



2026 State election

Scrutineer 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.
Declaration issuing officer	An election official in an election day voting centre who issues declaration votes and votes to electors who are enrolled in districts other than the district the voting centre is located in or is joint with (see the definition of 'Joint voting centre' for further information).
Election manager	The person appointed by the Electoral Commissioner to be responsible for the administration of a district or region election.
Deputy Electoral Commissioner	A statutory officer of the Victorian Electoral Commission who assists the Electoral Commissioner in the performance of their functions and may exercise delegated powers under the Electoral Act.
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.
General postal voter	A person who has registered to automatically get their ballot papers in the mail for an election, due to factors such as age, health or where they live.
Manager-in-charge	The manager who has responsibility for activities at a venue.
Ordinary issuing officer	An election official in an election day voting centre who issues ordinary votes to electors.
Scrutineer	A person appointed by a candidate to observe certain procedures on the candidate's behalf at an election. Scrutineers are permitted to observe voting, scrutiny and counting procedures during an election.

Election terms

The Act	The <i>Electoral Act 2002</i> (Vic)
Above-the-line (ATL)	Voting above the line is when a voter puts at least 5 numbers in order of preference in boxes above the line on a Legislative Council region election ballot paper.
Absent vote	A vote issued at an election day voting centre to electors who are enrolled in districts other than the district the voting centre is located in, or is joint with (see the definition of 'Joint voting centre' for further information).
Absolute majority	More than 50% of the formal votes counted in a district election for the Legislative Assembly (Lower House).
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 the voter records their preferences for each candidate in the election.
Ballot paper envelope	The envelope a voter puts their completed ballot paper in when casting a postal, marked as voted, provisional or other declaration vote.
Below-the-line (BTL)	Voting below the line is when a voter puts at least 5 numbers in order of preference in boxes below the line on a Legislative Council region election ballot paper.
Centralised activity site (CAS)	A central VEC venue which houses election activities including postal vote processing and extraction and counting activities.
Computer count	The electronic counting of votes after ballot paper preferences are manually entered into the VEC's computer count application by an election official.
Declaration vote	A vote that requires a written declaration by the voter, including a: • postal vote • provisional vote • marked-as-voted vote • absent vote or out-of-district early vote, when electronic roll mark-off is not available.
District	An electorate for the Legislative Assembly (Lower House), not to be confused with a region. There are 88 electoral districts in Victoria, each electing one member. Each electoral 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, allowing for streamlined and coordinated election delivery.
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 night	The period after 6 pm on election day when voting has closed and counting commences.
Election office	The location from 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 roll	The list of people entitled to vote in a particular election.
Election weekend	The weekend comprising election day, always held on a Saturday, and the following Sunday.
Joint early voting centre	An early voting centre that issues own-district early votes for 2 or more districts.
Joint voting centre	An election day voting centre that issues own-district votes for 2 or more districts on election day.
Marked-as-voted vote	A vote issued to a voter whose name appears to have already been marked off the electoral roll as having voted but claims not to have voted yet.
Missort	A ballot paper that has been incorrectly sorted to a candidate, or to informal, in an earlier stage of a count and needs to be corrected to ensure the accuracy of the count.
Ordinary vote	A vote cast at an election day voting centre within the voter's enrolled district.
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.

Preference distribution	The process used to determine the successful candidate(s) in an election when no candidate(s) has received enough first preference votes to be elected or there are still vacancies to be filled.
Preliminary scrutiny	The process of checking envelopes containing declaration votes. Also known as verification, ballot paper envelope processing or declaration envelope processing.
Primary count	A process undertaken by election officials to examine ballot papers for formality and sort them to the candidate (or group for region elections) with the first preference on the ballot paper, or as informal.
Proportional representation	The counting method used to elect representatives in proportion to their level of support in region elections.
Provisional vote	A vote issued to a person who claims to be entitled to vote at an election and whose name is not on, or cannot be found on, the electoral roll.
Recheck	A standard step in the counting process where ballot papers are reexamined for formality and correct sorting following a primary count. Not to be confused with the term 'recount'.
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 (Upper House), not to be confused with a district. There are 8 electoral regions in Victoria, each electing 5 members. Each electoral 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 papers or above the group name above the line on region ballot papers.
The Regulations	The Electoral Regulations 2022 (Vic).
Restricted area	The area established under section 110J(6) of the Electoral Act that allows early and postal vote extraction and sorting to take place prior to the close of voting to ensure the security and secrecy of the process.
Scrutiny	The checking and counting of ballot papers and ballot paper envelopes to determine the result of an election.

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 *Scrutineer handbook* is for anyone who has been appointed as a scrutineer at 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 scrutineers and explains the activities that you may be appointed to attend on behalf of your candidate. The handbook is not a substitute for the law and should be read alongside:

- the *Electoral Act 2002* (Vic) (the Act)
- the Electoral Regulations 2022 (Vic) (the Regulations)
- VEC Determination 001/2026 Scrutineering at an election.

Current versions of Victorian legislation are available at legislation.vic.gov.au and Determination 001/2026 is available on the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au/about-us/legislation/determinations

The role of scrutineers is defined by electoral law and is distinct from the role of campaigners or supporters whose activities are not so defined.

As a scrutineer, you represent the interests of a candidate in the election. Candidates should also read this handbook to familiarise themselves with the requirements of scrutineers and what can be expected at an election venue. We will provide information to your candidate throughout the election timeline that is specific to your candidate's district or region election. It is your candidate's responsibility to share this information with you.

1. Appointment as a scrutineer

This chapter explains the role and responsibilities of scrutineers at state elections, including eligibility requirements and the process of being appointed as a scrutineer by a candidate.

1.1 About your role

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

You can 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.

Your role varies between election activities. There are some activities that you can only observe and scrutinise, and some where you can also challenge decisions made by election officials.

If you wish to query something during an activity you are observing and scrutinising, you can put questions to the staff involved in the activity as long as the questions are brief and relevant to the activity. If you require further information or wish to discuss general procedures, you should direct your question to the relevant election manager or manager-in-charge.

1.2 Eligibility

You cannot be a scrutineer if you are:

- a candidate at the election (see **1.4 Candidates as scrutineers** for the exception which applies at recounts)
- under the age of 18
- working for the VEC at the election.

1.3 Scrutineer appointment

Scrutineers are appointed for a specific district or region election, and can only observe activities for that election. If you are also scrutineering for a candidate in another district or region election, you must be separately appointed for that election by the other candidate.

Before you can observe an election activity, you must be appointed as a scrutineer by the candidate you are representing. You will need to:

1. complete an *Appointment and declaration of scrutineer* form. Forms are available to candidates from the election manager, online at vec.vic.gov.au/candidates-and-parties/become-a-state-election-candidate/scrutineers or in the *Candidate kit*
2. ensure your candidate has signed and completed their section of the appointment form. If this information is not completed correctly, you may not be admitted to the venue. 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.
3. bring the candidate-signed form to the venue and sign the declaration section yourself in front of an election official at the time of registration.

❗ Important: You must not sign the declaration section of the form until you are in the presence of an election official.

Election activities will take place across multiple venues during the election period. You must provide a separate candidate-signed *Appointment and declaration of scrutineer* form for each venue that you attend before you can observe election activities at that venue. You must register one form for each venue and for each candidate you are representing. If you are observing mobile voting, you must have one form for each day rather than for each venue.

The VEC's centralised activity site (CAS) is one venue. If you are attending the CAS, you will not need multiple *Appointment and declaration of scrutineer* forms to visit different buildings where you are representing the same candidate.

See **Appendix 2: Appointment and declaration of scrutineer form** for a sample version of the form. Forms are available to candidates from the election manager, online at vec.vic.gov.au/candidates-and-parties/become-a-state-election-candidate/scrutineers or in the *Candidate kit*.

See **Appendix 3: Registration checklist** to check you are prepared for all the required steps in registering as a scrutineer.

Scrutineer rights and responsibilities will be displayed as a poster in venues. Refer to **Appendix 4: Scrutineer rights and responsibilities poster** to familiarise yourself with this information.

1.4 Candidates as scrutineers

A candidate in the election cannot be appointed as a scrutineer for any district or region at the election, except at a recount that does not involve the district or region election for which the candidate has nominated. Candidates at the election cannot be appointed to scrutinise any other activities.

A recount is not the same as the standard recheck process, which candidates in the election may not attend as scrutineers for any district or region election.

The *Appointment and declaration of scrutineer* form requires scrutineers to identify whether they are candidates for any district or region at the election.

A candidate properly appointed as a scrutineer at a recount will be issued with a scrutineer badge which also identifies them as a candidate in the election.

2. Observing and scrutinising election activities

This chapter outlines the activities you can observe and scrutinise, and when you are able to make a formal challenge. Further details of activities are given in subsequent chapters.

2.1 Observing, scrutinising and challenging

You can observe and scrutinise certain election activities before the close of voting as well as ballot material processing and counting after the close of voting. You can make general queries about the procedure taking place or the conduct of an election official. Election officials will use their best endeavours to respond to queries raised by scrutineers, or they may refer your query to the relevant election manager, manager-in-charge, or published information such as this handbook.

There are also activities where you can challenge decisions made by election officials (see '**Formal Challenges**' below).

The table below lists the activities that you can observe and scrutinise at state elections and whether a formal challenge can be made during these activities.

Activities that scrutineers can observe and scrutinise	Are formal challenges allowed?	Activity locations
Dispatching postal ballot packs	No	Other
Exhibiting and sealing of ballot boxes	No	EVC, MVC, EDVC
Issuing ballot papers by an ordinary issuing officer	No	EVC, MVC, EDVC
Issuing declaration votes by a declaration issuing officer	No	EVC, MVC, EDVC
Recording preferences by an election official aiding an elector who requires assistance to vote	Yes	EVC, MVC, EDVC
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	CAS
Receiving and admitting or rejecting declaration envelopes	No	CAS
Opening admitted declaration envelopes and extracting ballot papers	No	CAS
Opening and checking sealed ballot boxes or parcels of ballot papers	Yes	EDVC, Hubs, CAS

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

 Note: For the avoidance of doubt, the correction of a missort during a statistical count or the amalgamation can be challenged by a scrutineer.

Activity location abbreviations

EVC – Early voting centres

MVC – Mobile voting centres

EDVC – Election day voting centres

Hubs – Election hubs, including election offices

CAS – Centralised activity site

Other – postal vote distribution sites

Addresses for election venues will be provided to candidates and registered political parties and/or published on the VEC website, as appropriate.

Formal challenges

As a scrutineer, you can challenge a decision or action during certain activities, listed above. A challenge will be ruled on by the election manager or an authorised election official during the activity.

When observing and scrutinising an activity that allows for formal challenges, you should make the election official aware of your challenge by raising your hand and clearly saying 'Challenge'.

Types of challenges and the way each will be addressed is as follows:

Activity where challenge is allowed	What is challengeable	How challenge is addressed
Recording preferences by an election official aiding an elector who requires assistance to vote	If the election official records an elector's preferences incorrectly	The manager-in-charge will record the challenge and offer to oversee the process and/or help the elector fill out the correct preferences
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	If the election official records an elector's preferences incorrectly	The manager-in-charge will record the challenge and offer to oversee the process and/or help the election official fill out the correct preferences
Opening and checking sealed ballot boxes or parcels of ballot papers	If a discrepancy is noted between the seal on the box/parcel and what has been previously recorded on documentation/labels	The manager-in-charge will record the discrepancy and, if the ballot papers are for the correct district or region, continue the activity so counting can commence.
Recording preferences by an election official who is transposing braille ballot paper preferences onto a standard ballot paper for counting	If the election official records an elector's preferences incorrectly	The manager-in-charge will record the challenge and offer to oversee the process and/or help the election official fill out the correct preferences

Activity where challenge is allowed	What is challengeable	How challenge is addressed
Counting, rechecking and distributing ballot papers, including checking ballot papers to determine formality	Formality or interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper by an election official during a count	The counting team leader or election manager will make a ruling on the formality or interpretation of preferences. Their decision is final and the ballot paper cannot be challenged again during the same count but can be challenged at subsequent counts. For example, a ballot paper challenged and ruled on during a recheck can be challenged again during the preference distribution.
Counting and distributing ballot papers, including checking ballot papers to determine formality, during a recount	Formality or interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper by an election official during a count	The election manager will make a ruling on the formality or interpretation of preferences or reserve it for the decision of the Electoral Commissioner/Deputy Electoral Commissioner. A scrutineer may also request that the paper be reserved for a decision by the Electoral Commissioner/Deputy Electoral Commissioner.

Challenged ballot papers

If you challenge a ballot paper, the manager-in-charge, counting team leader or election manager will examine it and decide whether it can be admitted (if it is formal) or must be rejected (if it is informal). They will stamp the back of the ballot paper and tick the decision and the count at which the challenge occurred, and initial and date the ruling. They will use dot stickers to record their interpretation of any unclear numbers and place them on the right-hand side of the ballot paper in-line with the relevant candidate. The decision is final for that count and cannot be challenged again during the same count activity. Details of your challenge will not be recorded on the ballot paper.

Objecting to an elector's right to vote

Under section 91(3) of the Act, a scrutineer may object to the entitlement of a person to vote. If this happens, the voter will be asked to complete a *Declaration as to identity* form.

After the form is completed and signed by both the voter and an election official, the issuing officer will issue the vote according to the usual procedure. This form will be retained by the VEC.

2.2 Scrutineer quotas

The number of scrutineers that can be present at any one time to 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.

Because of this quota, you must identify which candidate you are appointed to represent at every activity.

Scrutineer quotas for prescribed activities are determined by the Act, including:

- issuing ballot papers at voting centres
- extracting and sorting early and postal votes before the close of voting during the authorised period in the restricted area
- conducting preliminary scrutiny
- 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 factors, such as 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.

See **2.3 Being notified of activities** for more information on the scrutineer quotas for each activity that can be observed.

For the purposes of managing the quota, an election manager or election official is still counted to be engaged in an activity even when they are temporarily absent such as for a meal break, unless they are replaced by another election official while they are absent.

Election officials will monitor the number of scrutineers observing an activity on behalf of each candidate to ensure scrutineer quotas are upheld. If you leave an activity, you must sign out of the activity so that another scrutineer can enter the activity in your place if they have been appointed by your candidate. If you do not sign out, you will continue to count towards your candidate's quota for the rest of the activity.

You may be asked to leave an activity if there are more scrutineers for your candidate than allowed. If this happens, the manager-in-charge will ask the relevant 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 who signed in will be asked to leave the activity.

2.3 Being notified of activities

Candidates will be notified of the details of the activities that their scrutineers can observe as per the table below. For counting activities, this will include the expected number of election officials involved in the activity. This will provide candidates with an indication of how many scrutineers can attend to observe an activity on their behalf in accordance with the scrutineer quota for the activity.

The number of election officials 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, the VEC will advise candidates 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 candidate's responsibility to share all activity details communicated to them with you.

You should arrive at least 30 minutes before the start of an activity to ensure you are signed in and briefed before it begins. Your candidate will be advised if scrutineer registration will open earlier than this for an activity.

Election officials may ask you to wait at the venue or return later if you arrive when activities for your candidate are not occurring. If you arrive late, you will only be admitted once you have been registered and briefed and you may miss the start of the activity.

