
- VicRoads for regulations that apply to the display of electoral material on and alongside freeways, highways and major road corridors
- Transport Victoria about the display of electoral material at public transport locations (buses, bus stops, trains, train stations, trams and tram stops)
- the Department of Education in relation to the display of electoral material on government-owned schools.

There are also restrictions on who can exhibit signs in relation to an election within 100 metres of the designated entrance of a voting centre, including early voting centres, mobile voting centres and election day voting centres. Candidates and registered political parties who are entitled to exhibit election signs are limited to the number and size of the signs that may be displayed. For more information, see **10.3 Conduct near voting centres** in the *Campaigner handbook*.

Local laws and public land

Candidates should check with the relevant local authority (for example, the local council, Department of Transport and Planning) to see if there are any laws on the distribution and display of electoral material in public spaces, on public land or alongside highways or road corridors.

This includes holding events or campaigning in public spaces such as parks or shopping centres.

4. How-to-vote cards

This chapter outlines the rules for registering and distributing how-to-vote cards (HTVCs).

A HTVC is any card, handbill, pamphlet or notice that:

- includes a representation of a ballot paper, including partial or purported partial representations of a ballot paper
- or
- lists the names of any or all the candidates for an election with a number indicating an order of voting preference against the names of any or all those candidates.

4.1 Distributing how-to-vote cards

HTVCs at election day voting centres

Registered HTVCs are the only form of printed electoral material that can be distributed within 400 metres of a voting centre on election day.

A penalty of 60 penalty units or 6 months imprisonment applies.

This restriction does not apply to signs, bunting and similar material that are attached to a structure or vehicle, material in campaign offices, or the normal distribution of newspapers.

On election day, an election manager or election official can ask a person they reasonably suspect to be distributing unregistered HTVCs to produce their HTVCs for inspection and hand over all unregistered cards. Failure to comply with this request is an offence.

A penalty of 10 penalty units applies.

Refer to **Chapter 9. Election compliance** for more information.

HTVCs at early voting centres

HTVCs distributed at early voting centres do not need to be registered. However, they must contain the name and street address of the person authorising the card and the name and place of business of the printer.

The penalty for failing to authorise electoral material is 10 penalty units for an individual and 50 penalty units for a body corporate.

HTVCs that are not registered must not contain the endorsement 'Registered by the Victorian Electoral Commission'.

HTVCs at mobile voting centres (including low-sensory voting)

If you would like your HTVC to be made available to voters by mobile voting teams at mobile voting centres, you must have it registered with the VEC and provide printed copies of the registered HTVC to the relevant election managers to supply to mobile voting teams.

When supplied, the election manager will enclose the registered HTVCs in folders for the mobile voting teams in the same order as candidates or group names appear on the ballot paper. Mobile voting teams will advise voters that they can view the folder of HTVCs.

If your HTVC is registered before mobile voting starts but you do not provide printed copies to the relevant election managers, the election managers will print a black-and-white version to include in the folders carried by mobile voting teams.

Low-sensory mobile voting centres will also have a poster with a QR code that directs voters to registered HTVCs on the VEC website.

4.2 Types of registered how-to-vote cards

Single HTVC

A single HTVC is one that relates to only one electoral district or region election. Any person or group may submit a single how-to-vote card, including candidates, registered political parties, interest groups and individuals.

Combined HTVC

Registered political parties may submit a combined HTVC for registration. A combined HTVC is submitted for one or more electoral district and/or region election for which the registered political party has endorsed a candidate.

Multiple HTVC

Registered political parties may submit a multiple HTVC for registration. A multiple HTVC is submitted for no less than every electoral district and/or region election for which the registered political party has endorsed a candidate.

4.3 How-to-vote card registration process

Any person, including independent candidates, may lodge a single HTVC for registration with the election manager for the electoral district or region the card relates to.

Registered political parties must lodge HTVCs with the VEC head office for registration. We will give registered political parties information on how to submit the digital and hard copy versions of their HTVCs in their briefing and in writing.

You can submit your applications to register a HTVC from **9 am Tuesday 10 November to 12 noon on Friday 20 November**.

Once a HTVC application is submitted, we will advise the applicant of the outcome by 12 noon the next day:

- if a HTVC meets the criteria for registration, it will be published on the VEC website
- if a HTVC does not meet the criteria for registration, it will be refused and we will notify the applicant in writing and by phone, giving reasons for refusal. A refused HTVC can be corrected and re-submitted using a new HTVC application, including a new declaration.

4. How-to-vote cards

This handbook contains a 'How-to-vote card checklist' in **Appendix 1** and example HTVCs in **Appendix 2**. Check each item on the checklist as it applies to your HTVC, paying attention to the spelling of candidate and registered political party names. The election manager and VEC head office will also check each item when you submit the HTVC.

Be aware that we must process a high volume of HTVC applications during a general election, and each application must go through the full decision-making process to identify if it may be registered. This means it may take some time for a decision to be made, though we will always provide an outcome before 12 noon on the day after you submitted your application.

HTVC registration steps

1. Make sure your HTVC complies with the rules (see **4.4 Requirements for how-to-vote card registration**).
2. Prepare a digital (PDF) and 2 hard (paper) copies.
3. Check your HTVC carefully – simple errors like misspelling candidate or registered political party names or giving voting instructions that would lead to an informal vote will cause your HTVC to be refused registration.
4. Submit your HTVC and declaration form(s). Independent candidates and applicants other than registered political parties will submit their HTVC to the district election manager for the relevant district election, or a district election manager within the relevant region for a region election. Registered political parties will submit HTVCs by appointment at the VEC head office.
5. Await application outcome – we will notify you directly by 12 noon on the day after your application was submitted if your application is refused.
6. If your HTVC is approved for registration it will be made available on the VEC website and can be distributed outside voting centres on election day. You can provide printed copies to the relevant district election manager(s) to use at mobile voting centres.
7. If your HTVC is refused registration, you will receive advice about any defects. You can submit a new HTVC application for registration with a corrected version of your HTVC before applications close.

HTVC format

Your HTVC must be submitted in PDF in a finalised 'print ready' format. You must not introduce any changes during the formatting and printing process. You must also provide 2 hard copies of the card in its finalised format at the time you lodge your application.

HTVC endorsement

Registered HTVCs must include the following endorsement in the footer of at least one printed side of the card:

*Authorised by [name and street address of authoriser, not a PO Box]
Printed by [name and place of business]
Registered by the Victorian Electoral Commission*

HTVCs in multiple languages or languages other than English

If your HTVC contains multiple languages, the authorisation statement must appear in all languages represented on the HTVC. HTVCs must contain authorisation statements in English, even if the HTVC is not written in English. For example, a HTVC written in Mandarin and Arabic must contain authorisation statements in Mandarin, Arabic and English.

❗ Important: If your HTVC includes any language other than English, it must be submitted with an accurate translation of that section, including a signed declaration that the translation is fair.

When to print your HTVCs

A HTVC that includes the registration endorsement must not be distributed until we confirm it is approved for registration. We strongly recommend that you do not bulk print HTVCs with the endorsement statement until your HTVC has been successfully registered.

The HTVC declaration form

You must include a completed *How-to-vote card declaration* form with each HTVC application. This form is included in the *Candidate kit* and is also available on the VEC website. A separate declaration is required for *each* application to register a HTVC.

Registered political parties submitting combined and/or multiple HTVCs must also include a *HTVC declaration* form for each application.

4.4 Requirements for how-to-vote card registration

For a HTVC containing region election voting instructions to be approved for registration:

- it must clearly identify the person, registered political party, organisation or group it will be distributed on behalf of
- it must contain:
 - an order of voting preference for voters voting above the line
 - or
 - an order of voting preference for voters voting below the line
 - or
 - a statement that voters must:
 - number from 1 to at least 5 in their preferred order for groups above the line
 - or
 - number from 1 to at least 5 in their preferred order for candidates below the line.
- any logos, emblems or insignia belonging to the person, registered political party, organisation or group submitting the HTVC must be at least 4 square centimetres (4cm²). Remember this if you print a card at a smaller size to when it was registered

4. How-to-vote cards

- it must contain the name and street address (not a post office box) of the person authorising the card and the name and place of business of the printer
- it must contain the endorsement 'Registered by the Victorian Electoral Commission'. This endorsement must not appear on unregistered HTVCs
- any representation of a ballot paper must contain the correct spelling of any listed candidate names, registered political party names, and district and/or region electorate names
- any representation of a ballot paper must list candidates in correct ballot paper order
- it must not deceive or mislead an elector about how to vote, or be likely to cause a voter to cast an invalid vote
- it must not contain offensive or obscene material.

