

Frequently Asked Questions Relating to Local Government Elections

QUESTION	ANSWER
General Information	
Q1. When is the next Local Government election?	Election Day is Saturday 8 October 2022 and voting closes at midday on that day. The voting period starts on Friday 16 September 2022
Q2. Who is running the election?	The Electoral Officer has full responsibility for running the election.
Q3. What is the name of the Electoral Officer/Deputy Electoral Officer for Horizons Regional Council?	<p>Craig Grant (Electoral Officer) craig.grant@horizons.govt.nz 06 952 2863 / 021 2277 083</p> <p>Warwick Lampp (Deputy Electoral Officer) wlampp@electionz.com 021 4980517</p>
Q4. What type of voting method do you use?	Horizons Regional Council will use the First Past the Post (FPP) voting method. The candidate or candidates that get the most votes win(s).
Q5. How many constituencies does Horizons Regional Council have?	<p>Horizons Regional Council has eight (8) constituencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Horowhenua• Manawatū-Rangitikei• Palmerston North• Ruapehu• Tararua• Whanganui• Raki Māori• Tonga Māori

QUESTION

ANSWER

General Information

Q6. What is the role of a councillor?

A councillor:

- Participates in strategic and long-term planning for the whole city/district/region;
- Participates in setting a budget and rates
- Develops policy across a wide range of activities and services;
- Represents the Horizons region at functions as required;
- Reviews and develops bylaws for the city/district/region;
- Advocates on a wide range of issues;
- Coordinates and forms partnerships with other spheres of government and other agencies;
- Participates in the appointment and performance review of the Chief Executive Officer;
- Acts on all these matters within a legislative and regulatory framework
- Monitors the performance of the council organisation

Q7. What is the difference between Māori and general constituencies?

Horizons Regional Council has established Māori constituencies. Members of Māori constituencies are elected by those enrolled to vote on the respective Māori electoral roll; similarly members of general constituencies are elected by those enrolled to vote on the respective general electoral roll.

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Candidates

Q8. What qualifications and experience do I need to be a candidate?

You must be a New Zealand citizen and be a parliamentary elector anywhere in New Zealand.

Other requirements are that:

- You are nominated by two electors in the area you are standing for.
- You or your spouse/partner must not have concerns or interests in contracts over \$25,000 with the council.
- If you are subject to a Court Order under section 31 of the Protection of Personal Property Rights Act 1988, you should take legal advice.
- If you are an employee of the council, you must resign before taking up your position as an elected member. The rules of some councils may require you to take leave for campaigning prior to the election.
- You do not need to reside in the area (city, district, ward, constituency, community board or local board) that you are standing for.
- You do not need any formal qualifications. Elected members come from all walks of life and generally have a desire to serve their community.

Q9. When I stand for election, can I be affiliated with an organisation or group?

Yes, if you belong to a political party or other group, you may want to identify with them. However, you don't have to have any affiliations. If this is your situation, you can identify as, 'independent' or leave the space blank when you fill out your nomination form.

If you do have a specific affiliation, the electoral officer may require a letter of consent from the party, organisation or group giving its consent for you to use the affiliation.

Q10. How many people do I need to nominate me?

You need two people to nominate you.

Q11. Who is able to nominate me?

A nominator must be on the electoral roll for the constituency for which you are standing, e.g. if you are standing for election to a specific constituency, you must be nominated by two electors from that constituency who are on the electoral roll for that constituency. You are not able to nominate yourself.

Q12. When do nominations open?

Nominations open on Friday 15 July 2022 and close at 12 noon on Friday 12 August 2022.

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Q13. Where do I get a nomination form from?

Nomination forms are available from:

- Horizons Regional Council website
- By contacting Horizons Regional Council on 0508 800 800

Your nominators must fill in the form. You must agree to being nominated and will also need to sign the form

Q14. When will nominations be open?

Nominations open from 15 July 2022 and close on Friday 12 August 2022 at midday. Nominations must be lodged in person with the electoral officer or an electoral official at the council you are standing for or emailed to elections@horizons.govt.nz by the close date.

Do not leave lodgement until the last day because if there any problems with the details provided there might be insufficient time to resolve them and you could miss out.

Q15. Do I need to be on the Māori electoral roll or of Māori descent if I am standing for election in a Māori Constituency?

No. To be eligible you must be a New Zealand citizen and your name must be on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll (anywhere in New Zealand).

You will need to be nominated by two electors whose names appear on the Māori electoral roll within the area of election for which you are standing.