Activities that scrutineers can observe and scrutinise	How are candidates notified of activity?	What is the quota rule?
Dispatching postal ballot packs	Candidate handbook and Scrutineer handbook. Candidates can contact the VEC if they wish to have a scrutineer attend	1 scrutineer per candidate for the activity
Exhibiting and sealing of ballot boxes	Election advertising and candidate bulletins/circulars	1 scrutineer per 1 candidate per 1 issuing officer
Issuing ballot papers by an ordinary issuing officer	Election advertising and candidate bulletins/circulars	1 scrutineer per 1 candidate per 1 issuing officer
Issuing declaration votes by a declaration issuing officer	Election advertising and candidate bulletins/circulars	1 scrutineer per 1 candidate per 1 issuing officer
Recording preferences by an election official aiding an elector who requires assistance to vote	Election advertising and candidate bulletins/circulars	1 scrutineer per 1 candidate per 1 issuing officer
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	Election advertising and candidate bulletins/circulars	1 scrutineer per 1 candidate per 1 issuing officer
Receiving and admitting or rejecting declaration envelopes	Candidate bulletins/ circulars	1 scrutineer per 1 candidate per 1 election official

2. Observing and scrutinising election activities

Activities that scrutineers can observe and scrutinise	How are candidates notified of activity?	What is the quota rule?
Opening admitted declaration envelopes and extracting ballot papers	Candidate bulletins/ circulars	1 scrutineer per 1 candidate per 1 election official
Opening and checking sealed ballot boxes or parcels of ballot papers	Candidate bulletins/ circulars	1 scrutineer per 1 candidate per 1 election official
Extracting and sorting early and postal votes during the authorised period within a restricted area	Candidate bulletins/ circulars	1 scrutineer per 1 candidate per 1 election official
Recording preferences by an election official who is transposing braille ballot paper preferences onto a standard ballot paper for counting	Candidate bulletins/ circulars	1 scrutineer per 1 candidate per 1 election official
Exchanging ballot papers between district and/or region elections	Candidate bulletins/ circulars	1 scrutineer per candidate for the activity
Amalgamating ballot papers prior to a preference distribution	Candidate bulletins/ circulars	1 scrutineer per 1 candidate per 1 election official
Preparing batches of ballot papers for data entry	Candidate bulletins/ circulars	1 scrutineer per candidate for the activity
Statistical counts for information purposes only, such as two-candidate-preferred count (or three-candidate-preferred count) and two-party-preferred count	Candidate bulletins/ circulars	1 scrutineer per 1 candidate per 1 election official
Counting, rechecking and distributing ballot papers, including checking ballot papers to determine formality	Candidate bulletins/ circulars	1 scrutineer per 1 candidate per 1 election official
Counting and distributing ballot papers, including checking ballot papers to determine formality, during a recount	Candidate bulletins/ circulars	1 scrutineer per 1 candidate per 1 election official

3. Conditions of entry for scrutineers

This chapter outlines the conditions of entry that you agree to follow when you sign the *Appointment and declaration of scrutineer* form.

A series of 'dos and dont's' which form the conditions of entry for scrutineers will be displayed as a poster in venues to reinforce what is expected when you are observing election activities. Refer to **Appendix 5: Conditions of entry for scrutineers poster** to familiarise yourself with this information.

3.1 Expected scrutineer behaviour

We expect you to behave consistently with the obligations prescribed by law when observing election activities at your appointed venues.

Any misconduct or failure to obey the lawful directions of an election official is an offence and you may be removed from the venue. See **Chapter 11. Election compliance** for more information.

Do:

- Present your completed *Appointment and declaration of scrutineer* form to the election official at the scrutineer registration desk
- Have multiple appointment forms if:
 - you have been appointed by more than one candidate at the same venue
 - you have been appointed by a single candidate for multiple venues.
- Sign the hard copy declaration in the presence of the election official at the scrutineer registration desk. If your form is not properly completed, you will not be able to enter the venue.
- Sign in and out of activities at venues when required. If you leave without signing out and returning your identification, you will still be recorded against your candidate's quota of scrutineers which may prevent others from being allowed to observe.
- Participate in the required briefings provided to all scrutineers. Briefings will cover your rights and responsibilities as a scrutineer and will explain the activity you are observing.
- Only enter the activity space when election activities for your candidate's election are occurring, and you are signed in to observe it. An activity space is any area where a process is occurring that scrutineers who are signed in are allowed to observe.
- Always keep your scrutineer lanyard or identification label visible. This shows your name and the name of the candidate you have been appointed for.
- Follow all rules at the venue and follow the instructions of election managers and election officials.
- Behave courteously and professionally towards staff.
- Follow any health and safety rules in place at the venue.

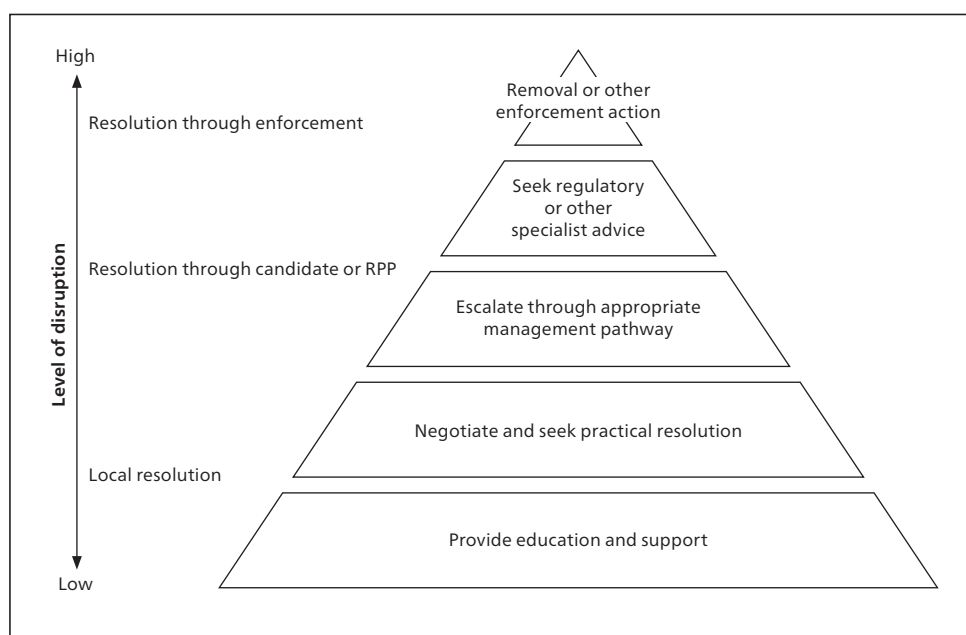
3. Conditions of entry for scrutineers

Don't:

- Interfere with or attempt to influence any voters.
- Communicate with anyone in the venue except when necessary for your scrutineer role.
- Touch ballot papers or ballot paper envelopes.
- Observe activities you are not registered and signed in for.
- Communicate or socialise with election staff during activities or breaks.
- Wear any party or candidate logos or paraphernalia if you are observing voting.
- Behave in a way that distracts election officials from performing their duties. This includes talking loudly, talking on mobile phones, or not giving election officials enough space to perform their duties.
- Eat or drink around activities; you should only eat or drink in designated areas away from the ballot papers.
- Leave any rubbish around the venue.
- Obstruct or delay any activities or behave in a disorderly manner.

Responding to issues

If your behaviour or conduct as a scrutineer needs to be addressed by election officials while you are attending a venue, they will follow pathways to resolve the issue accordingly. The diagram below gives a general overview of the escalation stages in resolving scrutineer issues.



Your belongings

Scrutineers are responsible for their own belongings (except for items that have been checked in as part of the restricted area entry requirements — see **5.2 Scrutineering in the restricted area**).

You are able to keep a bag with you at activities; however, this must not impede staff and other scrutineers. Storage at venues may be limited and the VEC cannot guarantee the security of unattended belongings.

3.2 Use of electronic devices and restriction on recording

You can use an electronic device if it doesn't interfere with election activities.

For example, if you want to use a mobile phone you must step away from the activity.

While you are a scrutineer you must not use your phone or any other device to record or photograph:

- ballot papers
- declarations
- forms
- VEC staff members, including election managers and election officials.

Devices that must not be used to record include mobile phones, smart watches, tablets, laptops, cameras, video recorders, or any other technology that can record, save and transmit images, audio and footage.

There are further restrictions on the use of these devices during the early processing of votes on election day between 8 am and 6 pm (see **5.2 Scrutineering in the restricted area**).

3.3 Scrutineer briefings

You will be provided with a scrutineer briefing when entering a venue. The briefing will be provided by election officials and will cover site-specific information and your rights and responsibilities.

Before each activity begins, you will receive an activity briefing from election officials explaining how the activity will take place.

You must be briefed before you begin scrutineering, so we strongly advise you to arrive at a venue at least 30 minutes before the activity begins. If you arrive late to an activity, you may be required to wait until a briefing can be arranged.

Your candidate will be advised of the recommended arrival time for each activity in a candidate bulletin.

3.4 Relieving scrutineers

You may enter or leave a voting centre during voting or counting and may be replaced during any absence by another scrutineer, as long as the scrutineer quota is not exceeded. The relieving scrutineer must have an appointment form signed by the candidate.

Restrictions will apply to scrutineers attending the extracting and sorting of early and postal votes on election day between 8 am and 6 pm, which must take place within a restricted area. Election managers or election officials will fully brief scrutineers before the start of the extraction or sort. See **5.2 Scrutineering in the restricted area** for more information.

3.5 Public access to facilities

The VEC leases voting centres and election hubs for its electoral activities. In some cases, the building administration may place restrictions on access to parts of the venue, including facilities, for security purposes. In some cases, you may need to be accompanied by an election official when you move around the venue, which may not always be possible during peak activity periods. We appreciate your understanding to ensure the security of all electoral activities and our election venues is maintained.

If you are attending the Centralised Activity Site (CAS), there will be dedicated facilities for scrutineers. These will be shown to you during your scrutineer briefing.

4. Voting period

This chapter explains key activities that take place during the voting period for a state election. During the voting period, electors will use various methods to record their vote.

Scrutineers may observe the following activities during the voting period:

- dispatching postal ballot packs
- exhibiting and sealing ballot boxes
- issuing ballot papers by an ordinary issuing officer
- issuing declaration votes by a declaration issuing officer
- recording preferences by an election official aiding an elector who requires assistance to vote
- recording preferences by an election official aiding an elector who is using telephone assisted voting.

4.1 Ballot material

Dispatching postal ballot packs

Postal ballot packs are mailed to electors who are registered as general postal voters, or electors who apply for a postal vote after the writs are issued and before 6 pm on Wednesday 25 November 2026. Scrutineers can observe the lodgement of postal ballot packs with Australia Post from our postal vote distribution sites. If you want to observe this, the candidate will need to contact the VEC in advance to be advised of the time and location of this process.

4.2 In-person voting

Early voting

Any elector can vote before election day at an early voting centre anywhere in Victoria. You may observe and scrutinise the issuing of early votes, including the sealing of ballot boxes before voting commences.

- From Wednesday 18 November to Friday 27 November 2026, early voting centres will operate daily from 9 am to 6 pm, except on Sunday 22 November 2026 when they will be closed.

Early voting is also available at some interstate and overseas locations.

Details of all early voting centres, including their location, accessibility rating and operating hours will be available on the VEC website.

Mobile voting

Mobile voting centres are fixed venues that a mobile voting team attends during the early voting period. This service is to assist voters who may experience barriers to accessing other voting methods. 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 2026.

Candidates may appoint scrutineers to observe the issuing of votes at mobile voting centres. An itinerary for mobile voting activities will be shared with candidates and registered political parties via bulletins. This itinerary will list the location of mobile voting centres and the dates and times of the activities. Candidates will be advised of any updates to the itinerary.

Scrutineers must not display election material or distribute how-to-vote cards while accompanying a mobile voting team.

Candidates, registered political parties, and others may provide copies of registered how-to-vote cards to district election managers to be included in folders carried by the mobile voting teams within the relevant district. The registered how-to-vote cards carried by election officials will be enclosed in a folder in the ballot paper order of candidates and, for Legislative Council region elections, groups. Mobile voting teams will advise voters that a folder of registered how-to-vote cards is available to be viewed.

Low-sensory mobile voting

For the 2026 state election, we are expanding our low-sensory voting model. This initiative aims to provide a more inclusive environment for voters who are, or care for someone who is, neurodivergent or with sensory needs. Carefully selected sites will provide voters the opportunity to vote in a quieter accessible environment, serviced by our mobile voting teams. The aim is to maintain a low-stimulus environment inside and outside the voting centre.

If appointed to observe low-sensory mobile voting, we ask that you support the objectives of this service by avoiding speaking loudly near or inside the voting centre and respecting the personal space of voters. We appreciate your cooperation and support to make a significant difference to the voting experience for people who find noise, lights and personal interaction stressful.

Low-sensory mobile voting will be held on Tuesday 17 November between 10 am and 4 pm.

Election day voting

Voting centres will be open on election day from 8 am to 6 pm on Saturday 28 November 2026. Details of all voting centres will be available on the VEC website.

Ordinary voting

You may observe and scrutinise the issuing of ordinary votes, including the sealing of ballot boxes before voting commences.

Absent voting

An elector who is away from their enrolled district but still within Victoria on election day may vote at any election day voting centre in the state.

If the voting centre has electronic roll mark-off facilities (laptops connected to a central copy of the statewide electoral roll), the elector will be marked off the electoral roll electronically and issued the ballot papers for their enrolled district and region elections.

If the voting centre does not have electronic roll mark-off facilities:

1. A declaration issuing officer will identify the elector's enrolled district and region using an electronic or paper list of streets.
2. The elector will be given a declaration envelope which they must complete and sign. The declaration issuing officer may assist to fill in details if necessary.
3. The declaration issuing officer will tick the 'Absent' box for the type of vote, write the elector's district name and sign as a witness, then issue ballot papers to the elector.
4. Once complete, the elector will return the ballot papers to the declaration issuing officer who will seal them in the declaration envelope and place in the declaration ballot box.

You may observe and scrutinise the issuing of absent votes, including the return and sorting of absent vote envelopes.

Provisional voting

If a person claims to be eligible to vote but they are not enrolled or their name cannot be found on the roll for any district in Victoria, they will be issued a provisional vote. This can occur at any type of voting centre.

If, after careful checking, a person's name cannot be found on the electoral roll:

1. A declaration issuing officer will issue the person with an Enrolment/Provisional Vote form and envelope and ensure they have read and understood the included statement and claim to be entitled to be enrolled for the election.
2. Using the person's address, the declaration issuing officer will identify the relevant district and region election by searching an electronic or paper list of streets.
3. The person will be given a declaration envelope which they must complete and sign. The declaration issuing officer may assist to fill in details if necessary. The person will also be asked to provide proof of their identity; acceptable documents are listed on the form or, if they cannot provide proof of their identity, the person may nominate a service provider listed on the form for the VEC to verify their identity later.
4. The declaration issuing officer will sign as a witness, then issue ballot papers to the person.
5. Once complete, the person will return the ballot papers to the declaration issuing officer who will seal them in the Enrolment/Provisional Vote envelope and place in the declaration ballot box.

4. Voting period

6. The VEC will check these envelopes to identify whether the person is eligible to be enrolled, and therefore whether their vote may be counted, after election day.

You may observe and scrutinise the issuing of provisional votes, including the return and sorting of Enrolment/Provisional Vote envelopes.

Marked-as-voted voting

If an elector's name has already been marked off the roll to show that a vote has already been issued in their name for the election, but the elector claims not to have voted, they will be issued a 'marked-as-voted' vote. This can occur at any type of voting centre.

The elector will be asked to make a declaration that they have not voted, and their ballot papers will be enclosed in a declaration envelope pending later investigation by the VEC.

You may observe and scrutinise the issuing, return and sorting of these envelopes.