Refer to **Appendix 1: How-to-vote card checklist – Region HTVC** as your guide to ensure that your HTVC meets the requirements for registration.

Use of photographs and quotes on HTVCs

We strongly advise you to gain permission from the people or organisations concerned if your HTVC includes:

- photographs of people other than the candidate
- photographs that clearly identify members of a particular organisation
- quotes from people other than the applicant.

There have been instances where people or organisations have objected to the use of photographs or quotes on HTVCs without their permission, as this may suggest that the person or organisation supports a particular candidate. While the use of such material would not usually prevent HTVC registration, we recommend that you seek permission where relevant to avoid time-consuming disputes, including possible civil action.

The VEC is not responsible for advising you on the use of potentially contentious photographs or quotes and has limited authority to regulate their use, except where the material is offensive or obscene or likely to mislead or deceive an elector in casting their vote.

4.5 Decision on how-to-vote card applications

We will inform you before 12 noon on the day after receiving your application for registration if your application must be refused because it does not meet the requirements for registration. We will explain the reason for the refusal.

If your HTVC is approved for registration, it will be published on the VEC website before 12 noon on the day after receiving the application.

Last day submissions

We recommend you submit application(s) to register HTVCs well before the deadline. If you submit your application on the final day for registration and it is refused, there may not be sufficient time for you to lodge a new application. As a result, you will not be able to distribute the HTVC within 400 metres of voting centres on election day and your HTVC will not appear on the VEC website.

Review of HTVC decision

Any person may apply to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) for a review of our decision to register or refusal to register a HTVC. The application to VCAT must be lodged no later than 12 noon on the next working day after we have advised the applicant of that decision. VCAT must make a decision before 5 pm on the next working day after receiving the application.

Inspection of registered HTVCs

As soon as possible after registration, registered HTVCs will be published on the VEC website. Any person has the right to inspect a registered HTVC card at the VEC's head office once it has been registered. Registered HTVCs will also be made available for inspection at the relevant election office as soon as possible.

Correcting errors on registered HTVCs

If you need to correct an error on your HTVC, you must submit an amended version to us for registration no later than **12 noon on Monday 23 November**.

Before 12 noon on the next day after receiving the amended card, we will inform you that we are either:

- registering the amended HTVC
- or
- refusing to register the amended HTVC.

Printing more than one registered HTVC on a leaflet

If you have separately registered single HTVCs for a district and region election, or if you wish to distribute your HTVC at a joint voting centre, you may choose to print more than one registered single HTVC on the same leaflet.

More than one single registered HTVC may be printed on the same leaflet. In these cases, each single registered HTVC must be reproduced exactly as it was registered and must include its own authorisation and registration statements. No changes may be made to the registered single HTVCs, and no additional material may be introduced.

This process is not to be confused with the combined HTVCs application process available only to registered political parties.

HTVC Registration Process

Read the rules

Make sure your HTVC complies with the rules (**see 4.4 Requirements for how-to-vote card registration**).



Prepare your HTVC

Prepare a digital (PDF) copy and two final print-ready hard (paper) copies, along with a completed declaration form for each HTVC you wish to register.



Check your HTVC carefully

Simple errors like misspelling candidate or registered political party names or giving voting instructions that would lead to an informal vote will cause your HTVC to be refused registration.



Independent candidates or others

Email your digital HTVCs to the relevant election manager and bring 2 hard copies of each HTVC to your appointment.

Submit your HTVC and declaration form to the election manager.

Registered political parties

Upload the digital HTVCs via DEx and bring 2 hard copies of each HTVC to your appointment.

Submit your HTVC and declaration forms by appointment at VEC head office.



Await your application outcome

The VEC will provide an outcome to your HTVC application by 12 noon on the day following your application.



Application refused

Your HTVC application has been refused as it does not meet the legislative requirements. You can submit a new HTVC application with a corrected version of your HTVC until the close of the HTVC period. The ground for refusal will be provided.

HTVC registered

Your HTVC is registered and will be made available on the VEC website.

You may now use your HTVC at voting centres on election day. You can provide printed copies to the relevant election manager for use at mobile and low-sensory voting centres

All decisions to register or reject a HTVC are reviewable by VCAT. Anyone impacted can request a review of the VEC's decision.

5. Postal voter data for candidates

5.1 Applying for a postal vote

Electors can apply for a postal vote online from Wednesday 4 November 2026. Postal vote applications are also available at Australia Post outlets from Wednesday 4 November, at district election offices or by calling the VEC on 131 832.

We must receive postal vote applications by **no later than 6 pm on Wednesday 25 November**.

❗ Important: It is an offence for a person other than the VEC to distribute postal vote applications.

5.2 Access to postal voter data

Independent candidates and registered political parties may request an electronic copy of the details of electors who have applied to vote by post. Details will be provided progressively over the postal voting period as applications to vote by post are received and accepted.

Independent candidates and registered political parties may also request an electronic copy of the details of any general postal voters registered as at the close of roll for the election. A general postal voter is an elector who is registered to automatically receive a postal vote for all elections. General postal voter details will be provided as soon as practicable after the close of rolls.

These will be provided via DEx at dex.vec.vic.gov.au. Independent candidates and registered officers (on behalf of their registered political party) must complete a *Postal vote application confidentiality agreement* form to access the data. By completing this agreement, you are agreeing that you take full personal responsibility for the confidentiality of the data. As part of the process, you will need to provide an email address to receive the data.

Once the agreement is completed, and when data is available, you will be sent an email containing instructions on how to create an account in DEx (if you do not already have one) and download electronic copies of the postal voting application details as they become available from the secure data exchange portal.

Both postal voting application details and general postal voter details will contain the name and address of voters. The information will not contain any silent electors or itinerant electors.

The information will comprise one comma separated file, in family name order within a district. This can be opened in Microsoft Excel.

❗ Important: You must not use the information provided for any purpose other than in connection with the election. You also must not disclose the information provided unless the disclosure is for a purpose in connection with the election.

The maximum penalty is 600 penalty units for a person. The maximum penalty is 3000 penalty units for a corporation.

Independent candidates

Independent candidates will receive the data for the 11 districts comprising the region where you are a candidate. The *Postal vote application confidentiality agreement* form must be signed by you; it cannot be signed by a representative on your behalf. Lodge this form with a district election manager within the region you have nominated in.

Registered political parties

Registered political parties can receive data for all electorates and can make this available to their endorsed candidates. Registered officers can lodge the *Postal vote application confidentiality agreement* form when they submit their nominations at VEC head office.

6. Election activities

This chapter outlines key activities that take place during state elections, from campaigning, to voting and election results. More information about how the VEC manages voting and counting is available on our website.

This chapter also explains the role of scrutineers in representing candidates' interests. It includes a table of those election activities which can be observed or challenged by scrutineers. Detailed information about these activities and scrutineers' obligations is available in the *Scrutineer handbook*.

6.1 Campaigning

You can campaign at any time, even before the official start of the election period. There are strict rules governing campaigning activities including:

- authorisation of electoral material (see **Chapter 3. Electoral material and authorisation**)
- distributing material outside voting centres
- voting centre signage limits.

Detailed information about campaigning is provided in the *Campaigner handbook*. Please ensure that you and your campaigners familiarise yourselves with the content before campaigning.

6.2 Receiving the votes

In a state election, electors can vote at any voting centre in Victoria on election day. Other ways electors can vote include:

- before election day at any early voting centre in Victoria, interstate, and some overseas locations
- before election day at a mobile voting centre, including low-sensory mobile voting centres
- by post
- by phone (if eligible).

Early voting

We establish early voting centres for electors who wish to vote in person in advance of election day. Any elector can vote at an early voting centre.

Some electorates will have joint early voting centres, for example if an early voting centre is close to a district boundary. Electors from each corresponding district can complete an in-district early vote at the joint early voting centre.