Equally if you are on the Māori electoral roll you can stand in a general ward, and will need to be nominated by two electors whose names appear on the general electoral roll within the area of election for which you are standing.

Q16. How much will it cost me to stand?

You will need to pay a nomination deposit of \$200 GST inclusive.

The funds must be deposited with the Electoral Officer at the same time your nomination is submitted. It is recommended you pay the nomination deposit by online/internet banking (or EFTPOS or cash) noting that cheques are no longer accepted.

If you poll greater than 25% of the lowest polling successful candidate (for FPP elections) you will receive your nomination deposit back.

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Q17. Can I withdraw my nomination as a candidate?

Only if it is withdrawn before the close of nominations. You cannot withdraw voluntarily after nominations have closed. If you decide to opt out, your name will still appear on the voting document. If you do change your mind and decide not to run for election after you have been nominated, let your electoral officer know who will talk through the issues with you.

However, if you become incapacitated with serious illness or injury and unlikely to be able to perform the functions and duties if elected to office, you can apply to withdraw on those grounds. You will need verification from a doctor and lawyer about your situation. See your local electoral officer if you need more information about this process.

Q18. What is a candidate profile statement?

You may provide a candidate profile statement when you lodge your nomination. This is a statement of up to 150 words containing information about yourself and your policies and intentions if elected to office. The profile statement will be included in the voting packs that all electors receive.

If your candidate statement is submitted in Māori and English, the information contained in each language must be substantially consistent with the information contained in the other language. Each language has to be within a 150-word limit.

Your profile statement must be true and accurate. The Electoral Officer is not required to verify or investigate any information included in your statement.

Your profile can include a recent passport size colour photograph.

In addition, your candidate profile statement must state whether or not your principal place of residence is in the area you are seeking election, e.g., 'My principal place of residence is in the Palmerston North Constituency', or 'My principal place of residence is not in the Palmerston North Constituency'. This is not part of the 150-word limit.

See section 61 of the Local Electoral Act 2001 for more information.

QUESTION

ANSWER

Candidates

Q19. Does a criminal record affect a person standing as a council candidate?	No, not at all for city, district, and regional council elections. However, please contact the Horizons Regional Council Electoral Officer for more information: craig.grant@horizons.govt.nz 06 952 2863 / 021 2277 083
Q20. How long is the term of the elected member?	Three years
Q21. Is the role I want to stand for full-time or part-time?	This varies between councils and between roles within a council. Ask your local Electoral Officer about a guide to how many hours a week the role encompasses.
Q22. How much will I get paid?	Pay and allowances are determined by the Government's Remuneration Authority. The pay rates vary according to population size and other factors. You can see all the councils' remuneration schedules by clicking on this link to the Local Government Members (2021/22) Determination . More information about how the Remuneration Authority determines pay can be found here .
Q23. Do I need to be resident in the city, district or region I am standing for?	No, but you must be on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll (anywhere in New Zealand) and provide proof that you are a New Zealand citizen.
Q24. How many offices can I stand for?	You cannot stand for both a regional council and one of its constituent district or city councils or a community board.
Q25. I am a serving police officer. Can I stand for council and continue to work as a police officer?	Yes. There are no longer any restrictions on police officers standing for local authority elections, apart from the normal eligibility criteria
Q26. Can I raise campaign funds from donations to offset electoral expenses?	Yes, you can raise funds from donations to help offset your campaign expenses. There is very specific legislation about donations and expenses which you need to abide by. Refer to the Horizons Electoral Officer for more information if needed: craig.grant@horizons.govt.nz 06 952 2863 / 021 2277 083

QUESTION

ANSWER

Candidates**Q27. How much can I spend on my campaign?**

If you stand for more than one position, the amount you can spend is the highest amount for **one** position. You cannot add positions together to allow you to spend more than the limit.

All candidates are required to lodge an electoral donations and expenses return within 55 days after the day on which the successful candidates are declared to be elected (public notice of final results). If a candidate is outside NZ on this day, the return must be filed within 76 days after election result day. If this is not done, the non-return will be advised to the NZ Police. This return needs to be made before a candidate nomination deposit is refunded (if applicable).

Constituency	Est Resident Population as at 30 June 2020	Expenditure Limit (inc GST)
Horowhenua General	31,000	\$20,000
Manawatū-Rangitikei General	41,800	\$30,000
Palmerston North General	80,700	\$50,000
Ruapehu General	9,130	\$7,000
Tararua General	16,000	\$14,000
Whanganui General	39,700	\$20,000
Raki Māori	18,280	\$14,000
Tonga Māori	17,560	\$14,000

Q28. When is the campaign period?