Electors requiring assistance

Electors may be assisted with voting by:

- an election official, scrutineer or other person marking an elector's ballot material as nominated by the elector
- an election official taking ballot material outside the voting centre when the elector is physically unable to enter the voting centre to vote.

You may observe an election official who is assisting an elector to vote, and may challenge the way the elector's preferences were recorded.

4.3 Postal voting

To vote by post, an elector must:

- submit an application to the VEC between Wednesday 4 November 2026 and no later than 6 pm on Wednesday 25 November 2026
- or
- be enrolled as a general postal voter, a special category of elector who are automatically mailed ballot papers for every election.

We will mail ballot material to the elector, who must then complete their ballot papers, place them in the declaration envelope provided, and return the vote to the VEC.

Completed postal votes must be mailed back to the VEC, or handed in to an election venue, before 6 pm on Saturday 28 November 2026. After being posted, postal votes must reach the VEC by 6 pm on Friday 4 December 2026 in order to be included for further checking and counting.

You may observe and scrutinise the sending out of postal vote packs and the sorting and preliminary scrutiny of these returned envelopes.

4.4 Telephone assisted voting

The VEC's telephone assisted voting service enables eligible electors to cast their vote over the telephone. We will establish a dedicated call centre to manage this voting process, which will be located at the CAS.

Telephone assisted voting will be available to the following groups:

- electors who are blind or have low vision
- electors who have a motor impairment
- electors in a group prescribed by the Regulations.

You may observe and scrutinise the recording of preferences through telephone assisted voting. Scrutineers are not permitted to observe and scrutinise the registration of voters for telephone assisted voting.

A person applying to vote by telephone who cannot be found on the electoral roll, or who has been marked on the roll as voting already when they attempt to vote via this service cannot vote via the VEC's telephone Assisted Voting service and, will be required to attend a voting centre if they wish to complete a provisional or marked-as-voted vote.

5. Counting period

This chapter explains the various activities that will be undertaken at election hubs, the CAS and election day voting centres by election staff during the counting period. You should be aware of the differences between these activities as well as when they will occur.

For detailed explanations of the counting processes conducted for district and region elections, see **Chapter 6. Counting process for district elections** and **Chapter 7. Counting process for region elections**.

The proposed high-level count timelines for the district and region counts are also included at **Appendix 1: High-level count plans**.

Counting processes are intentionally methodical and are not rushed. Our priority is always accuracy over speed. You may observe the following activities during the counting period (including preliminary scrutiny and other preparatory activities that occur before the close of voting on election day):

- receiving and admitting or rejecting declaration envelopes (preliminary scrutiny)
- opening and checking sealed ballot boxes or parcels of ballot papers
- extracting and sorting early and postal votes during the authorised period within a restricted area
- opening admitted declaration envelopes and extracting ballot papers
- recording preferences by an election official who is transposing braille ballot paper preferences onto a standard ballot paper for counting
- exchanging ballot papers between district and/or region elections
- amalgamating ballot papers prior to a preference distribution
- preparing batches of ballot papers for data entry
- statistical counts for information purposes only, such as a two-candidate-preferred count (or three-candidate-preferred count) and two-party-preferred count
- counting, rechecking and distributing ballot papers, including checking ballot papers to determine formality
- counting and distributing ballot papers, including checking ballot papers to determine formality during a recount.

5.1 Early processing and postal vote extraction

During the early voting period and after the close of early voting, sealed ballot boxes from early voting centres (EVCs) will be securely transferred to election hubs. Ballot boxes from mobile voting teams will also be securely stored at election hubs.

Returned postal votes will also start arriving at the CAS from mid-November.

The Act allows for postal and early votes to be processed early, before voting has closed. This can occur between 8 am and 6 pm on election day within designated restricted areas. See **5.2 Scrutineering in the restricted area** for more information. Within restricted areas, early votes can be extracted from ballot boxes and sorted by district in preparation for counting. It does not involve reviewing any preferences on ballot papers, and ballot papers are processed face down. Postal ballot papers can also be extracted face-down from admitted declaration envelopes and prepared for counting.

Processing of own-district early votes on election day in the restricted area

An own-district early vote is a vote cast by an elector at an EVC or mobile voting centre in their enrolled district, or at a venue that is 'joint' with their enrolled district.

Election officials will start opening own-district and region EVC ballot boxes and reconciling the number of ballot papers against the amount issued for each EVC within a restricted area in each hub from 8 am on election day. This is called vote processing.

You may observe and scrutinise this sorting of early votes, including the opening of sealed ballot boxes. Strict rules apply between 8 am and 6 pm when the restricted area is in operation. See **5.2 Scrutineering in the restricted area** for more information.

Own-district and region mobile voting ballot boxes will be opened, sorted and reconciled after 6 pm on election night and reconciled. You may also observe and scrutinise this.

Extracting postal votes on election day in the restricted area

Returned postal votes will be processed, undergo preliminary scrutiny, and be subsequently counted at the CAS.

All postal votes that have been returned and accepted through preliminary scrutiny by the close of business on Thursday 26 November 2026 will be extracted in a restricted area from 8 am on election day. Strict rules apply between 8 am and 6 pm when the restricted area is in operation.

See **5.2 Scrutineering in the restricted area** for more information.

Postal vote declaration envelopes are to be admitted to extraction if:

- the declaration has been completed by the same elector who completed the application (i.e. the elector's identification has been confirmed)
and
- the declaration has been correctly completed
and
- the elector is enrolled for the district and/or region
and
- the vote was cast before the close of voting on election day.

You may observe and scrutinise the preliminary scrutiny and extraction of returned postal votes. Preliminary scrutiny will commence on Tuesday 17 November 2026 at the CAS.

5.2 Scrutineering in the restricted area

If you are attending the early processing of early or postal votes as a scrutineer on election day, you must uphold strict security and secrecy requirements while in restricted areas:

- You cannot be admitted to a restricted area without a valid *Appointment and declaration of scrutineer* form. You will also be asked to sign a declaration stating you understand that you are subject to secrecy provisions and aware of the penalties for breaching those provisions.
 - Any mobile phones, smart watches, tablets or other devices capable of transmitting information to any device or person outside of the restricted area must be surrendered prior to entering the restricted area.
 - The only paper or writing implements allowed within the restricted area are those required by election officials to perform their work.
 - Surrendered items will be stored securely until you leave the restricted area permanently, or at 6 pm when the restricted area ceases to be in effect. Surrendered items will not be returned during permitted breaks in the activity unless required for an emergency. If you leave the restricted area and collect your surrendered items, you cannot re-enter the area until after 6 pm.
-  **Note:** Scrutineers are encouraged to bring food with them, as they will not be able to access their device to purchase food or drinks (such as using Apple Pay or Google Pay). If you intend to purchase food, you should plan to have cash or carry your credit or debit card with you. You will be able to eat and drink in the designated break area.
- After you enter the restricted area, you may exit at any time if you wish to permanently leave the area. If you wish to re-enter the area, you can only exit for permitted reasons including bathroom and meal breaks.

5.3 Counting on election night

Counting activities at election day voting centres, election hubs and the CAS will commence as soon as possible after voting closes at 6 pm on election day.

Ordinary district votes

Ordinary district votes issued in election day voting centres will be counted in those voting centres from 6 pm on election day.

Two counts will be conducted in the following order:

- primary first preference count
- primary two-candidate-preferred (2CP) count.

You may observe and scrutinise the counting of ordinary district votes, including the opening of sealed ballot boxes, and can also challenge the formality or an election official's interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper during the primary first preference count. See **6.2 Two-candidate-preferred (2CP) count** for more information on observing 2CP counts.

First preference and 2CP results will be phoned through to election offices and published on the VEC website. At the completion of these counts, the ballot papers will be placed in sealed boxes and delivered to the hub for rechecking. You may witness the recording of security seal numbers.

Counting in election day voting centres will commence as soon as possible after 6 pm, but you should be aware of several critical close of voting activities which can cause minor delays including:

- allowing voters who were in the queue at 6 pm to cast their vote
- packing up voting booths and setting up a count area, particularly in smaller venues
- registering and briefing scrutineers.

You are encouraged to arrive at the voting centre prior to 6 pm to ensure you can be signed in and briefed before the doors of the voting centre are closed. If you are campaigning outside an election day voting centre and transitioning to be a scrutineer after 6 pm, you should be inside the voting centre prior to 6 pm. This will ensure you can observe the opening and checking of the sealed ballot boxes prior to counting commencing. If you arrive after this time, you can still sign in, however you will not be able to start observing activities until you are registered and briefed.

Ordinary region votes

Ordinary region votes issued in election day voting centres will be counted to first preference (by group or ungrouped candidates) in voting centres following the completion of the two district counts, unless the VEC identifies that a region count will not be possible on election night for that voting centre. We will decide this when planning the count based on the number of expected votes and will notify candidates in a candidate bulletin before election day.

If the VEC decides that a region primary count will not occur in an election day voting centre, the number of ballot papers will still be reconciled against the total number issued.

You may observe and scrutinise the counting or reconciliation of ordinary region votes, including the opening of sealed ballot boxes, and can also challenge the formality or an election official's interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper during the primary first preference count.

Once the count has been completed (or once the ballot papers have been reconciled), the ballot papers will be placed in sealed boxes and delivered to the election hub. If a count has taken place, the primary first preference results will be published on the VEC website. The sealed boxes will then be securely transferred to the CAS for further counting. See **5.5 Region counting** for more information. You may witness the recording of security seal numbers.

Own-district early votes

Own-district early votes issued in EVCs will be counted in election hubs, commencing after the close of voting at 6 pm on election day. Own-district early votes cast in mobile voting centres will be reconciled from 6 pm and will be counted once this is complete.

5. Counting period

During the count planning process, we will identify districts where high volumes of early votes are likely to mean that own-district early vote counts cannot be completed on election night. Counts in these districts will be scheduled to occur over election night and the rest of the election weekend. We will notify candidates in a candidate bulletin before election day.

Two counts will be conducted for own-district votes cast at each EVC and in mobile voting centres in the following order:

- primary first preference count
- primary 2CP count.

Results will be published to the VEC website once the counts are completed.

Scrutineers can observe and scrutinise the counting of own-district early votes, including the opening of sealed ballot boxes, and can also challenge the formality or an election official's interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper during the primary first preference count. See **6.2 Two-candidate-preferred (2CP) count** for more information on observing 2CP counts.

Own region early votes

Region votes cast at EVCs or mobile voting centres within the elector's enrolled district, or at a venue that is 'joint' with their enrolled district, will not be counted on election weekend. These will be sealed in security boxes once they have been reconciled during vote processing on election day and securely transferred to the CAS on the Sunday after election day for counting.

See **5.5 Region counting** for more information.

Counting postal votes on election weekend

From 6 pm on election day, we will count all district ballot papers that were extracted from admitted postal vote envelopes within the restricted area at the CAS. Two counts will be conducted in the following order:

- primary first preference count
- primary 2CP count.

Results will be published to the VEC website once the counts are completed.

A second extraction will occur on the Sunday after election day for votes returned on Friday 27 November 2026 and verified on Saturday 28 November. A primary first preference and primary 2CP count will then be conducted for all extracted district election ballot papers.

You may observe and scrutinise the preliminary scrutiny, extraction and counting of district postal votes, including the opening of sealed boxes containing the declaration envelopes, and can also challenge the formality or an election official's interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper during the primary first preference count.

See **6.2 Two-candidate-preferred (2CP) count** for more information on observing 2CP counts.

Region election ballot papers from postal votes extracted on election weekend are expected to be counted from the Sunday after election day. See **5.5 Region counting** for more information.

5.4 Counting after election day

District rechecks

All ordinary district votes (from election day voting centres) and own-district early votes (from EVCs and mobile voting centres) that were counted on election weekend will be rechecked in election hubs from the Monday after election day.

All district postal votes that were counted on election weekend will also be rechecked at the CAS on the Monday after election day.

Two further counts will be conducted for these votes:

- recheck
- recheck 2CP count.

Results will be published to the VEC website once the counts are completed.

You may observe and scrutinise the counting of these votes, including the opening of sealed boxes containing the ballot papers, and can also challenge the formality or an election official's interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper during the recheck. See **6.2 Two-candidate-preferred (2CP) count** for more information on observing 2CP counts.

Other-district and other region early votes

Early votes cast at EVCs or mobile voting centres outside of the elector's enrolled district will be sorted and packaged in hubs on election weekend. These other-district votes will then be securely transferred to the CAS for processing and counting. This is known as the early vote exchange.

The early vote exchange occurs in 2 stages. During election weekend, including on election day within the restricted area, election hubs will sort, reconcile and package other-district early votes for transfer. On Monday 30 November 2026, these votes will be transferred to the CAS where they will be receipted and processed. Additional transfers may occur later in the week after election weekend, if required.

There is an exception to this process for early votes taken for districts within the same election hub as the dispatching district, where the voter was marked off in real-time using the VEC's electronic roll mark-off application and the ballot paper was placed directly into a ballot box rather than a declaration envelope. These votes will be exchanged and receipted locally.

The district early votes that are exchanged locally will be counted in the election hub from the Monday after election day. Other-district early votes dispatched to the CAS are expected to be counted at the CAS on Wednesday 2 December 2026, with any votes received from additional transfers expected to be counted on Monday 7 December.

Three counts will be conducted for these votes:

- primary first preference count
- recheck
- recheck 2CP count.

Results will be published to the VEC website once the counts are completed.

5. Counting period

Any early votes in declaration envelopes will also undergo preliminary scrutiny and extraction at the CAS before being counted.

You may observe and scrutinise the exchange and counting of these votes, including the opening of sealed boxes containing the ballot papers, and can also challenge the formality or an election official's interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper during the primary and recheck counts. See **6.2 Two-candidate-preferred (2CP) count** for more information on observing 2CP counts. You may also observe and scrutinise the preliminary scrutiny and extraction of early votes in declaration envelopes.

Any region votes that are locally exchanged will not be counted in election hubs. These will be sealed in security boxes following the completion of local exchange activities and securely transferred to the CAS as part of the early vote exchange. See **5.5 Region counting** for more information on counting the region other-district early votes at the CAS.

Absent district and region votes

Absent votes cast in election day voting centres that were reconciled and returned to the election hub in sealed boxes on election night will be sorted and packed and securely transferred to the CAS for processing and counting. This is known as the absent vote exchange.

The absent vote exchange also occurs in 2 stages. On Monday 30 November 2026, election hubs will sort, reconcile and package votes for transfer. On Tuesday 1 December, these votes will be transferred to the CAS where they will be receipted and processed. Additional transfers may occur later in the week after election weekend, if required.

Absent district votes are expected to be counted at the CAS on Thursday 3 December 2026, with any votes received from additional transfers expected to be counted on Monday 7 December. Three counts will be conducted for absent district votes:

- primary first preference count
- recheck
- recheck 2CP count.

Results will be published to the VEC website once the counts are completed.

Any absent votes in declaration envelopes will also undergo preliminary scrutiny and extraction at the CAS before being counted.

You may observe and scrutinise the exchange and counting of these votes, including the opening of sealed boxes containing the ballot papers, and can also challenge the formality or an election official's interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper during the primary and recheck counts. See **6.2 Two-candidate-preferred (2CP) count** for more information on observing 2CP counts. You may also observe and scrutinise the preliminary scrutiny and extraction of absent votes in declaration envelopes.

See **5.5 Region counting** for information on counting the region absent votes at the CAS.

Interstate and overseas votes

Early votes received from overseas and interstate electors will be sorted and counted at the CAS. Votes marked off in real-time using the VEC's electronic roll mark-off application will be packaged in envelopes for secure transfer to the CAS.