As a candidate, you may appoint scrutineers to view early voting activities. See the *Scrutineer handbook* for more information.

Early voting centres are scheduled to open from **Wednesday 18 November until 6 pm Friday 27 November for the 2026 state election**. Further details are available on the VEC website.

Mobile voting

Mobile voting centres are venues that a mobile voting team attends before election day to help people vote. A mobile voting team may move around a venue issuing early votes to patients and residents or create a temporary voting area within the venue.

Mobile voting is scheduled to begin on **Tuesday 17 November** for the 2026 State election.

As explained in **Chapter 4. How-to-vote cards**, you may provide printed copies of registered HTVCs to district election managers to be included in folders carried by mobile voting teams. Mobile voting teams will advise voters that they may view a folder of registered HTVCs.

The itinerary for mobile voting activities will be communicated to candidates and registered political parties once it is finalised.

You may appoint scrutineers to attend sites with the mobile voting team.

❗ Important: Scrutineers must not display election material or distribute HTVCs while accompanying the mobile team.

Campaigners are not allowed to canvass for votes or distribute election material – including HTVCs – within 6 metres (or a lesser distance, if reduced by the mobile voting centre manager) of the designated entrance to the voting centre while voting is in progress. Additional restrictions apply to the display of notices or signs within 100 metres of the designated entrance to the voting centre. Refer to the *Campaigner handbook* for more information about campaigning rules.

Election day voting

Voting takes place between 8 am and 6 pm at voting centres on election day.

Some electorates will have joint voting centres, for example if a voting centre is close to a district boundary. Electors from each corresponding district can complete an ordinary vote at the joint voting centre.

Details of all election day voting centres and operating hours will be available on the VEC website.

You will be provided with the estimated number of voters per voting centre to help you estimate how many HTVCs you will need. You may wish to supply more HTVCs at a joint voting centre.

As a candidate, you may appoint scrutineers to view election day voting activities. See the *Scrutineer handbook* for more information.

Postal voting

The VEC sends ballot packs to general postal voters and electors who have completed a postal vote application for the election.

Completed postal declaration envelopes must be in the mail before 6 pm (Victorian time) on election day. They can also be hand-delivered to early voting centres, mobile voting centres, election day voting centres or district election offices before the close of voting.

We will process all postal vote applications and returned postal vote declaration envelopes at our centralised activity site (CAS). Returned postal votes are also extracted, sorted and counted at the CAS.

As a candidate, you can appoint scrutineers to observe:

- the dispatching of postal ballot packs with Australia Post
- postal vote verification for returned postal vote declarations
- the opening and counting of postal votes.

For more details, see the *Scrutineer handbook*.

Telephone assisted voting

The VEC's telephone assisted voting service enables eligible electors to cast their vote by telephone. We establish a call centre to manage this voting process.

Telephone assisted voting will be available to the following groups and any other electors prescribed by the Regulations:

- electors who are blind or have low vision
- electors who have a motor impairment.

Details about the telephone assisted voting service will be available on the VEC website.

You may appoint scrutineers to view the operation of the VEC's telephone assisted voting centre. For more information, see the *Scrutineer handbook*.

Interstate and overseas voting

The VEC provides early voting services at interstate and overseas locations. We work closely with interstate electoral commissions and the Commonwealth Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to determine the early voting services provided.

Details of all interstate and overseas early voting locations will be available on the VEC website.

6.3 Counting the votes

After the final number of candidates in each district and region election is confirmed, the VEC will determine the requirements for counting activities. We will communicate the count activity schedule to you so you can inform your scrutineers.

The planned count schedule for region elections is included in **Appendix 3**. Please refer to the timeline for detailed information on the conduct of activities on and after election day.

Detailed information on how and where VEC counts votes is available in the *Scrutineer handbook* and the 2026 state election service plan.

6. Election activities

Candidates are not allowed to be present while votes are being counted. Scrutineers may represent your interests at counting activities. See **6.4 Scrutineers** and the *Scrutineer handbook* for more information on the rights and responsibilities of your scrutineers.

Adjournments

District election managers can adjourn the count of votes.

If counting is adjourned, the election manager will inform all election officials assisting and scrutineers that are present.

If the adjournment changes the timeframe for a particular count that was previously communicated to you, we will notify you of the time, location and additional details (such as the indicative number of election officials) for resuming the activity.

If counting is adjourned for any reason, all ballot material will be packed and securely stored.

Recounts

Recounts usually occur for a district or region election if the result of the election is extremely close. Recounts can only occur before the election result is declared.

In a recount, sealed parcels of ballot papers are opened, and each ballot paper is re-examined. A recount can be conducted on all ballot papers for an election (full recount) or only some of the ballot papers for an election (partial recount). The type of recount to be conducted for a district election is determined by the election manager and the VEC or, for a region election, by the VEC.

The VEC and/or election manager can do this at their own discretion, or at the written request of a candidate if the candidate has given reasons that are strong enough to support their request. A candidate can only request a recount following the completion of counting activities and up until declaration. Any requests received outside of this period will be refused.

For region elections, the VEC will consider several factors when deciding to conduct a recount, including:

- any close margins at critical points during the distribution of preferences
- any procedural or system errors or failures that may have interrupted or interfered with the counting process
- the accessibility of the counting process for scrutineers to properly perform their duties.

Where a decision is made to conduct a recount, the VEC must provide all candidates and specified contact persons with written notice a minimum of 4 hours before the recount starts.

The election official(s) overseeing a recount for a region election has the same powers as if the recount were the original count and may reverse any decision to admit or reject a ballot paper.

The election official(s) overseeing a recount for a region election can set any ballot paper aside for the Electoral Commissioner or Deputy Electoral Commissioner to rule on at the recount. A scrutineer can also request that any ballot paper be set aside if they disagree with the decision of the election official(s). The Electoral Commissioner

or Deputy Electoral Commissioner are only required to rule on ballot papers where the number of ballot papers reserved for decision could change the outcome of the election.

Candidates are not allowed to be present at a recount. You can appoint scrutineers to represent your interests at a recount. See **6.4 Scrutineers**.

Tied elections

When calculating the results for a region election, if 2 or more candidates have an equal number of votes on the final count or transfer, the result is determined by lot.

Elections where a candidate has died

If a candidate dies after the close of nominations and before or on election day, and the number of candidates remaining in the region election is greater than 5, voting and counting will continue as normal. During the calculation of the region election results, preferences marked by a voter for the deceased candidate will be moved to the next preferred candidate.

Declaration of the election

The declaration of results for each region election will take place at the CAS following the calculation of results.

Registered officers and region candidates will receive information through VEC head office on the date, time and location of the declaration relevant to their election. Each declaration of results is a public event that anyone can attend, including candidates, families and friends, local media and other interested parties.

Refer to the *Scrutineer handbook* for more information on declaration of results.

Disputed elections

The validity of any election can only be disputed by a petition to the Court of Disputed Returns.

Candidates, electors or the VEC can petition the Court of Disputed Returns. The petition must be filed with the Prothonotary of the Supreme Court of Victoria within 40 days after the return of the writ for the election.

If you are considering a petition to the Court of Disputed Returns, you should seek independent advice.

6.4 Scrutineers

Candidates are not permitted in election venues to observe election activities. Instead, candidates appoint scrutineers to observe these activities and represent their interests. Scrutineers are an important part of delivering a free and fair election. They contribute to integrity, fairness, transparency and public trust in the election.

The *Scrutineer handbook* is available on the VEC website and in the *Candidate kit*. The *Scrutineer handbook* outlines the rights, responsibilities and procedures associated with scrutineering at an election.

Further information about the activities that are observable and challengeable can also be found in the VEC's most recent determination on scrutineers, available at vec.vic.gov.au/about-us/legislation/determinations

❗ Important: Ensure that you and your scrutineers are familiar with the *Scrutineer handbook*.

Role of scrutineers

You can appoint scrutineers to observe and scrutinise certain election processes where election officials handle ballot papers or declaration envelopes. The Act prescribes that scrutineers can observe activities related to the issuing, counting and scrutiny of ballot material. The VEC allows scrutineers to observe several additional activities including those related to the handling and transfer of ballot material.