Election campaigning can start at any time and continue up to and including election day.

Q29. Can people already elected onto council use council resources to campaign?

No, elected members cannot use council resources for their campaigns.

Q30. Are there any rules about using social media?

Yes. Councils have policies or guidelines for web and social media use related to campaigning. They will not permit council social media pages to be used by anyone (candidates or members of the public) for electioneering or campaigning in the three months before election day. Councils monitor their websites and take down any campaign related posts.

QUESTION	ANSWER
<p>Q31. What does ‘authorisation of advertising’ mean?</p>	<p>Election advertising, using any media, must identify either you or your agent. The publication of any advertisements (in any newspaper, periodical, notice, poster, pamphlet, handbill, billboard or card, or broadcast over radio or television) for candidates requires the written authorisation of you or your agent.</p> <p>The advertisement must contain a statement setting out you or your agent’s true name, or at whose direction, it is published and the street address (not a PO box) of their residence or business. This applies during your entire campaign.</p>
<p>Candidates</p>	
<p>Q32. Where and when can I put up election signs?</p>	<p>Election signs are permitted on private property (with the owner’s consent) at any time. The sign must be erected in a stable fashion, not be a hazard to the public or to traffic safety, and must comply with the (local authority district plan/bylaw.</p> <p>For State Highways, signs must meet Waka Kotahi/NZTA rules for any signage.</p> <p>Depending on your local city / district council’s rules, election signs may be permitted on selected council property/road reserves. On these sites, signs can be erected in accordance with the rules, and generally must be removed by midnight Friday 7 October 2022. Ask the Electoral Officer from your local city/district council for more information about your council’s rules.</p>
<p>Q33. Can I view the electoral roll?</p>	<p>Yes, the electoral roll will be open for public inspection at your city or district council’s offices and libraries from 15 July 2022 to 12 August 2022.</p>
<p>Q34. What is the election date?</p>	<p>The elections are by postal vote. Voting documents will be delivered from Friday 16 September 2022 to Wednesday 21 September 2022. Voters can return their vote anytime from when they receive their voting documents. Votes must be received by the Electoral Officer by the close of voting on midday Saturday 8 October 2022.</p>
<p>Q35. Can I help people vote or collect their voting documents to send in?</p>	<p>No, candidates or their assistants should not collect voting documents from electors. Each elector should post or deliver their own voting document to the Electoral Officer.</p> <p>It is an offence (carrying a fine of up to \$5,000 if convicted) to interfere in any way with an elector with the intention of influencing or advising the elector as to how he or she should vote. Candidates and their assistants should be mindful of this particularly if campaigning occurs in facilities such as rest homes or hospitals.</p>

QUESTION	ANSWER
Q36. When will election results be known?	Voting closes at midday Saturday 8 October 2022. Progress results (approximately 90 per cent of votes cast) will be known early that afternoon, with preliminary results known on Sunday morning, 9 October 2022. Final results will likely to be declared on Thursday 13 October 2022. All results will be posted on your council's website.

QUESTION

ANSWER

Enrolment

Q37. How do I know whether I am enrolled?

You can check your enrolment status on www.vote.nz.

The Electoral Commission will be undertaking a roll update campaign in early July 2022 for the Parliamentary Electoral Roll which forms the basis of our roll for the local authority election.

If you do not receive a letter in the post during late June/early July 2022, the chances are you are not enrolled or your details are incorrect.

Q38. How do I enrol to vote in these elections?

You need to complete an enrolment form for this. You can either:

- enrol online at <https://vote.nz/enrolling/enrol-or-update/enrol-or-update-online/>
- ring 0800 36 76 56 to arrange for a form to be sent to you in the mail
- send your name and address to Free text 3676 for a form to be sent to you in the mail
- download a form at <https://vote.nz/enrolling/enrol-or-update/other-ways-to-enrol/>
- I can send one out

If you own a property in a district and it is not your main residence you may be able to enrol as a Ratepayer elector. **(Refer to your local city or district council)**

Q39. I am a student and spend my time in different places. Where should I enrol?

You should enrol where you spend the greater part of your time.

Q40. I am a New Zealand Māori, do I need to enrol on the Māori roll?

Not necessarily. If you are enrolling for the first time you can decide whether you want to go on the Māori Electoral Roll or the General Electoral Roll by signing the appropriate panel on the Parliamentary Elector Enrolment form.