Three counts will be conducted for interstate and overseas district early votes:

- primary first preference count (following extraction)
- recheck
- recheck 2CP count.

Results will be published to the VEC website once the counts are completed.

Any early votes in declaration envelopes, where the vote was not marked off in real-time on the VEC's electronic roll mark-off application, will also undergo preliminary scrutiny before being extracted.

You may observe and scrutinise the sorting, extraction and counting of these votes, including the opening of sealed boxes containing the ballot papers, and can also challenge the formality or an election official's interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper during the primary and recheck counts.

See **6.2 Two-candidate-preferred (2CP) count** for more information on observing 2CP counts. You may also observe and scrutinise the preliminary scrutiny of early votes in declaration envelopes.

See **5.5 Region counting** for information on the counting of region interstate and overseas early votes at the CAS.

Provisional and marked-as-voted votes

All provisional and marked-as-voted votes received across all voting locations will be packaged and securely transferred to the CAS as part of the early vote exchange, absent vote exchange, and secure transfer of votes from interstate and overseas venues. All provisional votes will be assessed by enrolment officers at the CAS to check eligibility. Preliminary scrutiny will then be conducted on all eligible provisional votes, as well as all marked-as-voted votes.

Admitted provisional and marked-as-voted votes will be extracted and counted at the CAS.

Three counts will be conducted for these district votes:

- primary first preference count
- recheck
- recheck 2CP count.

Results will be published to the VEC website once the counts are completed.

You may observe and scrutinise the exchange, extraction and counting of these votes and can also challenge the formality or an election official's interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper during the primary and recheck counts.

See **6.2 Two-candidate-preferred (2CP) count** for more information on observing 2CP counts. You may also observe and scrutinise the preliminary scrutiny of these votes from declaration envelopes.

See **5.5 Region counting** for information on the counting of region provisional and marked-as-voted votes at the CAS.

Telephone assisted votes

Telephone assisted votes will be sorted and reconciled at the CAS following the close of voting and will then be packaged and securely transferred to count.

Three counts will be conducted for telephone assisted district votes:

- primary first preference count
- recheck
- recheck 2CP count.

Results will be published to the VEC website once the counts are completed.

You may observe and scrutinise the counting of these votes, including the opening of sealed boxes containing the ballot papers, and can also challenge the formality or an election official's interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper during the primary and recheck counts. See **6.2 Two-candidate-preferred (2CP) count** for more information on observing 2CP counts.

See **5.5 Region counting** for information on the counting of region telephone assisted votes at the CAS.

Postal votes

Postal votes received after election day will undergo preliminary scrutiny before being extracted and counted daily at the CAS from Tuesday 1 December.

Three counts will be conducted for district postal votes extracted after election weekend:

- primary first preference count
- recheck
- recheck 2CP count.

Results will be published to the VEC website once the counts are completed.

You may observe and scrutinise the preliminary scrutiny, extraction and counting of these votes, and can also challenge the formality or an election official's interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper during the primary and recheck first preference counts. See **6.2 Two-candidate-preferred (2CP) count** for more information on observing 2CP counts.

When braille postal votes are extracted, you may also observe the transposing of braille ballot paper preferences onto ballot papers for counting. There will be a dedicated time to perform this extraction, as well as another dedicated time to extract of all postal votes dispatched electronically to voters outside of Victoria. These postal votes are downloaded and printed by voters on A4 paper before being mailed back to the CAS. The extracted A4 sheets will be prepared for counting by the extraction team (for example the A4 sheets will be taped together to form a whole ballot paper where split over several pages).

See **5.5 Region counting** for information on the counting of region postal votes after election weekend at the CAS.

Postal votes that are received after 6 pm on Friday 4 December 2026 are not eligible to be counted. They will not undergo preliminary scrutiny and must instead be set aside as 'late returns'.

District preference distributions

Once they have been counted, all district votes counted at the CAS will be packaged and securely transferred to their relevant election hub, where they will be amalgamated with the ordinary and early votes for the relevant district that were rechecked at the election hub. A full preference distribution will then be conducted in each district. Preference distributions are expected to commence from Thursday 10 December 2026.

A full preference distribution involves excluding the candidate with the fewest votes at each distribution and transferring each of their ballot papers to the remaining candidates in the order of the voter's next highest preference. This process continues until only two candidates remain, even if a candidate obtains an absolute majority before the final exclusion, and it will provide the margin between the final two candidates.

Where a candidate receives an absolute majority (more than 50%) of first preference votes, this count is conducted for statistical purposes only. If there is no winner on first preference votes, the distribution of preferences will determine the result of the district election.

You may observe and scrutinise the amalgamation and preference distribution and can also challenge the formality or an election official's interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper during the distribution.

Ballot papers are not checked for formality during the amalgamation process, so this process is not challengeable, however you may challenge the formality or an election official's interpretation of preferences on any missorted votes that are found during the amalgamation. These can be identified during quality assurance checks to ensure the process has been completed correctly. Recheck results will be updated to reflect any missort corrections so first preference totals are as accurate as possible before the preference distribution commences.

District two-party-preferred counts

A two-party-preferred (2PP) count is a statistical count that shows how the vote is divided between the Australian Labor Party – Victorian Branch and the Liberal Party of Australia – Victorian Division/National Party of Australia – Victoria Coalition in each district election that these parties contest. It takes into account the preferences of voters who gave higher preferences to other registered political parties or independent candidates.

We conduct a 2PP count if the selected candidates for the 2CP count or the results of the full distribution of preferences do not reflect how preferences in the district are divided between these two parties.

Any 2PP counts will occur in the election hub once the preference distribution has been completed.

You may observe and scrutinise a 2PP count, but cannot challenge ballot paper formality as ballot papers are not checked for formality during this process. The 2PP count is conducted for information purposes only at the completion of counting and does not have any bearing on the official results of the election.

5.5 Region counting

Once all region votes have been transferred to the CAS for counting, they will be processed as follows:

1. ordinary region votes that underwent a primary first preference count in election day voting centres will be batched and sent to data entry
2. all other region votes will undergo a primary first preference count before being batched and sent to data entry.

During data entry, the preferences from above-the-line and below-the-line votes will be data-entered into our computer count application. Two rounds of data entry will be conducted, serving as a computerised recheck.

The total number of informal votes for each parcel of votes in each region election will also be entered into our computer count application.

Data entry is expected to commence on Monday 30 November. Primary and recheck results for each parcel will be published on the VEC website once the counts are completed.

Once all data entry is completed, below-the-line preferences will be loaded into the computer count application for the preferences captured above-the-line in each region election. Below-the-line preferences within each group will be loaded using the order of each group's candidates below the line.

You may observe and scrutinise the extracting, counting, batching and data entry of region votes, and can also challenge the formality or an election official's interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper during the primary first preference counts.

During data entry, you may:

- ask a computer count team leader for more information
- query the formality of a ballot paper being data-entered. If this occurs, the data entry operator will flag the ballot paper as 'formality to be determined' for review by the manager-in-charge. The manager-in-charge (or their delegate) will examine the ballot paper to decide formality
- query the accuracy of the data entry of a specific ballot paper or batch with the computer count team leader. If this occurs, the computer count team leader will review the relevant ballot papers with you, comparing them to the preferences shown on an extract of the *Ballot paper details* report.
 - If any errors are found, the computer count team leader will correct these in the computer count application.
 - If you do not agree with what has been data-entered, or you would like to challenge the ballot paper, you can request that the computer count team leader flags the ballot paper in the system as 'formality to be determined' for review by the manager-in-charge. The manager-in-charge (or their delegate) will examine the ballot paper to decide formality.

Formality checking will occur regularly throughout the data entry process. Ballot papers flagged as 'formality to be determined' in the computer count application will be removed from the batch and reviewed by the manager-in-charge (or their delegate) to determine formality.

You can challenge the formality of a ballot paper when it is being reviewed by the manager-in-charge (or their delegate). Their decision is final and cannot be challenged again during the count. See **2.1 Observing, scrutinising and challenging** for more information. Copies of the ballot paper formality guide will be available to reference during the count. See **Appendix 6: Ballot paper formality rules** for more information.

Batch audits will be conducted throughout the count. Randomly selected batches will be checked for accuracy against the *Ballot paper details* report.

Information about our validation procedures can be found in the *Availability of results guide*, available on the VEC website or from the manager-in-charge by request.

The results for each Legislative Council region election will be calculated at the CAS. This is expected to occur on Wednesday 16 December 2026.

6. Counting process for district elections

This chapter provides detailed information about the counting method used in district elections and the types of counting that we conduct to determine the official results. It also provides information about statistical counts we conduct during the counting period to provide an early indication of the election result.

You should ensure that you understand the types of counts that are used and the differences between them. While we aim to count votes as quickly as possible, accuracy is our highest priority.

Preferential counting is used in each district election, where one member is elected to the Legislative Assembly. To be elected, a candidate must obtain more than 50% of all formal votes (known as an absolute majority).

In all district elections, ballot papers will undergo the following manual counts:

- primary first preference count
- primary 2CP count (election weekend counts only)
- recheck
- recheck 2CP count (all counts)
- full preference distribution.

You are strongly encouraged to read **Appendix 6: Ballot paper formality rules** before attending counting to ensure that you are familiar with what constitutes a formal and informal district election ballot paper in Victorian state elections.

6.1 Primary counts

The primary count, also known as a first preference count, is the first time a vote is counted. Election officials sort and count each individual ballot paper by hand according to the voter's first preference. This is conducted at tables where there are sorting cards for each candidate.

After an election official examines each ballot paper, they place it next to:

- the sorting card for the candidate who received the number '1' vote, if the vote appears to be a formal vote
- the 'formality to be determined' sorting card, if the vote appears to be an informal vote or the preferences written on the ballot paper are unclear
- the 'challenged' sorting card if the formality of a vote or an election official's interpretation of preferences on a ballot paper is challenged by a scrutineer.

Any ballot paper that is sorted to the 'formality to be determined' sorting card is reviewed by a trained counting officer. If the ballot paper is confirmed as informal, it is placed next to an 'informal' sorting card. If the ballot paper is deemed formal, it is placed next to a 'formal' sorting card and moved to the sorting card of the relevant candidate.

Ballot papers that are challenged are reviewed by the manager-in-charge, counting team leader or the election manager (or a delegate), who will rule on the formality of the vote. See 'Challenged ballot papers' in **2.1 Observing, scrutinising and challenging** for further information. If the ballot paper is confirmed as an informal

vote, it is placed next to an 'informal' sorting card. If the ballot paper is deemed to be a formal vote, it is placed next to an 'admitted' sorting card and moved to the sorting card of the relevant candidate.

Once all the ballot papers have been sorted, the manager-in-charge or counting team leader tallies and records the total number of first preference votes for each candidate, as well as the total number of informal votes. These are then entered into our election management system directly or phoned in to the election office for data entry. Results are then published on the VEC website.

6.2 Two-candidate-preferred (2CP) count

On election weekend, once primary counts are completed for district election ballot papers, election officials sort all formal ballot papers to the 2 candidates predicted to be 'most likely' to have the highest number of votes after the distribution of preferences. This is known as the two-candidate-preferred (2CP) count.

The purpose of the 2CP count is to provide indicative preference data to election analysts, candidates, registered political parties and the media. The 2CP results, along with candidate first preference totals and historical result trends, allow these groups to predict the likely outcome in each district election, even though official results may not be known for several weeks. This provides an early indication of who will form government from the Legislative Assembly following the election, and it is how election analysts can 'call' the election once enough district election outcomes can be predicted.

The 2CP count is an indicative count only and has no bearing on the official outcome of the election. The 2CP results only allow outcomes to be predicted or, alternatively, help identify district elections where the result is in doubt until further results become available. Importantly, the 2CP result does not replace the full distribution of preferences that will provide the official margin between the final two candidates with the highest number of votes. In some complex or very close counts, the result may not be known until the full distribution of preferences has occurred.

As the 2CP results do not affect the official election results, the VEC's focus following election weekend will be on determining the official results as soon as possible, prioritising the accuracy and completion of primary and recheck counts, as well as the full distribution of preferences, over indicative counts.

2CP selections

The VEC predicts the 2 candidates for the 2CP count in each district election shortly after nominations close, and well before election day. 2CP predictions have become more challenging as voter support patterns shift in Victorian state elections. Our 2CP predictions are made using the best available data informed by electoral knowledge, political science and statistical modelling techniques.

The 2CP selections are confidential until voting closes at 6 pm on election night. If you are scrutineering an election night count, you will be told who the 2 selected candidates are after 6 pm, before the 2CP count begins.

Conducting a 2CP count

To conduct a 2CP count, election officials sort all formal ballot papers from the candidates not selected to the sorting cards for the 2 selected candidates according to which of the 2 candidates has the higher preference marked on the ballot paper. The higher preference is indicated by the lowest number against the selected candidates (the number closest to 1).

Votes counted on election weekend have a 2CP count conducted following the primary count, as well as a recheck 2CP after the parcel is rechecked in the weeks following election weekend. Votes admitted to the count after election weekend proceed directly to the recheck 2CP (following the completion of the primary count and recheck).

2CP results are entered progressively into our election management system and are published on the VEC website.

2CP corrections

We will monitor the results of the 2CP counts on election weekend. Where the selected candidates in a district election appear incorrect, we may decide to correct the 2CP at the commencement of the recheck process if a more accurate selection can be determined at that point in time. If the contest is between 3 candidates, this may include changing to a 3-candidate-preferred count in certain circumstances. We will not adjust any incorrect 2CP counts on election weekend.

The decision to make a correction is at the discretion of the VEC, and any correction remains a prediction that may not reflect the official result once known, especially as it is sometimes not possible to identify who will be the final two candidates until the distribution of preferences is completed. Even when the 2 candidates are correct, minor variations may still be observed between the 2CP results, determined for each parcel of votes counted to first preference, and the results from the distribution of preferences, which is conducted following the amalgamation of all vote parcels.

Observing 2CP counts

You may observe and scrutinise 2CP counts but you may not challenge the formality and interpretation of preferences of the votes being counted. This is because a 2CP count is an indicative count only and ballot papers are not checked for formality during these types of counts. Ballot papers already deemed to be formal in the preceding primary count or recheck are simply distributed to the 2 selected candidates and tallied.

The exception to this is any missorted votes identified and corrected during the activity. If this occurs, you may challenge the formality or interpretation of preferences on these votes, as long as they have not been previously challenged and ruled on during the preceding primary count or recheck (depending on when the 2CP count is occurring).

You should also be aware of the following information:

- Once the 2CP candidates are selected, 2CP counts that follow primary counts on election weekend will continue with this pairing even if it becomes clear that the selection is likely incorrect. Selections will only be changed prior to the commencement of rechecks on the Monday after election day.

- In some instances, the candidates with the highest number of first preference votes will not be the same as the candidates who are predicted to be the final 2 candidates after the distribution of preferences. 2CP counts will always distribute votes to the 2 selected candidates, which may or may not be those who have the highest number of first preference votes in that count or overall.
- To ensure that 2CP counts conducted on election weekend are completed efficiently, enabling this data to be released to election analysts, candidates, registered political parties and the media as soon as possible, election officials may not correct every missorted ballot paper found during these counts. Any missorted papers that are not corrected will be flagged for correction at recheck, and a further 2CP count will be conducted after rechecks are complete. Any missorts found during the recheck 2CP count will be corrected, ensuring that recheck 2CP totals are as accurate as possible for the selected candidates, and that first preference totals are also accurate following the completion of the recheck.