You may appoint scrutineers to observe activities for the specific district or region election you are contesting. You must appoint each scrutineer for each venue that you want them to attend to observe activities on your behalf. They must be separately appointed to represent any other candidate for other district or region elections.

A scrutineer's role varies between election activities. There are some activities that they can only observe and scrutinise, and some where they can also challenge decisions made by election officials.

Observable activities

The table below lists the activities that your scrutineers can observe at state elections and where a formal challenge can be made during these activities.

Activities that scrutineers can observe and scrutinise	Are formal challenges allowed?
Dispatching postal ballot packs	No
Exhibiting and sealing of ballot boxes	No
Issuing ballot papers by an ordinary issuing officer	No
Issuing declaration votes by a declaration issuing officer	No
Recording preferences by an election official aiding an elector who requires assistance to vote	Yes
Recording preferences by an election official aiding an elector who is using telephone assisted voting, excluding the registration of an elector to use telephone assisted voting	Yes
Receiving and admitting or rejecting declaration envelopes	No
Opening admitted declaration envelopes and extracting ballot papers	No
Opening and checking sealed ballot boxes or parcels of ballot papers	Yes
Extracting and sorting early and postal votes during the 'authorised period' within a 'restricted area' under section 110J of the Electoral Act	No

Activities that scrutineers can observe and scrutinise	Are formal challenges allowed?
Recording preferences by an election official who is transposing braille ballot paper preferences onto a standard ballot paper for counting	Yes
Exchanging ballot papers between district and/or region elections	No
Amalgamating ballot papers prior to a preference distribution	No
Preparing batches of ballot papers for data entry	No
Statistical counts for information purposes only, such as a two-candidate-preferred count (or three-candidate-preferred count) and two-party-preferred count	No
Counting, rechecking and distributing ballot papers, including checking ballot papers to determine formality	Yes
Counting and distributing ballot papers, including checking ballot papers to determine formality, during a recount	Yes

Scrutineer quotas

The number of scrutineers that can observe and scrutinise an election activity on behalf of each candidate is limited. This is known as the scrutineer quota. The quota varies depending on the activity and is usually based on the number of election officials that are engaged in the activity that is taking place.

Scrutineer quotas for prescribed activities are determined by the Act and the Regulations including issuing ballot papers at voting centres, extracting and sorting early and postal votes during the 'authorised period' in the 'restricted area', conducting preliminary scrutiny, and undertaking most counting activities.

Scrutineer quotas for additional activities that the VEC allows scrutineers to observe are determined by the VEC. Quotas for these activities will be determined based on relevant considerations including the size of the venue and the planned number of election officials. From time to time, the VEC or an election manager may place reasonable limits on the number of scrutineers for an additional activity in order to maintain fair access for scrutineers, to meet health and safety requirements or other lawful obligations.

Candidates will be notified of the details of the activities that their scrutineers can observe. Further information about how you will be notified is available in the *Scrutineer handbook*. For counting activities, this will include the expected number of election officials involved in the activity. This will provide you with an indication of how many scrutineers can attend to observe an activity on your behalf, based on the scrutineer quota for the activity.

Staffing numbers are indicative only and the VEC retains the discretion to change staffing levels as required. Where changes occur in the days prior to an activity commencing, we will advise you of this change. Where staffing numbers change on the day of the activity, this will be communicated to scrutineers at the venue if required.

❗ Important: it is your responsibility to share all activity details communicated to you with your scrutineers.

Your scrutineer may be asked to leave an activity if there are more scrutineers for you than is allowed. If this happens, the election manager or manager-in-charge will ask the impacted scrutineers to decide who will continue to observe the activity, and who will sign out. If the scrutineers cannot reach a decision, the last scrutineer to sign in will be asked to leave the activity.

Your scrutineers are expected to behave consistently with the obligations prescribed by law when observing election activities at your appointed venues, including behaving courteously and professionally towards election officials, and not behaving in ways that obstruct or delay activities. Any misconduct or failure to obey the lawful directions of an election official is an offence and may result in your scrutineer being removed from the venue. If your scrutineer is not following the conditions of entry, we will contact you and ask you to request that they leave the venue.

Appointment of scrutineers

To appoint a scrutineer, you must use the *Appointment and declaration of scrutineer* form to specify the scrutineer's name and address. This form is available in the *Candidate kit*, from the election office and on the VEC website.

You must complete section 1 of the form, and your scrutineer must bring the form with them when they observe any electoral activity.

Handwritten and digital signatures (including a scan of a handwritten signature) are acceptable on the *Appointment and declaration of scrutineer* form, however typed signatures are not accepted.

Election managers or election officials will ask to see this form when your scrutineer attends a venue for the first time and will not admit your scrutineer without a properly completed form.

❗ Important: Your scrutineer must not sign the declaration section of the form until they are in the presence of an election official.

Your scrutineers must present a new *Appointment and declaration of scrutineer* form for each venue they attend. However, if your scrutineer is visiting the same venue to represent you over several days, they can use the same form, but they will need to sign into the activity they are observing each time they attend and sign out when they leave. If they do not sign out, they will continue to count towards your quota for the remainder of the activity.

For the purposes of the Appointment and declaration of scrutineer form, the VEC's centralised activity site (CAS) is considered one venue. Scrutineers will not need multiple Appointment and declaration of scrutineer forms to visit different buildings at the CAS where the scrutineer is representing the same candidate.

If your scrutineer is observing mobile voting, they must have one form for each day as opposed to each venue.

7. Parliamentary induction for successful candidates

This chapter provides an overview of the induction procedures for successful candidates, including electoral office allocations by the Department of Parliamentary Services.

7.1 Recognition of successful candidates

Candidates (including returned Members of Parliament) will not be recognised by the Parliament of Victoria as a successful candidate for their electorate until the result has been formally declared by the VEC and communicated to the Clerk of the Legislative Council.

7.2 Service provision

Provision of services to Members of Parliament will not commence until the VEC has formally declared the election result.

To assist the coordination of onboarding activities, the Department of Parliamentary Services may make initial contact with candidates ahead of the VEC's declaration to provide further information and clarity about available services, process and timing in readiness for the declaration.

Following receipt of official advice, the Department of Parliamentary Services will provide successful candidates with information on scheduling time for a formal orientation program and beginning the process of allocating resources, including electorate office, motor vehicle and salary arrangements.

The VEC will provide the Department of Parliamentary Services with contact details for all candidates as provided on *Nomination forms* for this purpose. Personal information will be maintained by the parliamentary departments in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles as derived from the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and the Parliament of Victoria Privacy Policy.

7.3 Electorate office allocation

Following the declared result, Members of Parliament who retained their seats will continue to occupy their existing electorate office. Members who are not successfully returned at the state election will vacate their electorate office. This also applies to Members who have not re-contested at the state election.

Newly elected Members of the Legislative Council will be able to choose from the available vacated electorate offices within their region. The order in which new Members choose their electorate office will be based on the number of votes they received through proportional counting in the state election, using the following methodology:

- The first choice of a vacant electorate office is allocated to the newly elected Member who received the highest proportion of votes within their region election

7. Parliamentary induction for successful candidates

- The second choice of a vacant electorate office is allocated to the newly elected Member who received the second-highest proportion of votes within their region election
- The subsequent choices of vacant electorate offices continue until the newly elected Member with the smallest proportion of votes has been allocated the last remaining vacant electorate office.

Members will need to notify the Department of Parliamentary Services of their final selection of an available electorate office within 48 hours.

8. Candidate cybersecurity

Candidates in state elections may have access to sensitive personal information. Handling sensitive personal information, as well as participating in public affairs, can increase your exposure to cybersecurity threats. You and the members of your campaign team can help to safeguard information and support a secure environment while also protecting your own safety.

By staying vigilant and following recommended security practices, you will help ensure that sensitive personal information is protected.

8.1 Common cybersecurity threats

Phishing attacks

Cybercriminals may use deceptive emails or messages to try to obtain personal information. It is a good practice to verify the sender's identity using a separate communication channel, and to exercise caution with urgent or unexpected requests.

Malware and viruses

Malicious software can compromise or destroy your data. Consider downloading files only from trusted sources and keeping your antivirus software up to date to help reduce risk.

Social engineering

Attackers sometimes impersonate authority figures to gain access to sensitive information. When in doubt, verifying requests through an independent channel can help protect against these tactics.

