

Elections are always held on a Saturday. The easiest way to vote is to go to your nearest polling place (often in your local Primary School). All polling places are open from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. You don't have to go to a polling place in your own electorate.

Polling officials are there to help you. Some polling places have officials who speak other languages besides English. Some polling places have suitable access for disabled people.

At a polling place you have your name marked off the electoral roll to show you have voted. You fill in your ballot paper at a voting screen where no-one can see how you are voting. You put your ballot paper into a sealed ballot box, which is not unsealed until after the polls have closed. You must not write your name on the ballot paper because the way you vote is private. We call it the secret ballot. In some polling places you can choose to vote by computer.



If you are not in Canberra on polling day there are other ways of voting. Voting is compulsory so you should choose the most convenient way for you.

Pre-poll voting

If you are not going to be in Canberra on the day of the election you must arrange to vote before you leave.

For 3 weeks before every election pre-poll voting centres are set up around Canberra where you can cast a normal vote between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm Monday to Friday. They remain open until 8:00 pm on the night before the election.

Pre-poll voting is also available in each State capital city and in Darwin at the State Electoral Offices. They are open during normal business hours for the pre-poll period.

Postal voting

These are intended for people who will not be in Canberra on election day or during the 3 week pre-poll period. They are also for people who are housebound. You must make an application for a postal vote. This can be in writing or via email or over the phone to Elections ACT. Your signature on the envelope of your postal vote will be matched against the signature on your enrolment form.

Application forms are available from all ACT Post Offices, Shopfronts, electoral offices and on the Internet, at the time of the election.

Ballot papers can be sent to you, wherever you may be at the time, up to 2 days before the election if you are in Australia or one week before the election if you are overseas. You must post them back (faxes will not do) before polling day.