6.3 Rechecks

Rechecking is the process where, following a primary count, district election ballot papers are checked again for:

- formality
- correct sorting to first preference
- correct reconciliation of totals.

It is not uncommon for minor variations in sorting and counting (known as missorts) to be identified during the rechecking process, particularly if there are a large number of candidates on the ballot paper for the election. Variations may also occur if the recheck is observed by many scrutineers who are actively challenging decisions on ballot paper formality. We monitor for any significant variations that need further checking.

After rechecking, if a candidate has reached an absolute majority of first preference votes (more than 50% of the formal votes), and any further votes not yet admitted for counting cannot change the result, the candidate will be declared elected and a full distribution of preferences will occur for statistical purposes only. The declaration may occur before, during or after the distribution of preferences for statistical purposes. Otherwise, the count will progress to the distribution of preferences to obtain a result.

Rechecked results are entered progressively into our election management system and are published on the VEC website. Election managers and managers-in-charge can provide you with consolidated reports of rechecked results.

See **Chapter 9. Availability of results and declarations** for further information.

6.4 Distribution of preferences

Prior to the counting period commencing, the Electoral Commissioner will issue a direction that full distributions of preferences must be conducted for all district elections.

When a candidate receives an absolute majority (more than 50%) of first preference votes, a distribution of preferences will be conducted for statistical purposes only. If there is no successful candidate based on first preference votes, the distribution of preferences will be completed to determine the result.

6. Counting process for district elections

For all district elections, the distribution of preferences continue until there are only 2 candidates remaining, even if a candidate obtains an absolute majority before there are only 2 candidates left. This will provide the margin between the 2 final candidates after the distribution has occurred.

Amalgamation of ballot papers

Before a distribution of preferences takes place, the election manager will amalgamate all first preference ballot papers for each candidate and all informal votes by combining the rechecked parcels of votes. This will include any parcels of votes counted at the CAS, which will be securely transferred to the election hub to be included in the distribution of preferences.

The total number of ballot papers will be confirmed after amalgamation to ensure that it matches the total number of ballot papers from all rechecked parcels of votes.

You may observe and scrutinise the amalgamation of ballot papers, but cannot challenge the formality and interpretation of preferences of the votes being combined. This is because ballot papers are not checked for formality during this step. The exception to this is any missorted votes identified and corrected during the activity. These can be identified during quality assurance checks to ensure the amalgamation has been completed correctly. If this occurs, you may challenge the formality or interpretation of preferences on these votes, as long as they have not been previously challenged and ruled on during the amalgamation. Recheck results will be updated to reflect any missort corrections so first preference totals are as accurate as possible before the preference distribution commences.

Process of distributing preferences

At the commencement of a distribution of preferences, the candidate with the lowest number of first preference votes is excluded. The ballot papers for the excluded candidate are distributed to the remaining candidates according to the next available preference on each ballot paper.

The process of excluding candidates and distributing their ballot papers among the remaining candidates continues until all ballot papers are transferred to the 2 final candidates. If the distribution is conducted to obtain a result, the candidate who achieves an absolute majority will be declared elected, assuming there are no outstanding votes to be counted that could affect the final outcome. Any missorted votes found during the distribution of preferences will be corrected. If it is not possible to correct the missort, it will be removed from the count.

The results from each distribution of preferences will be entered into our election management system and published on the VEC website. Election managers can provide you with the preference distribution report. See **Chapter 9. Availability of results and declarations** for further information.

You may observe and scrutinise the distribution of preferences, even after a candidate reaches an absolute majority. You can challenge the formality or interpretation of preferences of any ballot paper, provided that ballot paper was not already challenged and ruled on during the distribution of preferences. Challenges are allowed regardless of whether the distribution of preferences is being conducted to obtain a result or for statistical purposes.

7. Counting process for region elections

This chapter provides detailed information on the counting method used in region elections and the types of counting that we conduct to determine the official results.

You should ensure that you understand the types of counts that are used and the differences between them. While we aim to count votes as quickly as possible, accuracy is our highest priority.

Proportional representation counting is used in each region election, where 5 members are elected to the Legislative Council. To be elected, candidates must receive a proportion of formal votes known as the quota.

The quota is calculated by dividing the number of formal ballot papers by the number of candidates to be elected plus one, then adding one to this figure. Any remainder is disregarded.

For example, if there were 450,000 formal ballot papers in a region election, the quota to be elected in that region election would be 75,001.

Region election ballot papers will undergo the following counts:

- a primary first preference count. This will either be conducted manually in most election day voting centres, or manually at the CAS once all region ballot papers have been securely transferred there following the close of voting
- a recheck via two rounds of data entry for both above-the-line and below-the-line preferences from each ballot paper.

Once all data entry is completed, below-the-line preferences will be loaded into the computer count application for the preferences captured above the line in each region election. Below-the-line preferences within each group will be loaded using the order of each group's candidates below the line. You are strongly encouraged to read through **Appendix 6: Ballot paper formality rules** to ensure that you are familiar with what constitutes a formal and informal region ballot paper in Victorian state elections.

Removal of group voting tickets from region elections

Group voting tickets were removed from Legislative Council region elections by changes to the Electoral Act in August 2026. Electors who choose to complete their region election ballot paper above the line are now instructed to number the boxes above the line from 1 to at least 5 in the order of their preference.

Each formal vote for a group above the line will be distributed according to the order that each group has listed their candidates below the line.

There are no changes to the instructions for electors who choose to complete their region election ballot paper below the line.

7.1 Primary counts

The primary count, also known as a first preference count, is the first time a vote is counted. Primary counts for region election ballot papers involve election officials sorting and counting each individual ballot paper to first preference by hand. Two types of first preference results are recorded:

- the number of first preference votes for each group marked above the line
- the number of first preference votes for each group and ungrouped candidate marked below the line.

When sorting the ballot papers, election officials sort obviously informal (blank or no number 1 present) ballot papers to an 'informal' sorting card. All ballot papers placed next to the informal sorting card will undergo further review during the recheck. Formal ballot papers are sorted to the relevant group or ungrouped candidate according to the voter's first preference.

At the end of this sort, the ballot papers are tallied and the total first preference votes for each group and ungrouped candidate, as well as the total number of informal votes, are entered into our election management system and published to the VEC website.

The size of region election ballot papers and the numbers of groups and candidates listed on each ballot paper mean that counting region election ballot papers manually is challenging. Primary region election results should therefore be considered indicative only, particularly as only obviously informal ballot papers are identified during this phase.

7.2 Recheck

A computerised recheck will take place for each region election.

Rechecking is the process where, following a primary count, region election ballot papers are checked again for:

- formality
- correct sorting to first preference
- correct reconciliation of totals.

Once region election ballot papers have undergone a primary count, they are batched and sent to data entry.

Data entry operators enter the preferences recorded on above-the-line and below-the-line ballot papers into the VEC's computer count system. Ballot papers flagged as 'formality to be determined' in the computer count application will be removed from the batch and reviewed by the manager-in-charge (or their delegate) to determine formality. Anything deemed to be formal is returned to the count and data-entered into the computer count system.

All ballot papers then go through a second round of data entry to verify the first data entry process.

During data entry, you may request copies of reports that show the progressive first preference results for each candidate. See **Chapter 9. Availability of results and declarations** for further information.

All ballot papers that were deemed informal during the primary count are also reviewed during data entry. The number of informal votes will be recorded and tracked for each parcel of votes to ensure that totals can be reconciled. No data from informal votes is retained in the computer count application.

Due to the challenging nature of counting region ballot papers by hand, small variations in first preference and informal totals will occur between the primary count results and the rechecked results for each parcel of votes.

Recheck results will be published to the VEC website for each parcel of votes once the first round of data entry of that parcel is complete. These results will be updated following the parcel's second round of data entry.

7.3 Distribution of preferences

Once data entry of all formal ballot papers is completed for a region election, the final totals will be reconciled and the results will be calculated using the VEC's computer count system. The calculation will take place at the CAS. The calculation of a region election is a public event that anyone can attend, including candidates, families and friends, local media and other interested parties.

Further information on computerised calculation, including the C# source code used by the VEC's computer count application, is available at vec.vic.gov.au/vote-counting

8. Adjournment

The election manager can adjourn the count of votes. This can occur for reasons such as:

- it is the end of the day, and while the count in progress has not fully completed, the venue must be packed up for the night
- an emergency or natural disaster.

If counting is adjourned, the election manager will inform all election officials and scrutineers that are present. If the adjournment changes the timeframe for a particular count that was previously communicated to your candidate, we will notify your candidate of the time, location and additional details (such as the expected number of election officials) for resuming the activity. If counting is adjourned for any reason, all ballot material will be packed and securely stored.

9. Availability of results and declarations

This chapter provides details about when results of counts will be made available to you.

9.1 Availability of district count results

You can view the results for district elections on the VEC website, including first preference results, 2CP counts, the distribution of preferences and any 2PP counts.

Results will be progressively published as they become available.

The following reports containing recheck results are also available from the manager-in-charge on request:

- *Electorate results (voting centre)* – recheck version
- *Electorate results (details)* – recheck version

Following the distribution of preferences, the following report will also be made available:

- *Preference distribution*

9.2 Availability of region count results

You can view the results for region elections on the VEC website, including first preference results and the distribution of preferences.

Results will be progressively published as they become available.

Reports available during data entry

The following reports are also available throughout the course of data entry on request:

- *First preference votes counted*
- *Computer count results for Legislative Council*
- *Ballot paper details*

Reports available after calculation

The following reports will be made available to scrutineers and candidates following the calculation of results in each region election:

- *First preference votes counted*
- *PR Distribution*
- *Ballot paper details*
- *Region votes received details*

More information on the reports available to scrutineers during region counts is provided in the *Availability of results guide*, available on the VEC website from November or from the manager-in-charge at the CAS by request.

9.3 Declaration of results

We are required to declare the result of an election as soon as practicable after election day. Once we determine that no outstanding votes will change the result of a district election for the Legislative Assembly (Lower House), the election manager will schedule the formal declaration of the result. This may occur even if there are a small number of counting activities still to be completed. You can observe and scrutinise all counting activities, including those that are conducted after the declaration of the result.

Where counting continues after the declaration of the result, we will continue to update the published results on the VEC website. This is particularly likely in district elections where a full distribution of preferences is being conducted for statistical purposes only and the declaration can be conducted before the distribution of preferences is completed.

The declaration of results for each region election for the Legislative Council (Upper House) will take place at the CAS following the calculation of results.

Once the declaration is completed for a district or region election, the VEC website will show that the declaration has occurred and display the name of the elected candidate(s).

Each declaration of results is a public event that anyone can attend, including candidates, families and friends, local media and other interested parties.

We will notify candidates of the date, time and location of the declaration for their district or region.

10. Recount of votes

Recounts usually occur if the result of an election is extremely close. Recounts can only occur before an 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, such as only the informal ballot papers (partial recount). The type of recount to be conducted is determined by the election manager and 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 once a provisional result is known and up until declaration. For district elections, this is once a candidate has obtained an absolute majority that cannot be overturned by any outstanding votes. For region elections, this is after the calculation of results.

Any requests received outside of this period must be refused.

The election manager and 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 election manager must provide all candidates and their specified contact person with written notice a minimum of 4 hours before the recount starts. Notice of the recount must also be provided to the registered officers of registered political parties with endorsed candidates in the district or region election being recounted.

You may attend a recount being conducted to represent your candidate's interests. If the recount is being conducted at venue where you have not previously been registered to attend on behalf of your candidate, you will need to register using a new candidate-signed *Appointment and declaration of scrutineer* form.

The election manager conducting a recount has the same power as if the recount were the original count and may reverse any decision to admit or reject a ballot paper.

The election manager can set any ballot paper aside for the Electoral Commissioner or Deputy Electoral Commissioner to rule on. You can also request that any ballot paper be set aside if you disagree with the decision of the election manager. The Electoral Commissioner or Deputy Electoral Commissioner are only required to rule on ballot papers where the number reserved could change the outcome of the recount.

11. Election compliance

This chapter describes the offences that exist for state elections relevant to scrutineers.

The value of a penalty unit is set annually by the Victorian Treasurer and is indexed on 1 July each year. For information on penalty units, see 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.

11.1 Offences

Offences for conduct of scrutineers

During voting a scrutineer must not:

- interfere with or attempt to influence any elector within a voting centre
- communicate with any person in a voting centre except as is necessary in their functions as a scrutineer
- handle any ballot papers.

This is set out in section 76(5) of the Act.

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

Scrutineers are also prohibited from wearing or displaying any badge, emblem or political slogan of a candidate or political party within 6 metres of a designated entrance of a voting centre or inside a voting centre during the hours of voting. For more information, see 'Canvassing or other prohibited conduct near a voting centre' below.

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 declaration as to your identity
- providing false information when completing the *Appointment and declaration of scrutineer form*

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 both offences, 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 both offences, 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.

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

Breaching secrecy of the vote

Except as 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.

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 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.

The maximum penalty is 60 penalty units or 6 months 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.

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, including a candidate, 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.

11.2 Removal of scrutineers from a venue

As a scrutineer, you have obligations in relation to your behaviour and conduct. These obligations come from the Act, the Regulations, relevant VEC Determinations, conditions of entry and the scrutineer declaration.

It is a reasonable direction of an election manager or election official to require a scrutineer to leave an activity or venue where the scrutineer has, or is reasonably suspected of, failing to comply with the conditions of entry.

11. Election compliance

If a scrutineer refuses to leave the activity or venue, the VEC will contact the candidate the scrutineer is representing or the registered political party associated with the candidate, and request that they arrange for the scrutineer to leave the activity or venue. If the candidate or registered political party cannot be reached, or the behaviour deteriorates, the election manager or manager-in-charge may request the police to remove the scrutineer.

This is set out in section 76 of the Act.

The VEC may also commence enforcement action, including prosecution, against scrutineers who fail to meet their legal obligations.

12. Feedback and complaints

This chapter provides information on our feedback and complaints process.

12.1 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
- by mail to Level 11, 530 Collins Street Melbourne VIC 3000.
Please address your letter to Customer Feedback and Complaints team.

12.2 Feedback and complaint processing

We will 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 behaviours 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 on what offences are covered under the Act, see **Chapter 11. Election compliance**)
- 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.