8.2 Essential cybersecurity practices

Passwords, passkeys and authentication

Consider using strong, unique passwords for every account, and enabling multi-factor authentication wherever possible. This can help reduce the risk of unauthorised access.

Passkeys offer a secure, phishing-resistant way to access accounts by replacing traditional passwords with cryptographic keys stored on your device. When signing in, your device verifies your identity, often using biometrics or a PIN, without transmitting a password over the internet. To use passkeys safely, it's advisable to keep your operating system and browser updated, and use a reputable password manager to synchronise passkeys across devices.

Because passkeys are unique to each website or app, they are highly resistant to phishing and credential theft. If a device storing passkeys is lost or compromised, consider revoking access promptly and setting up new passkeys on your replacement device.

Device and software updates

Keep your devices and software updated. Installing updates promptly can help patch security vulnerabilities and reduce risk.

Safe data handling

Access sensitive or personal information only when necessary. Before sharing sensitive information, it's a good practice to confirm the recipient's identity and authority to access the information, and to use secure channels for transmitting sensitive data.

Physical security

Locking your computer when not using it (for example, by pressing 'Windows' + 'L') and storing physical copies of sensitive or personal information securely are simple steps that can help protect against unauthorised access.

8.3 Managing Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools safely

Why AI safety matters

AI tools introduce new risks related to data privacy, security and ethical use.

Online AI tools may use your query or prompt data to improve their information libraries. If your prompt contains sensitive or proprietary data such as electoral roll information, that information could potentially be accessible to other users.

This would breach electoral law. Be aware of the penalties for misusing electoral roll information. For more information, see **9.6 Offences for using electoral information**.

AI tool outputs can sometimes be inaccurate, so you should check and verify responses for factual accuracy before relying on them.

Key principles

- Human oversight: you should only use AI tools under the guidance of human supervisors to help ensure responsible use.
- Privacy and data protection warning: avoid sharing personal or sensitive information on public AI tools, as such platforms may not guarantee adequate privacy or security, leading to notifiable data breach or privacy incidents.
- Authorisation: only enter information into AI tools if the input has been formally authorised and the platform is verified as secure.
- Transparency: you should clearly disclose when AI is used in content generation or decision-making processes.
- Testing and validation: using thoroughly tested and reputable AI tools can help reduce risk and improve reliability.
- Accountability: assigning a specific individual or team to oversee AI activities may help ensure clear responsibility and effective governance.
- Supplier controls: check that third-party providers follow strong AI security procedures to help protect you and your campaign's data and systems.

Best practices

- Data security: encrypt data, maintain comprehensive provenance records, and implement robust secure storage solutions to help protect sensitive information.
- Warning: do not share sensitive information, such as enrolment information, on public AI tools.
- Secure deployment: deploying AI solutions within protected technology environments that have strong governance standards can help reduce risk and support responsible use.
- Compliance: follow relevant regulations, such as the Australian AI Ethics Principles, to help ensure ethical and lawful use of AI technologies.

8.4 Additional cybersecurity resources

For more information about cybersecurity, information protection and AI, you can check the following organisations:

- Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner: ovic.vic.gov.au
- Australian Cybersecurity Centre: cyber.gov.au
- Australia's AI Ethics Principles, Department of Industry, Science and Resources: industry.gov.au/publications/australias-ai-ethics-principles

9. Election compliance

To facilitate compliance, we urge candidates, party officials and campaigners to understand and comply by the rules and limits which apply to campaigning and distribution of electoral material. These are set out in the *Campaigner handbook*.

This chapter outlines reporting and escalation pathways and introduces and explains the role of field compliance officers.

It also describes the offences that exist for state elections as well as activities that occur after the election.

9.1 Reporting and escalating

Candidates and campaigners should refer to the *Campaigner handbook* for information on raising concerns or issues as well as the escalation pathways from the field through to head office or other actions.

Note that campaigners can also raise concerns directly with their candidate, campaign organiser or party and be guided by their advice.

❗ Important: The VEC is not in a position to regulate candidate or campaigner behaviour outside of the scope of the Act.

Field compliance officers

For the 2026 state election, we will have field compliance officers in every hub, to deploy to a specific venue in response to allegations of non-compliance or to remind participants of their responsibilities.

Field compliance officers have specialist training to triage and manage serious incidents, poor behaviour and other possible electoral offences that occur during elections. They are also equipped to assist election staff and in scrutineer management, including in regional areas.

9.2 Offences for electoral material

The value of a penalty unit is set annually by the Treasurer and indexed on 1 July each year. For information on penalty units see the Department of Justice and Community Safety Victoria at justice.vic.gov.au/justice-system/fines-and-penalties/penalties-and-values

Refer to the Act and the Regulations for more information about electoral offences. We encourage you to seek independent legal advice if you are concerned about any of these offences.

The following list of offences is not exhaustive and should not be taken as legal advice.

Failing to authorise electoral material and how-to-vote cards

It is an offence to print, publish or distribute electoral material (or to cause, permit or authorise this) unless the name and address of the person who authorised the electoral material appears. This is set out in section 83(1) of the Act.

It is also an offence to print, publish or distribute a how-to-vote card (or to cause, permit or authorise this), including via the internet, unless it contains the name and address of the person who authorised it and the name and place of business of the printer or publisher. This is set out in section 83A(1) of the Act.

For both offences, the maximum penalty is 10 penalty units for a natural person and 50 penalty units for a body corporate.

For more information, including what is considered electoral material, see **Chapter 3. Electoral material and authorisation**.

Producing misleading or deceptive material

Between the day of the issue of the writs and 6 pm on election day, it is an offence to print, publish or distribute any matter or thing that is likely to mislead or deceive an elector in relation to the casting of their vote (or to cause, permit or authorise this). This is set out in section 84(1) of the Act.

During the same time period, it is also an offence to print, publish or distribute any electoral advertisement, handbill, pamphlet or notice that contains an image or representation of a ballot paper for the election which is likely to induce an elector to mark their vote otherwise than in accordance with the directions on the ballot paper (or to cause, permit or authorise this).

For both offences, the maximum penalty is 60 penalty units or 6 months imprisonment for a person or 300 penalty units for a corporation.

For more information about what is considered misleading or deceptive material for the purpose of these offences, see **3.7 Misleading or deceptive material**.

Failing to provide a heading to an electoral advertisement in a newspaper

Newspaper proprietors must ensure that all paid paragraphs or articles containing electoral matter that appear in their newspapers are headed by the word 'Advertisement'. This is set out in section 85 of the Act.

The maximum penalty is 5 penalty units for a person and 25 penalty units for a corporation.

9.3 Offences during election activities

Providing false or misleading information

It is an indictable offence to provide orally or in writing any false or misleading information under the Act, or to make a declaration, application or claim which is false or misleading. This is set out in section 148 of the Act.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- making a false statement or declaration in the *Nomination form*
- making a false statement or declaration when applying to register a how-to-vote card
- making a false declaration as to your identity
- providing false information when completing a vote declaration

9. Election compliance

- providing false enrolment information
- providing false information about the electors supporting a nomination, for example false addresses.

The maximum penalty is 600 penalty units or 5 years imprisonment.

Forging electoral papers

It is an indictable offence to make or use a false electoral paper knowing it to be false, or forge the signature of any person on any electoral paper. This is set out in section 149 of the Act.

Electoral papers include ballot papers, forms prescribed by the Regulations, and applications and declarations made under the Act.

The maximum penalty is 600 penalty units or 5 years imprisonment.

Voting fraudulently or multiple times

It is an indictable offence to:

- vote in the name of another person (including a dead or fictitious person)
- vote more than once
- apply for a ballot paper in the name of another person.

This is set out in section 150(1) of the Act.

The maximum penalty is 600 penalty units or 5 years imprisonment.

Bribery

It is an indictable offence to ask for, receive or obtain (or offer or agree to do these things) a property or benefit of any kind from someone on an understanding that the person's election conduct will be influenced or affected. This is set out in section 151(1) of the Act.

Conversely, it is an indictable offence to give, or promise or offer to give, a property or benefit of any kind to someone in order to influence or affect that person or anyone's election conduct. This is set out in section 151(2) of the Act.