However, if you have already made that choice you will have to wait until the next Māori Option period to change, which occurs following the next census, likely in 2023. The last Māori Option period was in **2018**.

QUESTION	ANSWER
Enrolment	
Q41. I turn 18 <u>on</u> Election Day. Can I vote?	<p>Yes, but you need to make sure you have enrolled which you can do provisionally from the age of 17 and it automatically changes when you turn 18.</p> <p>You will also need to apply for a special vote.</p> <p>You can do both if you call your local city or district council.</p>
Q42. We own a business in your area and pay rates, but we don't live in your area – do we get a say in the local elections?	<p>Yes, subject to being eligible to become enrolled as a ratepayer elector and becoming enrolled.</p> <p>Contact your local city or district council.</p>
Q43. I own a property in the region but it is not my fulltime residence. How do I get on the Ratepayer Electoral Roll?	<p>You will need to contact your local city or district council to get on the Ratepayer Electoral Roll</p>
Q44. I am on the Māori electoral roll, does this affect who I can vote for?	<p>Yes, if you are on the Māori roll you can only vote for those standing for a Māori constituency.</p>
Voting	
Q45. Is it a postal vote and will I be sent my voting documents in the mail?	<p>All local authority elections will be conducted by postal vote. Voting documents will be delivered in the mail between Friday 16 September 2022 and Wednesday 21 September 2022.</p>
Q46. I got my voting documents, but my partner didn't receive theirs.	<p>Contact your city or district council Electoral Officer.</p>
Q47. I didn't get my voting documents, so I called and got a special vote. Now I have two documents. Which one should I use?	<p>Use the original and destroy the special vote. The reason for this is that processing an original voting document is much simpler than processing a special vote (a special vote takes a lot more time and more importantly the elector may not have completed the declaration correctly which would make the special vote invalid), hence our advice/preference that the ordinary vote be returned.</p>
Q48. I received voting documents for (children, parent) and have Power of Attorney for them can I vote for them?	<p>No – Power of Attorney does not apply to voting on behalf of that person.</p>
Q49. I received voting documents for (children, parent) and have Power of Attorney for them. What should I do with the documents?	<p>If they are overseas, you could airmail them to the person or destroy them if that is not practicable.</p> <p>If they are for an elderly parent who is unable to vote, please destroy them by ripping/cutting them up.</p>

Enrolment	QUESTION	ANSWER
Q50.	I received voting documents that do not belong to me and I don't know these people or where they have gone.	Write GNA (Gone No Address) on the envelope and put them back in the mail.
Q51.	What is that barcode that I can see through the return envelope or on the front of the voting document?	It is a legal requirement to scan the barcode number to mark the electoral roll that you have voted so we can ensure that we do not receive two votes from the same person.
Q52.	How do you ensure the secrecy of my vote?	<p>Envelopes containing a voting document cannot be opened until there is a JP present. The JP is required to sign off that the processes used by the Electoral Officer met the legal requirements.</p> <p>The voter's name is not on the voting document.</p> <p>When the envelope is opened the only thing the Electoral Officer is looking for is that the vote for each election is valid.</p> <p>This means that for FPP they are making sure that the voter's intention is clear and they have not ticked or marked more than the number of candidates than there are vacancies.</p>
Q53.	Do I have to vote? I don't know any of these candidates	<p>No you don't have to vote. You also don't have to vote for all candidates or for all elections. But your vote is important because the people elected will be responsible for making decisions about what happens in your community for the next three years.</p> <p>To help you get to know about the candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a candidate profile booklet that comes out with the voting documents in which there is a photo and a statement from candidates. This information may also be available on the Council website. • Candidates may have their own website page, social media page(s), advertise in local newspapers or send out information to letterboxes in your area. • Local newspaper(s) are likely to cover information about the election.