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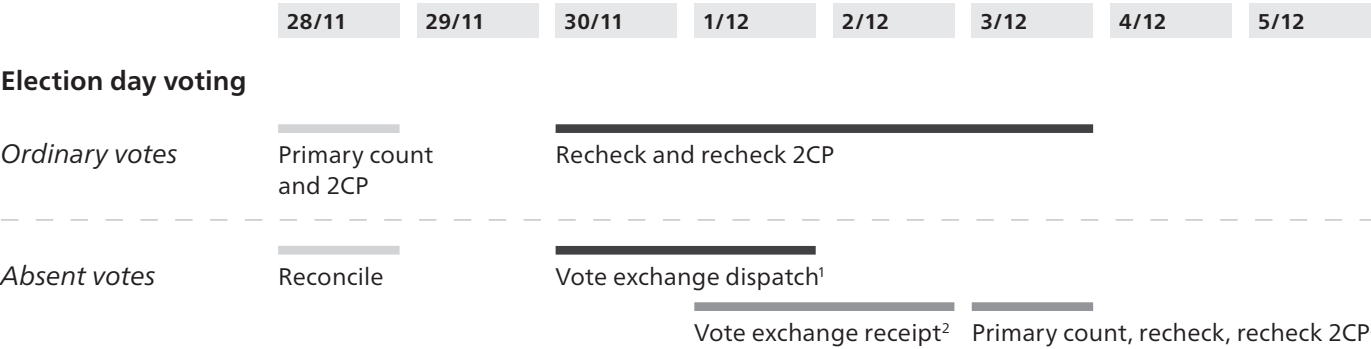
Appendices

Appendix 1: High-level count plans

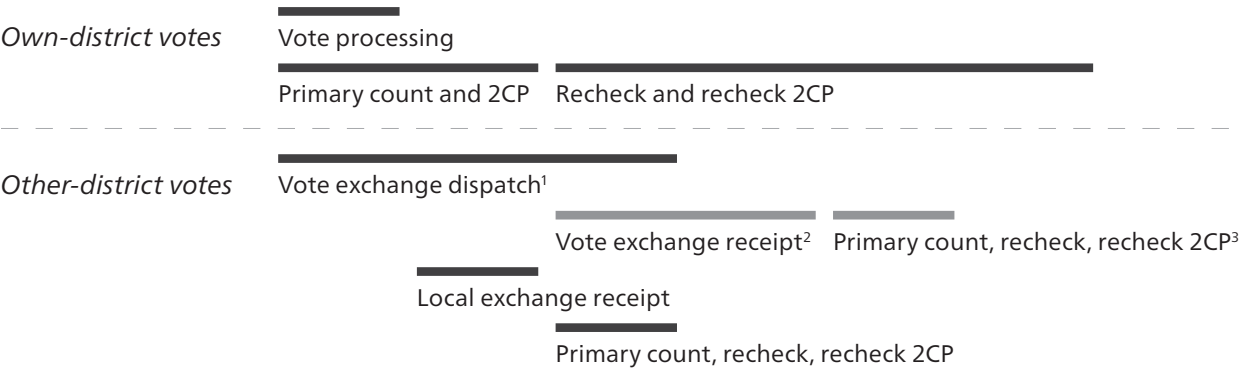
Legislative Assembly district election high-level count timeline

This high-level count timeline summarises the Legislative Assembly district election count process, including key counting, scrutiny and recheck activities, and the major milestones leading to the declaration of results.

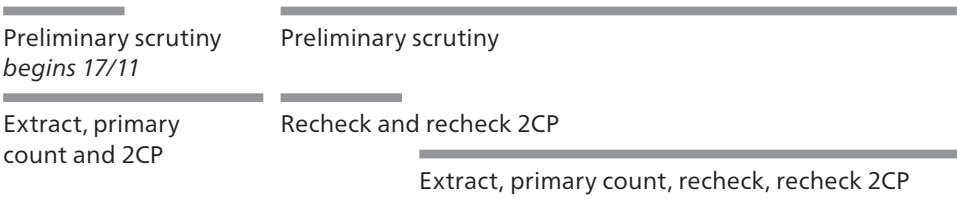
Legislative Assembly district election high-level count timeline



Early voting (taken in mobile and early voting centres)



Postal voting



Telephone assisted voting (TAV)



Interstate and overseas (ISOS) early voting



Marked-as-voted and provisional votes (taken in mobile and early voting centres, election day voting centres and ISOS venues)



All vote parcels

Primary and 2CP counts on election day commence from 6 pm

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

² Additional transfers may occur later in week if required

6/12

7/12

8/12

9/12

10/12

11/12

12–15/12

16/12

17/12

18/12

Legend: Activity location

Election day voting centre

Hub

Centralised activity site

Primary count, recheck, recheck 2CP³Primary count, recheck, recheck 2CP³Extract, primary count, recheck, recheck 2CP³

Extract, primary count, recheck, recheck 2CP

Dispatch parcels counted at CAS to hubs

District recount (from 14/12 if required)

Receive and
amalgamate

Full preference distribution

Declaration⁴

2PP (if required)

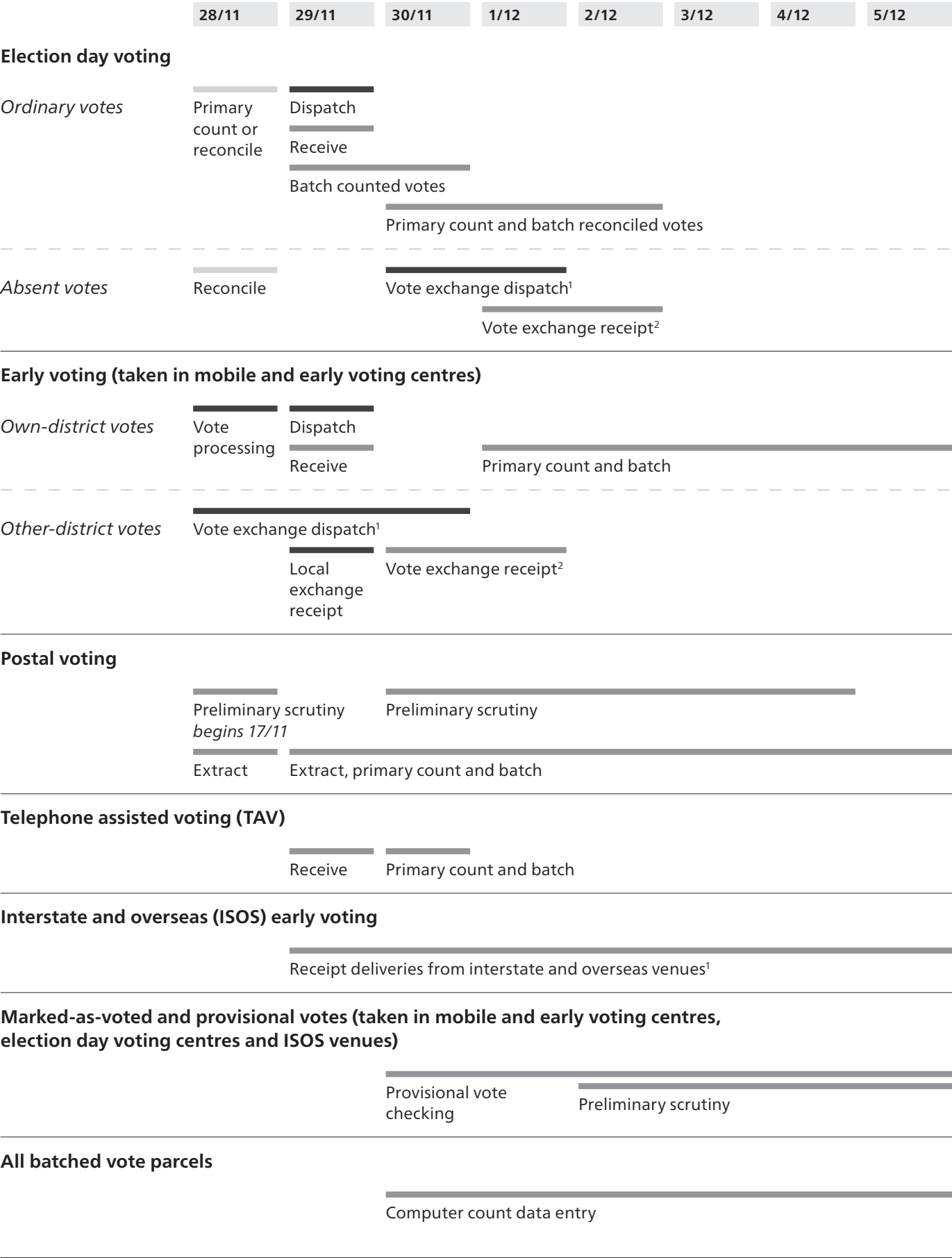
³ Votes in declaration envelopes will also undergo preliminary scrutiny and extraction⁴ Any district election that has a recount will be declared once the recount is complete

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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

6/12

7/12

8/12

9/12

10/12

11/12

12–15/12

16/12

17/12

18/12

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 results⁴

Region 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

Appendix 2: Appointment and declaration of scrutineer form

Appointment and declaration of scrutineer	District or region Election date / /
---	---

1 Candidate to complete
 Please use BLOCK LETTERS. A candidate appointing a scrutineer may sign this form by:

- Pasting a copy of their signature into the form
- Signing a PDF on a tablet, smartphone or laptop using a stylus or finger
- Signing a hard copy document and scanning the document.

Name of candidate

Signature		Date	
<i>Candidate</i>			/ /

2 Appointment of a scrutineer
 Please use BLOCK LETTERS.

Name of scrutineer

Residential address of scrutineer

(voting centre/election office/mobile voting team/count centre)

to be a scrutineer at

3 Scrutineer declaration
 Please use BLOCK LETTERS. Scrutineer to **complete in the presence of an election official.**

Name of scrutineer

I, , scrutineer for the candidate named above, declare that:

1. I undertake to be a scrutineer for the candidate named above.
2. I agree to comply with all lawful requirements of a scrutineer.
3. I am aware that it is an offence for a scrutineer to interfere with or attempt to influence any elector within a voting centre, communicate with any person in a voting centre except so far as is necessary, or handle any ballot papers.
4. I will not attempt to ascertain the vote(s) of any individual elector and should I become aware of the vote of an individual elector, I will not disclose that information.

Are you a candidate in this election? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature		Date	
<i>Scrutineer</i>			/ /

It is an indictable offence under section 148 of the *Electoral Act 2002* (Vic) to provide to the Victorian Electoral Commission orally or in writing any false or misleading information, or to make a statement knowing that it is false or misleading in a material particular in any declaration, application or claim under the Electoral Act.

Office use only

Declared before me at venue location

Name of Election Official witnessing declaration

Date

/ /

P380

Victorian Electoral Commission

Appendix 3: Registration checklist

To register as a scrutineer:	✓
Read the <i>Scrutineer handbook</i> and associated determination, available online at vec.vic.gov.au	
Complete an <i>Appointment and declaration of scrutineer</i> form, available from the election manager, online at LINK or in the <i>Candidate kit</i>	
Ensure your candidate has signed the form	
Bring an <i>Appointment and declaration of scrutineer</i> form to the venue that is signed by the candidate	
Sign the declaration section of the form in front of an election official at registration	
Listen to the scrutineer briefing for information on your role	
Listen to the activity briefing for information on the activity you are observing	
Follow all rules at the venue and follow the instructions of the election manager and election officials.	

Appendix 4: Scrutineer rights and responsibilities poster

Scrutineer rights and responsibilities

Your rights as a scrutineer

You can observe and scrutinise certain election activities before the close of voting as well as ballot material processing and counting after the close of voting. The table below lists the activities that you can observe and scrutinise at state elections and where a formal challenge can be made during these activities.

Activities which may be observed and scrutinised at a State election	Challengeable
Dispatching postal ballot packs	No
Exhibiting and sealing 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
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

*Note: For the avoidance of doubt, the correction of a missort during a statistical count can be challenged by a scrutineer.

Briefing

You must be briefed on your rights and responsibilities before you enter an activity space. Before each activity begins, VEC staff will also provide a briefing explaining the activity you are about to observe.

Challenging ballot paper formality

While observing activities, you can ask questions about the process but may only make a formal challenge during the specified activities outlined above. Refer to the Scrutineer handbook for information on what can be challenged during these activities.

Note: Raise your hand and say 'challenge' to get the attention of the election manager or the election official.

A decision on a challenged ballot paper is final and cannot be challenged again during the same count.

Scrutineer quotas

The number of scrutineers that can observe 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.

Because of this quota, you must identify which candidate you represent at every activity.

Election officials will monitor scrutineer numbers for each candidate to ensure quota limits are maintained. If you leave an activity, you must sign out so another scrutineer appointed by your candidate can enter in your place. If you do not sign out, you will continue to count towards your candidate's quota for the remainder of the activity.

Appendix 5: Conditions of entry for scrutineers poster

Attention: Scrutineers conditions of entry

Expected scrutineer behaviour:

Scrutineers are expected to behave consistently with obligations imposed on them while at venues they are entitled to attend. These obligations and prohibitions come from the Act, the Regulations, relevant determinations, conditions of entry and the scrutineer declaration.

Scrutineers must:

- Present a completed *Appointment and declaration of scrutineer P380* form to an election official at the scrutineer registration desk.
- Have appointment forms showing the appointment by each candidate if a scrutineer has been appointed by more than one candidate for a single venue.
- Sign the declaration (hard copy) in the presence of the election official at the scrutineer registration desk. If the form is not properly completed, you will not be authorised to perform your role.
- Only enter this venue when ballot papers for your own candidate are being processed.
- Always wear your registration identification and it must be visible at all times as this relates to the region or district that you are representing.
- Behave courteously and professionally towards venue staff.

Scrutineers must not:

- Interfere with or attempt to influence any elector within a venue or communicate with any person in a venue except as is necessary in their functions as a scrutineer.
- Handle any ballot papers.
- Observe activities that they are not appointed and signed-in for.
- Socialise with staff during breaks.
- Behave in a way that distracts election officials from performing their duties, such as talking loudly, including on mobile phones, or not providing officials with enough space to perform their duties.
- Wilfully or unnecessarily obstruct or delay the proceedings at a venue.
- Behave in a disorderly manner.
- Cause a disturbance at any election.
- Wear or display any badge, emblem or political slogan of a candidate or political party within 6 metres of a designated entrance of a voting centre or inside a voting centre during voting period. See section 158(2)(g) of the Act.

Important note:

Certain offences are subject to a penalty of up to 60 penalty units or 6 months imprisonment. Please refer to section 76(5) of the *Electorate Act 2002* for further detail. If a scrutineer fails to abide by any obligation or prohibition imposed on them, including the above, they may be removed from the activity or venue. You will be briefed on your rights and responsibilities before you enter. The person conducting the briefing will explain each stage of the process.

Restriction of the use of devices

Scrutineers are directed to refrain from using any device to record or photograph a ballot paper, declaration, form, or any agent, appointee, contractor or employee of the VEC (including election managers and election officials) while performing their role as a scrutineer. A device in this context includes an item that can capture, record, save or transmit images, videos or other information. This includes but is not limited to a mobile phone, a smart watch, a tablet or laptop, a camera or video recorder.

For more information visit vec.vic.gov.au/scrutineers



vec.vic.gov.au

STAT-POSTER37

Appendix 6: Ballot paper formality rules

The requirements for ballot paper formality are set out in the *Electoral Act 2002*, which prescribes how preferences must be marked to ensure a valid vote.

If a district or region ballot paper is cut or torn during processing or counting, and there is no doubt that the different parts belong to the same ballot paper, they can be taped together by an election official, and assessed for formality as one ballot paper.

District ballot papers

1. Ballot papers must have all boxes numbered using the full sequence of numbers (starting with 1) indicated on the ballot paper to be considered formal.
2. The only exception to rule 1 is where one box is left blank and would logically have contained the last number (such as when there are 6 candidates and the number 6 is the only missing number).
3. Ballot papers must have a number 1 in, adjacent to, or level with, one box (and only one box) to be considered formal. A tick or a cross cannot be used to indicate a first preference.
4. Numbers next to names are acceptable providing the voter's intention is clear.
5. Amendments to preferences are acceptable providing the voter's intention is clear. All other marks are to be ignored.
6. Unconventional but recognisable numbers, such as continental 1s and 7s and Roman numerals, or a mix of these numbering styles, are acceptable providing the voter's intention is clear.

One	Seven
/	Vii
/	7
1	7
1	7
I	VII

Examples of recognisable numbers

7. Numbers may be spelled out (for example one, two, three, and so on), but only in English.
8. Damaged ballot papers are formal if it is clear that the voter had access to all candidate information on the ballot paper when recording their preferences.
9. Ballot papers without an initial by an election official must not be excluded for that reason alone if the ballot paper contains a prescribed official mark (such as a watermark or an overprinting of the paper) that proves it was produced by the VEC.
10. Poorly formed numbers must be considered in the context of the whole ballot paper and are acceptable if they can reasonably be construed as numbers in the sequence.
11. More than one blank box makes the ballot paper informal.
12. A number skipped in the sequence makes the ballot paper informal.