For the purposes of these offences, 'election conduct' means:

- the way someone votes at an election
- someone's nomination as a candidate for an election
- someone's support or opposition of a candidate or political party at an election
- any act or thing someone does which is intended or likely to influence the way an elector sets out their preferences when voting.

'Election conduct' does not include a declaration of public policy or a promise of public action for the purposes of these offences.

For each offence, the maximum penalty is 600 penalty units or 5 years imprisonment.

Interfering with political liberty

It is an indictable offence to hinder or interfere with the free exercise or performance of someone's political right or duty relevant to an election. This is set out in section 152(1) of the Act.

It is also an indictable offence to influence someone's vote at an election by violence or intimidation. This is set out in section 152(2) of the Act.

For each offence, the maximum penalty is 600 penalty units or 5 years imprisonment.

Tampering

Unless authorised under the Act, it is an indictable offence to:

- open any sealed envelope containing a ballot-paper
- break the seal or open any sealed parcel of ballot material
- deal with ballot material.

This is set out in section 153 of the Act.

This includes a person opening postal ballot material which is not addressed to that person.

The maximum penalty is 600 penalty units or 5 years imprisonment.

Breaching secrecy of the vote

Unless authorised under the Act, it is an offence for a person who is present when an elector votes to:

- ascertain or disclose the elector's vote
- directly or indirectly require, induce or attempt to induce the elector to show how they intend to vote
- communicate with or assist the elector while voting
- look at the elector's vote or ballot paper.

This is set out in section 154 of the Act.

The maximum penalty is 120 penalty units or one year imprisonment.

Distributing an unregistered how-to-vote card which purports to be registered

It is an offence to print, publish, or distribute a how-to-vote card which has not been registered and which contains the prescribed endorsement 'Registered by the Victorian Electoral Commission' or a purported prescribed endorsement (or to cause, permit or authorise this). This is set out in section 156(2) of the Act.

This includes distributing a how-to-vote card containing the prescribed endorsement at early voting centres before the how-to-vote card has been successfully registered. For more information, see **4.1 Distributing how-to-vote cards**.

The maximum penalty is 60 penalty units or 6 months imprisonment.

Impersonating a VEC staff member

It is an offence to pretend to be a VEC staff member, election manager or election official in the performance of duties or the exercise of powers under the Act. This is set out in section 160 of the Act.

The maximum penalty is 10 penalty units.

Failing to vote

It is an offence for an elector to:

- fail to vote at an election without a valid and sufficient excuse for not voting
- fail to comply with their requirements upon receiving a notice from the VEC notifying them that they have failed to vote, including replying with the true reason why they failed to vote
- state a false reason for not having voted in response to a notice from the VEC notifying them that they have failed to vote
- if completing or purporting to be completing a form on behalf of another elector, state a false reason why that elector failed to vote.

This is set out in section 166(1) of the Act.

An elector may have a valid and sufficient excuse for not voting.

The maximum penalty is half a penalty unit if paid as an infringement penalty, otherwise one penalty unit. This is set out in section 170 of the Act.

9.4 Offences at a voting centre

Subjecting a campaigner to violence or intimidation

It is an indictable offence to subject any person handing out how-to-vote cards or supporting a candidate within 100 metres of the entrance of a voting centre to violence or intimidation. This is set out in section 152(4) of the Act.

The maximum penalty is 600 penalty units or 5 years imprisonment.

Canvassing or other prohibited conduct near a voting centre

During the hours of voting within 6 metres of the entrance of, or within, a voting centre, it is an offence to:

- canvass for votes
- solicit the vote of any elector
- induce any elector not to vote for any particular candidate
- induce any elector not to vote at the election
- exhibit any notice or sign (other than an official notice) relating to the election. This does not apply to car stickers, items of clothing when worn, lapel buttons, lapel badges, fridge magnets, pens or pencils
- conduct an exit poll

- if the person is a scrutineer or a VEC staff member, wear any badge, emblem or political slogan of a candidate or political party.

This is set out in section 158 of the Act.

The maximum penalty is 5 penalty units.

If the VEC considers it necessary, we may specify a distance less than 6 metres from the entrance of a particular voting centre within which this offence applies at that voting centre. This may be necessary due to weather conditions, traffic management, safety concerns or for another reason.

Election managers and election officials have the power to remove a notice or sign which is not permitted to be displayed under section 158 of the Act.

Exhibiting a notice or sign near a voting centre

Within 100 metres of the designated entrance of a voting centre (known as the 'limited sign zone'), it is an offence to exhibit any notice or sign in relation to the election except as permitted under section 158A of the Act:

- each candidate, whether party-endorsed or independent, may display up to 2 signs within the limited sign zone
- each registered political party may display up to 2 signs within the limited sign zone
- where a registered political party has endorsed 2 or more candidates for a particular Legislative Council region election, these candidates may display no more than 2 signs in total between them within the limited sign zone.

This means that a registered political party may be entitled to display up to 6 signs at a particular voting centre: 2 for a district candidate, 2 for one or more region candidates, and 2 for the party itself.

This does not apply to car stickers, items of clothing when worn, lapel buttons, lapel badges, fridge magnets, pens or pencils.

Candidates may not display notices or signs in a limited sign zone located within a district or region they have not nominated for, unless that voting centre has been appointed as a joint voting centre including the district or region they have nominated for.

All signs and notices within the limited sign zone must not be larger than 600 mm x 900 mm in size.

For the purposes of counting notices and signs, one notice or sign consists of a single visible side. Any notice or sign that has 2 visible sides, such as an A-frame or sandwich board, counts as 2 signs. If a permanent or preexisting notice or sign for a candidate or registered political party is located within the limited sign zone, it is subject to the limited sign zone rules.

At a joint voting centre, where one venue is hosting 2 or more voting centres for adjacent districts, the limited sign zone applies to each district election separately.

These rules do not apply to official notices or signs, such as those displayed by the VEC, or to signs that do not relate to the election.

The maximum penalty is 5 penalty units.

More information is available in the *Campaigner handbook*.

Displaying a mobile billboard near a voting centre

It is an offence to display a mobile billboard within the limited sign zone. This is set out in section 158A(3C) of the Act.

A mobile billboard is any billboard capable of being displayed while being transported or towed by any means, regardless of its size. This includes billboards that can be worn or transported by a person or animal, and billboards attached to vehicles such as cars, trucks, motorcycles, mopeds, drones, bicycles and scooters, and on trailers towed by vehicles.

Vehicles that are painted or vinyl-wrapped with election-related content are considered mobile billboards. A vehicle with any election-related notice or sign attached to it is considered a mobile billboard.

The maximum penalty is 5 penalty units.

Using a public address system

During the hours of voting within 400 metres of the entrance of, or within, a voting centre it is an offence to:

- use or permit the use of any loudspeaker, public address system, amplifier, broadcasting van, sound system, radio apparatus or any other apparatus or device to broadcast or disseminate anything intended or likely to affect the result of the election
- make any public demonstration about the election.

This is set out in section 159 of the Act.

The maximum penalty is one penalty unit.

9.5 Offences which only apply on election day

Disseminating exit poll results

During the hours of voting, it is an offence to publicly disseminate the results of an exit poll carried out at an election day voting centre (or to cause, permit or authorise this). This is set out in section 155 of the Act.

The maximum penalty is 60 penalty units or 6 months imprisonment.

Distributing printed electoral material other than a registered how-to-vote card near a voting centre

Within 400 metres of the entrance of, or within, a voting centre during the hours of voting on election day, it is an offence to distribute printed electoral material other than a registered how-to-vote card. This is set out in section 156(1) of the Act.

The maximum penalty is 60 penalty units or 6 months imprisonment.

For more information about registering how-to-vote cards, see **Chapter 4. How-to-vote cards.**

9.6 Offences for using electoral information

Misusing enrolment information

It is an offence for a person, party or organisation to use enrolment information that is provided by the VEC (including copies of the electoral roll given to candidates) except for the purpose for which it was provided. This is set out in section 36(1) of the Act.

For candidates, this purpose must be in connection with the election or monitoring the accuracy of the information on the electoral roll.

It is also an offence to:

- disclose enrolment information except for the purpose for which it was provided. This is set out in section 37(2) of the Act.
- use enrolment information for a commercial purpose. This is set out in section 37(3) of the Act.

