

Enrolment and voting for people with disability

Information for families and carers

This leaflet provides information for families and carers about enrolment and voting for people with disability.

The ACT Electoral Commission (Elections ACT) is committed to providing services to help all eligible electors in the ACT to participate in the electoral process.

Voting is a protected human right under the *Human Rights Act 2004*. It is important to discuss enrolment and voting, where possible, with a person you are caring for and whom you may consider eligible to vote. For example, a person who cannot read and/or write may still be able to enrol and vote and wish to do so. People with disability have the same right to enrol and vote as every other Australian citizen.

Enrolment

Who must enrol to vote?

In Australia, the law says that if you are entitled to be enrolled, then you must enrol. One of the most important ways to contribute to the community is through voting and you cannot vote unless you are enrolled. This is because with the right to enrol and vote comes the responsibility to contribute to the way the ACT and the country is governed.

However, a person who does not have the capacity to understand the nature and significance of enrolment and voting may not be entitled to enrol to vote.

How can a person in your care check to see whether they are enrolled?

Enrolment details can be checked on the Elections ACT website www.elections.act.gov.au or by calling 6205 0033.

The electoral roll for an ACT Legislative Assembly election closes approximately 4 weeks before polling day. Any person who is not on the roll, on or before that date, will not be able to vote in the election.

What can you do if you consider a person in your care sufficiently understands the enrolment and voting system but they are not enrolled?

Enrolment forms can be completed online at www.aec.gov.au/enrol. To complete the online application the applicant must hold an Australian passport or drivers licence as proof of identity or have someone who is enrolled confirm their identity. If neither of these documents is available, a paper form can be requested by calling 6205 0033. Paper enrolment forms are required to be signed by the applicant.



If the person in your care is unable to sign their name, another person can sign on their behalf. However you must first obtain a doctor's certificate indicating that they are unable to sign. A special enrolment form for this circumstance is available at www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling_to_vote/pdf/forms/unable_to_sign/er022ghw-act-0416.pdf

After completing an enrolment form, the person will be included on the electoral roll and will be eligible to vote for any of the federal and Territory elections in the ACT.

What can you do if you consider a person in your care, who is enrolled, does not sufficiently understand the nature and significance of enrolment and voting?

An elector may be removed from the roll where a registered medical practitioner has certified in writing that the person is incapable of understanding the nature and significance of enrolment and voting because of unsound mind. You should write to the [Australian Electoral Commission](#), providing details of the elector's full name, date of birth and enrolled address using the [Objection claim form](#), and attaching the medical practitioner's certificate. The elector will be then removed from the electoral roll and will not be required to vote at federal or Territory elections.

To access the objection claim form, visit

http://www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling_to_vote/pdf/forms/objection/er005aw-0117.pdf

Voting

Who must vote?

Voting in federal and Territory elections is compulsory for those who are on the electoral roll.

If an enrolled citizen fails to vote and is unable to provide a valid reason for not voting, a penalty may be imposed.

The person in my care has accessibility issues and cannot attend a polling booth. How can they vote?

Postal voting is available for anyone who is unable to attend a polling place. Applications for a postal vote can be made online or by calling 02 6205 0033.

An application for a postal vote can be made by the elector or by someone acting on behalf of the elector as long as that person has authorised them to do so.

Alternatively, the person in your care could apply to be registered as a General Postal Voter. Registration as a general postal voter means the elector will automatically be sent postal voting material as soon as possible after pre-poll voting commences for each federal and Territory election.

The application form to register as a general postal voter is available at

www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling_to_vote/pdf/forms/general_postal/er022gw-act-0416.pdf

Can a person in my care receive assistance to vote?

Yes. If you can go to a polling place, the elector can either nominate a family member or friend to help them vote, or a polling official can assist also.

Alternatively, you can assist the person in your care to vote by post. If required, you can apply for a postal vote on their behalf and assist them to complete their postal vote if they request you to do so.

Where can I, or the person in my care, find important electoral information?

Elections ACT develops a brochure that contains all the important electoral information required for each ACT election. The brochure is distributed to all households in the ACT in an election year and is also available in audio format on our website and in ACT libraries.

An Easy English Guide is also available to assist people with low literacy levels. The guide provides key information about enrolment and voting in the ACT in a concise and understandable way. Ideally, it would be read as a shared activity between the reader and someone such as a friend, family member or carer. This allows concepts to be explained and questions answered.

Some election materials are also translated into different languages to assist voters coming from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This includes the instruction screens for electronic voting.

Need more information?

For all enquiries about voting, visit the Election's ACT website www.elections.act.gov.au or call (02) 6205 0033.

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Fax: (02) 6205 0382

Internet: www.elections.act.gov.au

If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, you can contact Elections ACT through the [National Relay Service](#). Call 13 36 77 and then ask for (02) 6205 0033. For more information, visit www.relayservice.gov.au