13. A number other than the last number in the sequence missing makes the ballot paper informal.
14. A duplicated number makes the ballot paper informal.
15. If the number 0 (zero) is included in the sequence, the ballot paper is informal.
16. Damaged ballot papers are informal if any candidate information or preferences are not visible. If a ballot paper is torn across one of the boxes next to a candidate's name, but the preference in the box can still be understood, the ballot paper may still be deemed formal.
17. Ticks, crosses, letters (A, B, C, and so on) and any other non-numerical markings in boxes are not acceptable as indicators of preference and should be ignored, provided the voter's intention is clear.
18. Writing and markings on ballot papers that are not related to preferences should be ignored.
19. Ballot papers that include a deceased candidate must not be excluded for that reason alone. If a candidate dies after 6 pm on election day, counting will continue as normal, with the preferences for the deceased candidate treated as if the candidate is not deceased.

Each sample ballot paper is numbered to link it to the corresponding formality rule.

Ballot paper

Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.

Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo

6

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

2

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

4

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

1

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

3

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

5

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Formal

The numbers are consecutive, starting at 1

Ballot paper

Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.

Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo

2

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

4

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

1

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

3

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

5

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Formal

Only one box left blank, clearly the last preference

1. All boxes numbered using the full sequence of numbers (starting with 1) indicated on the ballot paper.
2. The only exception to rule 1 is where one box is left blank and would logically have contained the last number.

Ballot paper

Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.

Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo

2

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

✓1

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

3

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

4

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

5

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

6

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Formal

Even though there is a tick, number 1 is clear

Ballot paper

Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.

Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo

6

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

2

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

4

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

✓

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

3

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

5

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Informal

No number 1

- 3a. Ballot papers must have a number 1 in, adjacent to, or level with one box.
- 3b. A tick or a cross cannot be used to indicate a preference.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo		CANDIDATE, Name	2
Party logo		CANDIDATE, Name	3
Party logo		CANDIDATE, Name	6
Party logo		CANDIDATE, Name	1
Party logo		CANDIDATE, Name	4
Party logo		CANDIDATE, Name	5

Formal

Numbers outside boxes are still clearly allocated

4. Numbers next to names are acceptable if the voter's intention is clear.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	6	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	2	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	42	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	1	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	3	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	5	CANDIDATE, Name

Formal

The correction is clear

5. Amendments are acceptable if the voter's intention is clear. All other marks are ignored.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	2	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	III	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	I	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	5	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	IV	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	VI	CANDIDATE, Name

Formal

A mix of conventional and unconventional numbers is allowed

6. Unconventional but recognisable numbers are acceptable.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	two	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	one	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	three	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	four	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	five	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	six	CANDIDATE, Name

Formal

Written numbers are acceptable

7. Numbers may be spelled out, but only in English.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	3	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	2	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	6	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	1	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	4	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	5	CANDIDATE, Name Party name

Formal

Candidate information and preferences are discernible

8a. Voter had access to all candidate information on the ballot paper when recording preferences.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	2	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	3	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	6	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	1	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	4	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	5	CANDIDATE, Name Party name

Formal

Initials are missing, but printed on VEC security paper

8b. Voter had access to all candidate information on the ballot paper when recording preferences.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	6	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	2	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	4	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	1	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	3	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	5	CANDIDATE, Name Party name

Formal

Ballot paper not initialled, but printed on VEC security paper

9. Ballot papers without initials must not be excluded for that reason alone if it contains a prescribed official mark that proves it was produced by the VEC.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	2	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	4	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	1	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	3	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	5	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	6	CANDIDATE, Name Party name

Formal

Numbers can be determined taking the whole ballot paper into account

10a. Poorly formed numbers must be considered in the context of the whole ballot paper.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	2	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	1	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	3	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	4	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	3	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	6	CANDIDATE, Name Party name

Informal

Numbers in the third and fifth boxes are not distinguishable

- 10b. Poorly formed numbers must be considered in the context of the whole ballot paper.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	2	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo		CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	3	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	1	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo		CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo		CANDIDATE, Name Party name

Informal

More than one box left blank

11. More than one box left blank makes the ballot paper informal.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	6	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	2	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	4	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	1	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	7	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	5	CANDIDATE, Name Party name

Informal

Sequence broken between 2 and 4 (3 is missing)

- 12a. A number skipped in the sequence makes the ballot paper informal.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	3	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	2	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	4	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	1	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	7	CANDIDATE, Name Party name
Party logo	5	CANDIDATE, Name Party name

Informal

Sequence broken between 5 and 7 (6 is missing)

- 12b. A number skipped in the sequence makes the ballot paper informal.

Ballot paper

Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.

Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo

2

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

6

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

1

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

3

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

5

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Informal

The number 4 has been omitted from the sequence

13. A number other than the last number in the sequence missing makes the ballot paper informal.

Ballot paper

Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.

Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo

2

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

1

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

3

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

4

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

5

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

4

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Informal

The number 4 appears twice

14. A duplicated number makes the ballot paper informal.

Ballot paper

Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.

Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo

2

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

3

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

0

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

1

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

4

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

5

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Informal

The number 0 (zero) has been included

15. If the number '0' (zero) is included, the ballot paper is informal.

Ballot paper

Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly

Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.

Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo

3

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

2

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

6

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

1

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

4

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Party logo

CANDIDATE, Name

Party name

Informal

A candidate name is obscured and a preference can't be inferred

16. Candidate information or preferences are not visible.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly
Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	C	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	B	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	D	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	E	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	A	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	F	CANDIDATE, Name

Informal

Letters are not an acceptable indicator of preference

- 17a. Ticks, crosses, As and Bs, and non-numerical markings are not acceptable and should be ignored, provided the voter's intention is clear.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly
Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	X	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	X	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	I	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	X	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	X	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	X	CANDIDATE, Name

Informal

Sequence stops after number one

- 17b. Ticks, crosses, As and Bs, and non-numerical markings are not acceptable and should be ignored, provided the voter's intention is clear.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly
Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	6	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	2	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	1	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	4	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	3	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	5	CANDIDATE, Name

John Johnson

Formal

Ignore writing and strikethrough of candidate name

- 18a. Writing and markings that are not related to preferences should be ignored.

Ballot paper
Sample District

Issuing official's initials

Election of 1 member of the Legislative Assembly
Number the boxes 1 to 6 in the order of your choice.
Number every box to make your vote count.

Party logo	6	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	2	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	1	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	4	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	3	CANDIDATE, Name
Party logo	5	CANDIDATE, Name

Stick figure drawing

Formal

Ignore markings not related to preferences

- 18b. Writing and markings that are not related to preferences should be ignored.

Region ballot papers

Region ballot papers instruct voters to cast a region vote by:

- writing the numbers 1 to at least 5 next to groups' names in the boxes above the line on the ballot paper, or
- writing the numbers 1 to at least 5 next to candidates' names in the boxes below the line on the ballot paper.

These rules provide guidance on what can be considered a valid vote based on a voter's preferences as marked on the voter's region ballot paper.

The rules are divided into 3 sections: above-the-line votes, below-the-line votes, and general rules applying to all region votes.

If a voter has marked their region ballot paper both above and below the line, the formality of both parts needs to be determined (see ballot paper examples A – D).

- If both parts of the ballot paper are formal, the preferences marked below the line will be used for counting.
- If only one part of the ballot paper is formal, the formal part will be used for counting.
- If both parts of the ballot paper are informal, the vote is informal.

Above-the-line votes

1. Ballot papers must have at least one acceptable first preference mark in, adjacent to, or level with, one box above the line to be deemed a formal vote. Acceptable first preference marks are the number 1, a tick, or a cross.
2. First preference marks in 2 or more boxes above the line make the ballot paper informal unless it is an obvious correction. This includes:
 - if the number 1 appears more than once above the line
 - if the number 1 and a tick or the number 1 and a cross appear in different boxes above the line
 - if a tick appears more than once in different boxes above the line
 - if a cross appears more than once in different boxes above the line
 - if a tick and a cross appear in different boxes above the line.
3. If the voter's intention to record one acceptable first preference mark above the line is unclear for any reason, the ballot paper is informal.
4. A ballot paper should not be deemed informal because it does not have the numbers 1 to at least 5 appear in sequential order in boxes above the line, so long as it has a single acceptable first preference marked.
5. A ballot paper should not be deemed informal because of a break in sequence beyond the number 1. The ballot paper is considered formal from the acceptable first preference mark up to and including the last consecutive number before the break in sequence.
6. A ballot paper should not be deemed informal because of a duplicated number beyond the number 1. The ballot paper is considered formal from the acceptable first preference mark up to and including the last consecutive number before the duplicated number.

7. Letters (A, B, C, and so on) and any non-numerical markings other than ticks and crosses in boxes above the line are not acceptable as indicators of preference and should be ignored, provided the voter's intention is clear.
8. If the number 0 (zero) is included in the sequence above the line, the ballot paper is informal.

Below-the-line votes

9. Below-the-line votes are formal if the numbers 1 to at least 5 appear in sequential order in the boxes below the line. A ballot paper should not be deemed informal because of a break in sequence beyond the number 5.
10. Below-the-line votes must have a number 1 in, adjacent to, or level with, one box (and only one box) to be considered formal. A tick or a cross cannot be used to indicate a first preference below the line.
11. If the number 0 (zero) is included in the sequence below the line, the ballot paper is informal.
12. If any of the numbers between 1 and 5 are missing below the line, the ballot paper is informal. A ballot paper should not be deemed informal for mistakes in numbering outside of 1 to 5.
13. If any of the numbers 1 to 5 appear more than once below the line, the ballot paper is informal. A ballot paper should not be deemed informal because of a duplicated number beyond the number 5.
14. Ticks, crosses, letters (A, B, C, and so on) and any other non-numerical markings in boxes below the line are not acceptable as indicators of preference and should be ignored, provided the voter's intention is clear.

General formality rules applying to all region votes

15. Amendments to preferences are acceptable providing the voter's intention is clear. All other marks are to be ignored.
16. Unconventional but recognisable numbers, such as continental 1s and 7s and Roman numerals, or a mix of these numbering styles, are acceptable providing the voter's intention is clear.

One	Seven
/	Vii
/	7
1	7
1	7
I	VII

Examples of recognisable numbers

17. Numbers may be spelled out (for example one, two, three, and so on), but only in English.
18. Damaged ballot papers are formal if it is clear that the voter had access to all candidate and group information on the ballot paper when recording their preferences.
19. Numbers next to names are acceptable providing the voter's intention is clear.

20. Ballot papers without an initial by an election official must not be excluded for that reason alone if the ballot paper contains a prescribed official mark (such as a watermark or an overprinting of the paper) that proves that it was produced by the VEC.
21. Damaged ballot papers are informal if any candidate or group information or preferences are not visible. If a ballot paper is torn across one of the boxes next to a candidate's or group's name, but the preference in the box can still be understood, the ballot paper may still be deemed formal.
22. Poorly formed numbers must be considered in the context of the whole of the ballot paper and are acceptable if they can reasonably be construed as numbers in the sequence.
23. Writing and markings on ballot papers that are not related to preferences should be ignored.
24. A ballot paper containing a deceased candidate will not be deemed informal as long as there are 6 or more candidates (not including the deceased candidate) remaining in the election. The deceased candidate should be ignored on the ballot, and any number placed by a voter for the deceased candidate moved to the next ranked candidate. Further guidance on applying formality rules in such instances will be provided if needed.

Each sample ballot paper corresponds to a specific formality rule.

Directions

For your vote to count, you must vote in either one of the two ways described below.

Ballot paper **Sample Region** Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council **Sample Region** (Sample District)

Either

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
☐		☐		☐		☐		☐		☐		☐		☐
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPE
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location

Formal (use below-the-line)

The numbers 1 to at least 5 are recorded both above the line and below the line

- A. Both the above-the-line and below-the-line sections are **formal**.
Use the below-the-line preferences for the count.

Directions

For your vote to count, you must vote in either one of the two ways described below.

Ballot paper **Sample Region** Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council **Sample Region** (Sample District)

Either

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
☐		☐		☐		☐		☐		☐		☐		☐
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPE
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location

Formal (above-the-line)

There is one acceptable preference mark above the line; the number 3 is missing below the line

- B. The above-the-line section is **formal** and the below-the-line section is **informal**.
Use the above-the-line preferences for the count.

Directions		Ballot paper				Sample Region				Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council				Sample Region (Sample District)			
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 OR E OR F OR G OR H		Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name			
Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.		A OR B OR C OR D OR E OR F OR G OR H		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		UNGROUPED CANDIDATE, Name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location			

Formal (below-the-line)

The ballot paper has a first preference mark ('1' and 'tick') in 2 boxes above the line; the numbers 1 to at least 5 exist below the line

- C. The above-the-line section is **informal** and the below-the-line section is **formal**. Use the below-the-line preferences for the count.

Directions		Ballot paper				Sample Region				Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council				Sample Region (Sample District)			
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 OR E OR F OR G OR H		Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name			
Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.		A OR B OR C OR D OR E OR F OR G OR H		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		UNGROUPED CANDIDATE, Name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location			

Informal

The ballot paper has a first preference mark ('1' and 'cross') in 2 boxes above the line; the number 3 is missing below the line

- D. Both the above-the-line and below-the-line sections are **informal**. The ballot paper is informal.

Directions

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.

Ballot paper **Sample Region** Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council **Sample Region** (Sample District)

A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
														
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPE
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location

Formal

The ballot paper has at least one acceptable first preference mark

- 1a. Ballot papers must have at least one acceptable first preference mark in, adjacent to, or level with, one box above the line to be deemed a formal vote. Acceptable first preference marks are the number 1, a tick, or a cross.

Directions

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.

Ballot paper **Sample Region** Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council **Sample Region** (Sample District)

A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
		5		3		4						2		
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPE
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location

Informal

The ballot paper does not have at least one acceptable first preference mark

- 1b. Ballot papers must have at least one acceptable first preference mark in, adjacent to, or level with, one box above the line to be deemed a formal vote. Acceptable first preference marks are the number 1, a tick, or a cross.

Directions		Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)					
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 OR E OR F OR G OR H ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		2 Group name		4 Group name		5 Group name		3 Group name		5 Group name	
Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.		A CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location B CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location C CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location D CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location E CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location F CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location G CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location H CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location UNGROUPED CANDIDATE, Name Location		1 Group name		2 Group name		3 Group name		4 Group name		5 Group name	

Formal

The ballot paper has at least one acceptable first preference mark ('tick')

- 1c. Ballot papers must have at least one acceptable first preference mark in, adjacent to, or level with, one box above the line to be deemed a formal vote. Acceptable first preference marks are the number 1, a tick, or a cross.

Directions		Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)					
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 OR E OR F OR G OR H ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		1 Group name		2 Group name		3 Group name		4 Group name		5 Group name	
Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.		A CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location B CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location C CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location D CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location E CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location F CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location G CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location H CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location UNGROUPED CANDIDATE, Name Location		1 Group name		2 Group name		3 Group name		4 Group name		5 Group name	

Informal

The ballot paper has a first preference mark ('tick' and 'cross') in 2 boxes above the line

- 2a. First preference marks in 2 or more boxes above the line make the ballot paper informal, unless it is an obvious correction.

Directions

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.