For each of these offences, the maximum penalty is 600 penalty units for a person and 3000 penalty units for a corporation or registered political party.

Misusing postal voter information

It is an offence to use or disclose postal voter information that is provided by the VEC under section 104A of the Act unless it is for a purpose in connection with the election. This is set out in sections 104A(4) and (5) of the Act.

The maximum penalty is 600 penalty units for a person and 3000 penalty units for a corporation or registered political party.

Misusing election information

Parties and independent elected members can receive election information about electors who voted, whether they voted personally or by post, and which voting centre they voted at (where applicable). This information contains the names and addresses of the voters, unless they are a silent or itinerant voter.

A person must not use or permit the use of electoral information for any purpose other than in connection with an election.

These offences are set out in section 123(4) of the Act.

The maximum penalty is 600 penalty units for a person and 3000 penalty units for a corporation or registered political party.

9.7 Injunctions

The Supreme Court may grant an injunction under the Act restraining someone from engaging in conduct if the person has engaged, is engaging, or is proposing to engage in any conduct contravening the Act or any other Victorian law (in relation to elections).

Similarly, the Supreme Court may grant an injunction under the Act requiring someone to do something if the person has refused or failed, is refusing or failing

9. Election compliance

or is proposing to refuse or fail to do something, and the refusal or failure would be a failure to comply with, or an offence against, the Act or any other Victorian law (in relation to elections).

An injunction under the Act may be granted on the application of:

- a candidate in the election, if the conduct relates to an election
- the VEC, in any case.

The Supreme Court may grant an injunction:

- if it is satisfied that the conduct, refusal or failure has already occurred, regardless of whether it appears the person intends or is likely to do so again
- if it is satisfied that the conduct, refusal or failure is likely to occur, regardless of whether the person has already done so and whether there is an imminent danger of substantial damage to another person if it does occur.

This is set out in section 176 of the Act.

While this specific pathway exists for candidates and the VEC under the Act, injunctions may still be sought in relation to elections by any applicant under common law.

10. Privacy

The VEC is subject to the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and handles all the personal information it collects and holds in accordance with the information privacy principles.

Your *Nomination form* will not be available for public inspection.

However, we are required to disclose some of your personal information.

These disclosures, which are governed by legislation, are as follows:

- once nominations for an election close, the VEC must make each candidate's name and contact details publicly available by publishing these details on the VEC's website and by making them available for inspection at election offices
- candidates' names will appear on ballot papers and how-to-vote cards as well as the candidate's enrolled locality or suburb (for region elections only) and, for party-endorsed candidates, will appear together on the ballot paper with the registered name and logo of the registered political party that has endorsed the candidate
- all successful candidate names, postal addresses, phone and email details will also be provided to the Department of Parliamentary Services to enable contact with successful candidates regarding their introduction into Parliament
- referring or reporting offences and other matters to law enforcement and integrity agencies, such as Victoria Police and the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC), including under the VEC's mandatory reporting obligations.

All internal uses of your personal information by the VEC are either required by or necessary to implement the VEC's requirements under the Act. These requirements include processing applications to nominate for an election and to register a HTVC. We may also refer to your personal information in a check of electoral material.

Under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic), you have the right to access and correct any of your personal information held by the VEC, subject to other provisions of that Act. Further information on the VEC's privacy policy, including how to make a privacy enquiry or complaint can be found at vec.vic.gov.au/privacy

11. Feedback and complaints

This chapter provides information on our feedback and complaints process.

11.1 Responding to feedback and complaints

The VEC has a robust process for receiving and responding to all feedback and complaints. This is detailed in our customer feedback policy and our customer service charter, available on our website at vec.vic.gov.au/about-us/complaints

Please submit your feedback to our Customer Feedback and Complaints team. You can submit feedback:

- using the online tool at vec.vic.gov.au/about-us/complaints
- in writing to complaints@vec.vic.gov.au
- in writing to a district election manager within the region you have nominated in
- by mail to Level 11, 530 Collins Street Melbourne VIC 3000. Please address your letter to Customer Feedback and Complaints team.

Any complaints lodged with election managers that require escalation will be forwarded to VEC head office for consideration and response.

11.2 Feedback and complaint processing

We review all written feedback or complaints we receive.

The content of the complaint will determine who reviews and actions it. If the feedback or complaint:

- relates to the administration of the election, including the actions and behaviour of election managers or election staff, it will be referred to the relevant VEC team for investigation and response.
- alleges an offence against the Act and provides appropriate evidence, it will be referred for investigation (for more information about what offences are covered under the Act, see **Chapter 9. Election compliance**)
- alleges a breach of local laws, the complaint will be directed to the Chief Executive Officer of the relevant local council
- alleges a criminal offence under other legislation, the complaint will be directed to Victoria Police or the appropriate regulator.

You can also raise a complaint directly with a local council or Victoria Police.

If we need to refer your matter externally, we will advise you that the matter has been referred. In some cases, it may also be appropriate for us to notify the subject of the feedback or complaint that a matter has been raised, particularly where further information is necessary.

The VEC will not discuss individual complaints with members of the media under any circumstances, not even to confirm or deny that a complaint has been received.

The VEC acts to minimise situations where people may attempt to use the VEC's complaints process for any reason other than providing genuine feedback or complaints.

You may enquire about the progress of your complaint by contacting the Customer Feedback and Complaints Team on 131 832 or 03 8620 1100.

11.3 Reporting to the VEC

Elections in Australia allow for robust debate and expression of opinion. Candidates are free to rebut opinions expressed by others in the public domain during the campaign.

❗ Important: The VEC is not in a position to regulate candidate behaviour outside of the offences in the Act.

There are also civil and criminal mechanisms which can be used to regulate candidate behaviour, including injunctive action through the Supreme Court.

Consider the allegations checklist before raising an allegation with the VEC.

Allegations checklist

1. Appropriate to receive complaint
 - The VEC is Victoria's electoral regulator. The VEC administers the Act and other electoral legislation. The VEC can also receive feedback about its staff and procedures.
 - It might be appropriate for another regulator to receive a complaint or feedback, for example Victoria Police, the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC), the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), or a local council.
2. The matter concerns an electoral offence under the Act
 - Check the offences that exist for state elections, outlined in **Chapter 9. Election compliance.**
3. Report a breach of the Act through the complaints process
 - Any relevant evidence must be included with the complaint
 - Complaints must be made in writing using the online tool at vec.vic.gov.au/about-us/complaints or emailed to complaints@vec.vic.gov.au
4. Outcome after submitting a complaint
 - We will confirm by email that your complaint has been received and advise if an investigation will be conducted or the matter will be referred externally
 - If an investigation does take place, the person making the complaint will be advised of its outcome at the conclusion of the investigation.

Appendices

Appendix 1: How-to-vote card checklist – Region HTVC

Do not mass produce HTVCs until the VEC confirms the HTVC is registered

- ☐ Is the HTVC for a single region only? (For applicants other than registered political parties)
- ☐ Have you submitted an electronic PDF copy version of the how-to-vote card in final **print ready format**?
- ☐ Have you submitted 2 hard copies of the how-to-vote card in final **print ready format**?
- ☐ Have you completed the relevant how-to-vote card declaration form?
- ☐ If the how-to-vote card includes text in a language other than English, have you attached a translation? Have you included the authorisation and endorsement statement in all languages including English?
- ☐ Does the how-to-vote card clearly identify the person, registered political party, organisation or group it is being distributed for?
- ☐ Have you indicated an order of voting preference for electors voting above the line?

OR

An order of voting preference for electors voting below the line?

OR

A statement that voters must number from 1 to at least 5 in their preferred order for groups above the line or from 1 to at least 5 in their preferred order for candidates below the line?