Enrolment	QUESTION	ANSWER
	<p>Q54. Do I have to post my voting document back?</p>	<p>You can post it but make sure you have them in the mail by Tuesday 4 October 2022 to make sure it gets back to us in time (by 12 noon Saturday 8 October 2022)</p> <p>However, you can also deliver to the voting boxes which are at your local city or district council until 12 noon Saturday 8 October 2022)</p>
	<p>Q55. I have lost my return envelope.</p>	<p>You can use an envelope of your own and put the return address and Freepost number on it OR contact your local city or district council Electoral Officer.</p>
	<p>Q56. I am on the Unpublished Parliamentary roll and I want a special vote please.</p>	<p>Contact the Electoral Officer at your local city or district council.</p>
	<p>Q57. I didn't receive my voting pack, how do I obtain a special vote?</p>	<p>Contact the Electoral Officer at your local city or district council.</p>
	<p>Q58. I spoiled my voting documents / I have made a mistake on my documents. What can I do?</p>	<p>If you can amend it so that your voting intention is clear, then do so and initial the changes.</p> <p>OR contact your local city or district council Electoral Officer so they can issue you with another voting document.</p>
	<p>Q59. Where can I have a special vote?</p>	<p>Contact your local city or district council Electoral Officer</p>
	<p>Q60. I am going away and will not be here when the voting documents are posted out.</p>	<p>Contact your local city or district council Electoral Officer</p>

QUESTION	ANSWER
Enrolment	
Q61. Do I have to vote for all the candidates for any issue? If I don't vote for all the candidates or all the issues on my voting document, will all my votes be informal?	<p>Under FPP you can vote for as many candidates as you want but not more than the number of positions available on the voting document. So if you are electing five councillors then you can vote for up to five candidates. Remember, for FPP you tick the candidates you want to elect.</p> <p>With STV you can vote for all or as many candidates as you wish but these must be in order of your preference and no number can be repeated. Remember for STV, you rank the candidates you want to elect from number 1 onwards.</p> <p>You can decide not to vote for one or more of the different elections on your voting document. This does not invalidate all your other votes.</p>
Q62. My husband's voting document and mine are different. He has more/less things to vote for. His list of candidates is different to mine?	<p>Horizons Regional Council is using random name order on the voting documents. This could explain why the list looks different.</p> <p>Horizons Regional Council has established Maori constituencies. If you and your husband are not on the same electoral roll (Māori/general) then this may explain why the voting documents are different.</p> <p>If not then it is something that should be passed to the Electoral Officer</p>
Q63. I have received two voting documents	Contact your local city or district council Electoral Officer
Q64. Do all the staff working on the election know who I voted for?	No, your vote remains secret under the required roll scrutiny and counting procedures.
Q65. What happens to all the voting documents after the elections?	<p>They are delivered to the District Court and kept for 21 days so that the Court can access them should there be any application for recount or petition for inquiry.</p> <p>After 21 days, the court is responsible for destroying them.</p>

QUESTION	ANSWER
Election Results	
Q66. When will we know the results of the election?	<p>Progress and preliminary results will be announced as soon as possible after 12 noon on Saturday 8 October 2022.</p> <p>The official results will be announced when the final count is complete and special votes have been checked which will be between Thursday 13 October 2022 – Wednesday 19 October 2022.</p>
Q67. How will I find out?	<p>Candidates</p> <p>Will be advised as soon as possible after progress and preliminary results are known. This may be by email or phone.</p> <p>The Voters</p> <p>Progress and preliminary results will be released to the media and placed on our website as soon as possible after noon on Saturday 8 October 2022.– www.horizons.govt.nz</p>
Q68. What do I need to do if I want to challenge the results of the election?	Contact the Horizons Electoral Officer
Q69. When do elected members take up their roles?	Elected members take up office the day after the official result has been declared by public notice. However, they cannot act until they have sworn the oath of office which is usually at the first meeting of council. This first meeting is usually held as soon as practicable after the final election results are known.
Q70. Who are elected members responsible to?	Ultimately the elected members' final responsibility is to the local community. The Minister of Local Government and the Auditor-General do have a role in ensuring that councils follow the law.
Q71. Do elected members get paid and if so how much?	This is set by the Remuneration Authority. Some expenses are also reimbursed.
Q72. Would being an elected member take up much time?	The time commitment varies depending on the role and the size of the constituency you are representing.

QUESTION	ANSWER
<p>Q73. How many elected members are there?</p>	<p>Horizons Regional Council will have 14 Elected Members as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horowhenua-Kairanga (2) • Manawatū-Rangitikei (2) • Palmerston North (4) • Ruapehu (1) • Tararua (1) • Whanganui (2) • Raki Māori (1) • Tonga Māori (1)
<p>Q74. I have a complaint about electoral signage?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The signs don't have the required authorisation on them. • The signs have been pulled over. • The signs are bigger than they should be. • In what locations can signs be erected? • When can they be erected and when must they be pulled down? 	<p>Contact your local city or district council Electoral Officer for that Council's Signage Policy, or the Horizons Electoral Officer.</p>