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

Ballot paper **Sample Region** Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council **Sample Region** (Sample District)

A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
4				1		X		3		5		2		
Party logo				Party logo		Party logo		Party logo		Party logo		Party logo		
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPE
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location

Fold put i
decl
as a

Informal

The ballot paper has a first preference mark ('1' and 'cross') in 2 boxes above the line

- 2b. First preference marks in 2 or more boxes above the line make the ballot paper informal, unless it is an obvious correction.

Directions

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.

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

Ballot paper **Sample Region** Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council **Sample Region** (Sample District)

A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
X		X		X		1		X		X		X		
Party logo				Party logo		Party logo		Party logo		Party logo		Party logo		
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPE
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location

Fold put i
decl
as a

Informal

The ballot paper has a first preference mark ('1' and 'cross') in all boxes above the line

- 2c. First preference marks in 2 or more boxes above the line make the ballot paper informal, unless it is an obvious correction.

Directions

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.

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

Ballot paper **Sample Region** Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council **Sample Region** (Sample District)

A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
☐		☐		☐		☐		☒		☐		☐		☐
														
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPED
☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	
☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location			☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	

Informal

The voter's intention is unclear

Fold put i
dec
as a

- If the voter's intention to record one acceptable first preference mark above the line is unclear for any reason, the ballot paper is informal.

Directions

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.

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

Ballot paper **Sample Region** Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council **Sample Region** (Sample District)

A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
☐		☐		☐		☐		☐		☐		☐		☐
☐		☐		☐		☐		☐		☐		☐		☐
														
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPED
☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	
☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location			☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	

Formal

The ballot paper has one acceptable first preference mark

Fold put i
dec
as a

- A ballot paper should not be deemed informal because it does not have the numbers 1 to at least 5 appear in sequential order in boxes above the line, so long as it has a single acceptable first preference marked.

Directions		Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)	
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 OR E OR F OR G OR H 5 9 8 1 6 4 3 7 Party logo Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name	
Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.		A CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location B CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location C CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location D CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location E CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location F CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location G CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location H CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location UNGROUPED CANDIDATE, Name Location		Group name		Group name		Group name	

Formal

The ballot paper has one acceptable first preference mark. A break in the sequence beyond the number 1 is acceptable (only the 1 is formal)

- A ballot paper should not be deemed informal because of a break in sequence beyond the number 1. The ballot paper is considered formal from the acceptable first preference mark up to and including the last consecutive number before the break in sequence.

Directions		Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)	
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 OR E OR F OR G OR H 2 2 1 4 3 Party logo Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name	
Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.		A CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location B CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location C CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location D CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location E CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location F CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location G CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location H CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location UNGROUPED CANDIDATE, Name Location		Group name		Group name		Group name	

Formal

The ballot paper has one acceptable first preference mark. Ignore the duplicated 2s and beyond (only the 1 is formal)

- A ballot paper should not be deemed informal because of a duplicated number beyond the number 1. The ballot paper is considered formal from the acceptable first preference mark up to and including the last consecutive number before the duplicated number.

Directions		Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)	
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 OR E OR F OR G OR H ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐       Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.		A B C D E F G H UNGROUPED ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		Fold put i decl as a Informal <i>Letters are not acceptable as indicators of preference</i>	

- 7a. Letters (A, B, C, and so on) and any non-numerical markings other than ticks or crosses in the boxes above the line are not acceptable as indicators of preference and should be ignored, provided the voter's intention is clear.

Directions		Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)	
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 OR E OR F OR G OR H ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐       Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.		A B C D E F G H UNGROUPED ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		Fold put i decl as a Informal <i>The word 'yes' is not acceptable as an indicator of preference</i>	

- 7b. Letters (A, B, C, and so on) and any non-numerical markings other than ticks or crosses in the boxes above the line are not acceptable as indicators of preference and should be ignored, provided the voter's intention is clear.

Directions

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.

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

Informal

A smiley face is not acceptable as an indicator of preference

Ballot paper

Sample Region

Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council

Sample Region (Sample District)

A OR **B** OR **C** OR **D** OR **E** OR **F** OR **G** OR **H**

Group name

CANDIDATE, Name
Group name
Location

UNGROUPED

Closing official's initials

- 7c. Letters (A, B, C, and so on) and any non-numerical markings other than ticks or crosses in the boxes above the line are not acceptable as indicators of preference and should be ignored, provided the voter's intention is clear.

Directions

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.

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

Informal

Only one acceptable first preference mark appears above the line, but the voter's intention is not clear

Ballot paper

Sample Region

Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council

Sample Region (Sample District)

A OR **B** OR **C** OR **D** OR **E** OR **F** OR **G** OR **H**

Group name

CANDIDATE, Name
Group name
Location

UNGROUPED

Closing official's initials

- 7d. Letters (A, B, C, and so on) and any non-numerical markings other than ticks or crosses in the boxes above the line are not acceptable as indicators of preference and should be ignored, provided the voter's intention is clear.

Directions

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.

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

Informal

The number 0 (zero) has been included

Ballot paper **Sample Region** Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council **Sample Region** (Sample District)

A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
1		3		4				0				5		2
Party logo				Party logo		Party logo		Party logo		Party logo				Party logo
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPE
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location

Fold put i
dec
as a

Issuing official's
initials

8. If the number 0 (zero) is included in the sequence above the line, the ballot paper is informal.

Directions

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.

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

Formal

The numbers 1 to at least 5 appear in sequential order

Ballot paper **Sample Region** Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council **Sample Region** (Sample District)

A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
Party logo				Party logo		Party logo		Party logo		Party logo				Party logo
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPE
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
	2							

Fold put i
dec
as a

Issuing official's
initials

- 9a. Below-the-line votes are formal if the numbers 1 to at least 5 appear in sequential order in the boxes below the line. A ballot paper should not be deemed informal because of a break in sequence beyond the number 5.

Directions

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.

Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)	
A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name	

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPED
					4		1	
	2							
			5		6			
					8			
							3	

Formal

The numbers 1 to at least 5 appear in

||
||
||

- 9b. Below-the-line votes are formal if the numbers 1 to at least 5 appear in sequential order in the boxes below the line. A ballot paper should not be deemed informal because of a break in sequence beyond the number 5.

[illegible]

- 10a. Below-the-line votes must have a number 1 in, adjacent to, or level with one box (and only one box) to be considered formal. A tick or a cross cannot be used to indicate a first preference below the line.

Directions		Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)											
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 ☐  Group name ☐ Group name		C OR D ☐  Group name ☐ Group name		E OR F ☐  Group name ☐ Group name		G OR H ☐  Group name ☐ Group name											
Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.		A ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ 3 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		B ☒ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ 2 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		C ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		D ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ 5 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		E ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		F ☐ 4 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		G ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		H ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		UNGROUPED ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	

Informal

A tick cannot be used to indicate a first preference below the line

- 10b. Below-the-line votes must have a number 1 in, adjacent to, or level with one box (and only one box) to be considered formal. A tick or a cross cannot be used to indicate a first preference below the line.

Directions		Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)											
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 ☐  Group name ☐ Group name		C OR D ☐  Group name ☐ Group name		E OR F ☐  Group name ☐ Group name		G OR H ☐  Group name ☐ Group name											
Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.		A ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		B ☐ 0 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ 2 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		C ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		D ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ 5 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		E ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		F ☐ 4 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		G ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		H ☐ 1 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		UNGROUPED ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location ☐ CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	

Informal

The number 0 (zero) has been included

11. If the number 0 (zero) is included in the sequence below the line, the ballot paper is informal.

[illegible]

- 12a. If any of the numbers between 1 and 5 are missing below the line, the ballot paper is informal. A ballot paper should not be deemed informal for mistakes in numbering outside of 1 to 5.

[illegible]

- 12b. If any of the numbers between 1 and 5 are missing below the line, the ballot paper is informal. A ballot paper should not be deemed informal for mistakes in numbering outside of 1 to 5.

Directions

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.

Ballot paper

Sample Region Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council

Sample Region (Sample District)

A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPED
1	2		3	4	5	6	7	8
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location

Fold put i
dec as a

Informal

The number 2 appears twice. Ignore the

Issuing officer's initials

13a. If any of the numbers 1 to 5 appear more than once below the line, the ballot paper is informal. A ballot paper should not be deemed informal because of a duplicated number beyond the number 5.

Directions

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.

Ballot paper

Sample Region

Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council

Sample Region (Sample District)

A

Group name

OR

Group name

C

Group name

OR

Group name

E

Group name

OR

Group name

G

Group name

OR

Group name

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPED
1 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	2 CANDIDATE, Name Location	6 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	5 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	4 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	3 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	6 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	1 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	6 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
2 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	3 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	4 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	5 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	6 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	7 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	8 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	9 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	10 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location

Formal

Ignore the repeated 6s. Count up to 5

Folding official's initials

13b. If any of the numbers 1 to 5 appear more than once below the line, the ballot paper is informal. A ballot paper should not be deemed informal because of a duplicated number beyond the number 5.

Directions	Ballot paper Sample Region Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council				Sample Region (Sample District)				
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 Group name	B OR Group name	C OR Group name	D OR Group name	E OR Group name	F OR Group name	G OR Group name	H Group name	
Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.	A CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	B CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	C CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	D CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	E CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	F CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	G CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	H CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	UNGROUPED CANDIDATE, Name Location CANDIDATE, Name Location CANDIDATE, Name Location

Formal

The numbers 1 to at least 5 appear in sequential order. Ignore the 'F'

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.

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

14. Ticks, crosses, letters (A, B, C, and so on) and any other non-numerical markings in boxes below the line are not acceptable as indicators of preference and should be ignored, provided the voter's intention is clear.

Directions		Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)									
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	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H			
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name			
Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.																	
A	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	B	CANDIDATE, Name Location	C	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	D	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	E	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	F	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	G	CANDIDATE, Name Location	H	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	UNGROUPED	CANDIDATE, Name Location
2	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Location
	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location				CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Location
	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location			5	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Location
					CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location			3	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location						

Formal

The correction is clear

- 15a. Amendments to preferences are acceptable providing the voter's intention is clear. All other marks are to be ignored.

Instructions

Place your vote to count, you must vote in either one of the two ways described below.

Sample Region Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council

Sample Region (Sample District)

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
OR 	OR 	OR 	OR 	OR 	OR 	OR 	OR 
Group name	Group name	Group name	Group name	Group name	Group name	Group name	Group name

Either place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPED
CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location
					CANDIDATE, Name Location			
					CANDIDATE, Name Location			

Formal

The correction is clear

Issuing official's Initials: 

15b. Amendments to preferences are acceptable providing the voter's intention is clear. All other marks are to be ignored.

[illegible]

16. Unconventional but recognisable numbers, such as continental 1s and 7s and Roman numerals, or a mix of these numbering styles, are acceptable providing the voter's intention is clear.

Directions **Ballot paper** **Sample Region** Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council **Sample Region** (Sample District)

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	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
  Group name		 Group name		  Group name		  Group name		  Group name		  Group name		 Group name		  Group name

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPE
								
CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location
								
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
								
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
								
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
								
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location

Formal

Written numbers are acceptable

Group official's initials

17. Numbers may be spelled out (for example, one, two, three, and so on), but only in English.

[illegible]

- 18a. Damaged ballot papers are formal if it is clear that the voter had access to all candidate and group information on the ballot paper when recording their preferences.

Directions

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.

Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)								
A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name

Or

Place the numbers 1 to
at least 5 in these squares
to indicate your choice.

Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)									
A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H	UNGROUPED
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location				CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location				CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location				CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location				CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location

18b. Damaged ballot papers are formal if it is clear that the voter had access to all candidate and group information on the ballot paper when recording their preferences.

Directions

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.

Ballot paper

Sample Region

Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council

Sample Region (Sample District)

A OR Party logo Group name	B OR Group name	C OR Party logo Group name	D OR Party logo Group name	E OR Party logo Group name	F OR Party logo Group name	G OR Group name	H OR Party logo Group name
--	---	--	--	--	--	---	--

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

A CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	B CANDIDATE, Name Location	C CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	D CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	E CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	F CANDIDATE, Name Location	G CANDIDATE, Name Location	H CANDIDATE, Name Location	UNGROUPED CANDIDATE, Name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location

Fold put i
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19. Numbers next to names are acceptable providing the voter's intention is clear.

Directions

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.

OR

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

Ballot paper **Sample Region** Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council **Sample Region** (Sample District)

A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
3				2				4		1		5		
Party logo				Party logo		Party logo		Party logo		Party logo				Party logo
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name

Or

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPED
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location

Fold put i
decl
as a

Formal

Ballot paper not initialled, but printed on VEC security paper

20. Ballot papers without an initial by an election official must not be excluded for that reason alone if the ballot paper contains a prescribed official mark (such as a watermark or an overprinting of the paper) that proves it was produced by the VEC.

Directions

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.

OR

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

Ballot paper **Sample Region** Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council **Sample Region** (Sample District)

A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
Party logo				Party logo		Party logo		Party logo		Party logo				Party logo
Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name		Group name

Or

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPED
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	2 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	4 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	1 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
3 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	5 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location

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Informal

Multiple candidate names and preference boxes are missing

21. Damaged ballot papers are informal if any candidate or group information or preferences are not visible. If a ballot paper is torn across one of the boxes next to a candidate's or group's name, but the preference in the box can still be understood, the ballot paper may still be deemed formal.

Directions		Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)	
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 OR E OR F OR G OR H         Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		UNGROUPED     CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location					
Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.		A B C D E F G H         CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		UNGROUPED     CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location					
Fold put i dec as a		Formal <i>Numbers can be determined taking the whole ballot paper into account</i>		        CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		    CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location			

22a. Poorly formed numbers must be considered in the context of the whole of the ballot paper, and are acceptable if they can reasonably be construed as numbers in the sequence.

Directions		Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)	
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 OR E OR F OR G OR H         Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		UNGROUPED     CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location					
Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.		A B C D E F G H         CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		UNGROUPED     CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location					
Fold put i dec as a		Informal <i>The markings in 2 boxes are not distinguishable</i>		        CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		    CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location			

22b. Poorly formed numbers must be considered in the context of the whole of the ballot paper, and are acceptable if they can reasonably be construed as numbers in the sequence.

Directions		Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)	
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 OR E OR F OR G OR H            Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.		A B C D E F G H UNGROUPED          CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		Fold put in declaration as a Formal <i>The markings in 2 boxes are not distinguishable, but the ballot paper has one acceptable first preference mark. A break in the sequence beyond the number 1 is acceptable. Only the preferences up to and including 2 are formal</i>	

22c. Poorly formed numbers must be considered in the context of the whole of the ballot paper, and are acceptable if they can reasonably be construed as numbers in the sequence.

Directions		Ballot paper		Sample Region		Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council		Sample Region (Sample District)	
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 OR E OR F OR G OR H         Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name Group name		Or Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.		A B C D E F G H UNGROUPED          CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		Fold put in declaration as a Formal <i>Ignore writing and strikethrough of candidate name</i>	

23a. Writing and markings on ballot papers that are not related to preferences should be ignored.

Directions

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.

Ballot paper

Sample Region

Election of 5 members of the Legislative Council

Sample Region (Sample District)

A	OR	B	OR	C	OR	D	OR	E	OR	F	OR	G	OR	H
Party logo Group name		Group name		Party logo Group name		Party logo Group name		Party logo Group name		Party logo Group name		Group name		Party logo Group name

Or

Place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	UNGROUPE
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	2 CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	4 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	1 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location
3 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	5 CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location
CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location			CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location		CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location
					CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location
					CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location
					CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Group name Location	CANDIDATE, Name Location

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Formal

Ignore markings not related to preferences

Issuing official's
initials

23b. Writing and markings on ballot papers that are not related to preferences should be ignored.

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(Victorian Electoral Commission)

07 October 2026

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