- ☐ Are any candidates listed on the HTVC in ballot paper order, with correct spelling of their name?
- ☐ Have you checked that the logo/emblem/insignia is at least the prescribed size (4cm²)?
- ☐ Have you made sure that the how-to-vote card is not misleading, deceptive, offensive, or obscene?
- ☐ Is the full authorisation statement, including the authoriser's name and street address, present on at least one side of the how-to-vote card? (The authorisation statement must be printed in all languages and English)
E.g. *Authorised by Jane Smith, 123 Sample Street, Melbourne, Victoria*
- ☐ Have the details of the **printer** been included on at least one side of the how-to-vote card? (The printed by statement must be printed in all languages and English)
E.g. *Printed by Sample Printers, 11A Example Street, Melbourne, Victoria*
- ☐ Have you included the endorsement '**Registered by the Victorian Electoral Commission**' on at least one side of the how-to-vote card? It cannot appear on cards distributed at early voting centres until it has been registered.

Appendix 2: How-to-vote card example

District HTVC example

1. Candidate party

2. District name

3. LOGO
Min 4cm²

SMALL BALLOT PAPER
Number all the boxes from **1** to **6**

5. DISTRICT OF
DISTRICT NAME

4 CANDIDATE, One

1 CANDIDATE, Two

2 CANDIDATE, Three

3 CANDIDATE, Four

5 CANDIDATE, Five

6 CANDIDATE, Six

4.

6. Remember to **number every box** to make your vote count

8.

7.

Authorised by Joe Citizen, 104 Smith Street, Smithton
 Printed by Special Printers, 87 Top Street, Smithton South
 Registered by the Victorian Electoral Commission

1. Identify

Clearly identify the person, political party, organisation, or group – on whose behalf the card is to be distributed.

2. District name

Check that the district name is spelt correctly and it is for the correct district.

3. Logo

Make sure that the size of any logo, emblem, or insignia belonging to the person, or group – is at least 4 cm².

4. Candidates

Candidates must be listed, in ballot paper order, and with the exact same spelling as the ballot paper, including any punctuation or capitalisations.

Do not include designations, e.g. Dr., Prof. or MP.

5. Voting

If the HTVC contains a representation of the ballot paper, then every box must be numbered, and no number can be used more than once.

6. Numbering every box

Ensure to instruct people to number every box.

7. Authorisation

The HTVC must be authorised with the name and full street address of the person authorising the card. Make sure "Authorised" is spelt correctly.

8. Footer

Make sure to have:

- Full street address and place of business of printer
- VEC Endorsement (required for registered HTVCs).

Region HTVC example

1. Candidate party

2. Region name

3. LOGO
Min 4cm²

Either Vote **1** to at least **5** above the line

GROUP LETTER

4.

PARTY ABBREVIATION

Or Vote below the line by numbering **1** to at least **5**

GROUP LETTER **GROUP LETTER**

3 Candidate Seventeen Locality	5. 1 Candidate Twenty Two Locality
4 Candidate Eighteen Locality	2 Candidate Twenty Three Locality
5 Candidate Nineteen Locality	
Candidate Twenty Locality	
Candidate Twenty One Locality	

7. Authorised by Joe Citizen, 104 Smith Street, Smithon, VIC
Printed by Special Printers, 87 Top Street, Smithon South, VIC

6.

1. Identify

Clearly identify the person, political party, organisation, or group – on whose behalf the card is to be distributed.

2. Region name

Check that the region name is spelt correctly and it is for the correct region.

3. Logo

Make sure that the size of any logo, emblem, or insignia belonging to the person, or group – is at least 4 cm².

4. Voting above the line (Option 1)

Place at least the numbers 1 to 5 in the boxes above the line, in order of your preference.

5. Voting below the line (Option 2)

Place at least the numbers 1 to 5 in the boxes opposite the names of candidates, in order of your preference.

6. Authorisation

The HTVC must be authorised with the name and full street address of the person authorising the card. Make sure "Authorised" is spelt correctly.

7. Footer

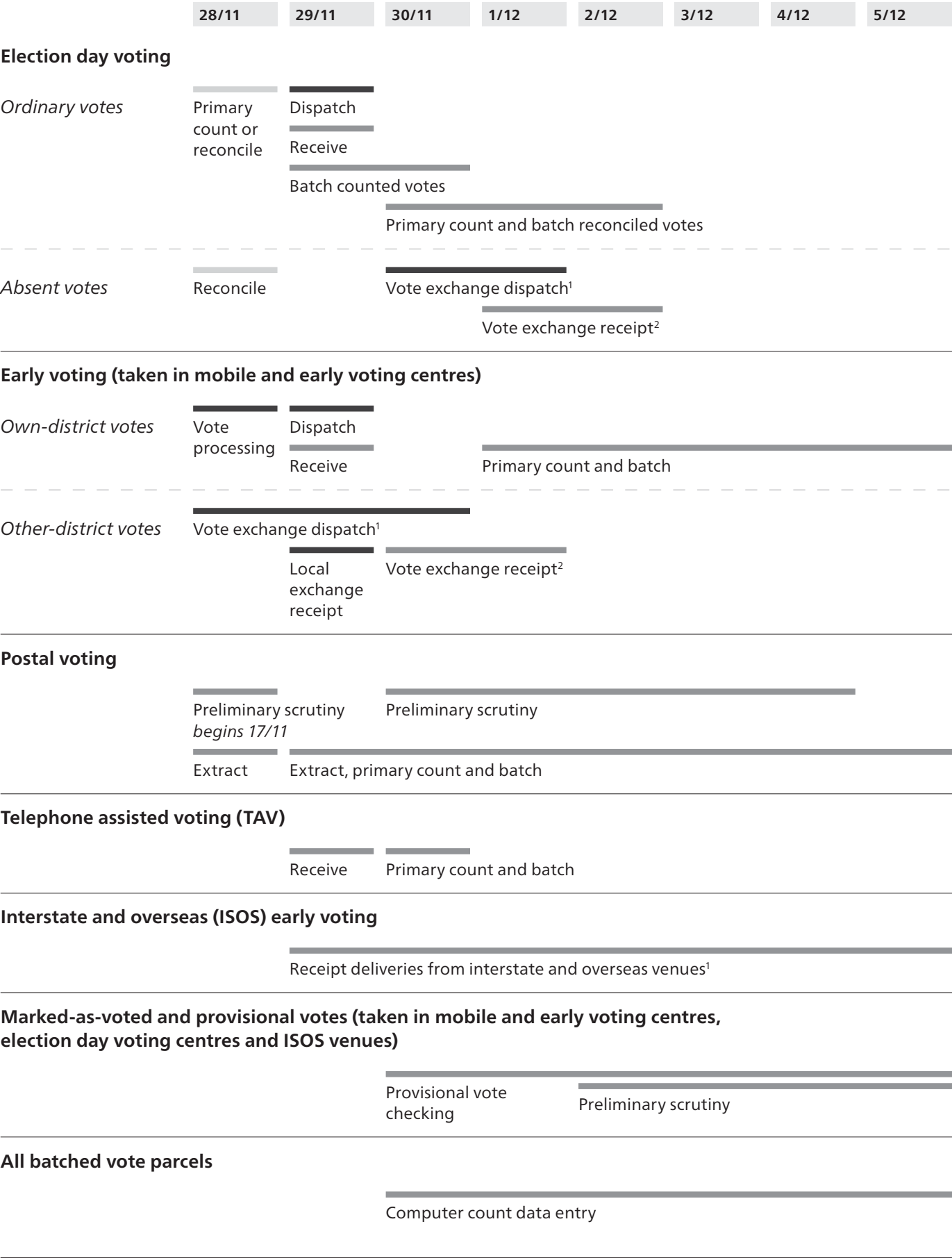
Make sure to have:

- Full street address and place of business of printer
- VEC Endorsement (required for registered HTVCs).

Appendix 3: Legislative Council region election high-level count timeline

This high-level count timeline summarises the Legislative Council region election count process, showing the key counting, scrutiny and recheck activities, and the major milestones leading to the calculation and declaration of results.

Legislative Council region election high-level count timeline



¹ Includes any issued marked-as-voted or provisional votes

² Additional transfers may occur later in week if required

6/127/128/129/1210/1211/1212–15/1216/1217/1218/12

Legend: Activity location

Election day voting centre

Hub

Centralised activity site

Primary count and batch³

Primary count and batch³

Extract, primary count and batch³

Extract, primary count and batch

Calculate results⁴Region recount (if required)

³ Votes in declaration envelopes will also undergo preliminary scrutiny and extraction
⁴ Results will be declared a minimum 4 hours after calculation, unless a recount is required

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(Victorian Electoral Commission)

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