

**An elector claims to have lost or not received their postal ballot pack(s)?**

**pp 29; 39**

Before 5pm: direct them to the Returning Officer for a replacement. After 5pm: follow the tendered ballot procedure. Ask the prescribed questions before issuing tendered ballot paper(s). Do not issue a tendered ballot paper if the relevant questions are not answered satisfactorily.

**An elector wants to return their postal ballot pack(s) to the polling station?**

**pp 16; 26**

Check the postal ballot pack is for the local electoral area. If it is not, or you are unsure, direct the voter to the elections office. If it is, place it in the receptacle provided.

**A person asks to vote for someone who has suffered a medical emergency?**

**p 30**

Only issue ballot paper(s) if they have been officially appointed as an emergency proxy. If not, explain that emergency proxies can be appointed until 5pm, and refer them to the Electoral Registration Officer for more details on this process.

**A voter asks how MEPs are elected?**

**pp 47–48**

Voters can cast one vote using an 'X' for either a party list or an individual candidate. MEPs are elected using a form of proportional representation, with a mathematical formula used for the allocation of seats.

**You, or someone else, suspects that the person applying for a ballot paper is not who they say they are?**

**pp 32–33**

Before – and only before – issuing the ballot papers, the Presiding Officer may ask the prescribed questions. Agents have a right to require Presiding Officers to ask these questions. If they are answered satisfactorily, ballot papers must be issued. No further enquiries may be made about a person's right to a ballot paper.

**There is a serious disturbance (e.g. fire, flood, etc)?**

**p 41**

Do not put the safety of anyone at risk. If safe to do so, set up a new polling station nearby. Inform the elections office.



## Contact details

If you are unsure about any of the procedures described in the handbook, or need to contact the elections office for any other reason, please contact:

# Supporting the combined European Parliamentary and local government elections in England

# The Electoral Commission

## A quick guide for polling station staff

4 June 2009

This guide should be used alongside the Commission's *Handbook for polling station staff*. Page references given in this guide show where more detailed information can be found in the handbook.



## Who can vote at the polling station? **pp 14–15**

Markers next to an elector's entry on the register determine whether or not they are entitled to vote at a particular election. The table below lists which ballot papers, if any, are to be issued in each case.

Marker	European Parliamentary ballot paper	Local government ballot paper
No letters	Yes	Yes
Date on or before 4 June 2009	Yes (unless any additional markers show they are not eligible)	Yes (unless any additional markers show they are not eligible)
Dates after 4 June 2009	No	No
No letters +N	Yes	Yes
A or A+N	No	No
E or E+N	Yes	No
F or F+N	Yes	No
G or G+N	No	Yes
K or K+N	Yes	Yes
L or L+N	Yes	Yes



## What is the usual voting process?

pp 13–19

<b>Stage 1 – Checking the voter</b>	Greet the elector and ask them to confirm their name and address.
	Confirm they are eligible to vote at each election by checking their register entry.
	Draw a line against (but not through) the voter's entry in the register.
	Read out their name, elector number and polling district reference from the register of electors.
<b>Stage 2 – Issuing the ballot paper</b>	Write the elector number on the corresponding number list (CNL) alongside the relevant ballot paper numbers.
	Ensure the ballot papers to be issued bear the official mark.
	Fold the ballot papers and hand them to the voter.
<b>Stage 3 – Voting</b>	The voter marks the ballot papers in the privacy of the polling booth.
	Ask the voter to show the ballot paper number and unique identifying mark on the back of the ballot papers before they place them in the ballot box(es).



## What if...

### It is 7am and the key-holder has not arrived?

Try to contact the key-holder. If necessary, make alternative arrangements, e.g. set up a temporary polling station in the back of a car. Inform the elections office.

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### A disabled elector needs assistance?

Offer assistance. Explain what support is available.

pp 23–25

### An elector cannot gain access to the polling station?

Take ballot papers outside to the elector after informing any agents present. Ensure ballot secrecy at all times.

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### A person is not on the register or any of the notices?

Do not issue a ballot paper. Direct the person to the electoral registration office if they insist they have registered.

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### An elector refuses a particular ballot paper?

Response will depend on whether the ballot paper is refused before or after it has been handed over to the elector. See handbook for further details.

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### An elector is only entitled to one ballot paper?

Indicate on the register which ballot paper has been issued. Write 'cancelled' on the ballot paper that has not been issued and next to the relevant ballot paper number on the CNL. Place the cancelled ballot paper in the relevant envelope.

p 16

### An elector spoils a ballot paper?

Ask them to return all ballot papers issued. Cancel all and place in the appropriate envelope(s). Write 'cancelled' on the CNL and re-issue.

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### An elector spoils a ballot paper, but has already placed the other ballot paper in the ballot box?

Ask them to return the spoiled ballot paper. Write 'cancelled' on the returned ballot paper and next to the relevant ballot paper number on the CNL. Place the cancelled ballot paper in the relevant envelope. Issue replacement, but cancel ballot paper for the other election that is not needed (the unused). Write 'cancelled' on the unused ballot paper and next to the relevant ballot paper number on the CNL. Place the unused ballot paper in the relevant envelope.

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### The person asking to vote appears on the register as having already voted?

Check whether they had appointed a proxy. If not, follow the tendered ballot process. Ask the prescribed questions for the relevant election(s) before issuing any tendered ballot paper(s). Do not issue a tendered ballot paper if the relevant questions are not answered satisfactorily.

pp 33; 39

### An elector hands you a poll card without a name or address?

Poll cards like this are sent to anonymously registered electors. Do not ask for the elector's name and address. Follow the procedure for issuing ballot papers to anonymous electors.

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### An elector with an 'A' marker on the register says they did not apply to vote by post?

Do not issue any ordinary ballot paper(s). If they have received their postal ballot pack(s), encourage them to return the pack(s) to the polling station or Returning Officer by 10pm. If not, or if they do not want to return them, follow the tendered ballot procedure. Ask the relevant prescribed questions before issuing any tendered ballot paper(s). Do not issue a tendered ballot paper if the relevant questions are not answered satisfactorily.

pp 28–29; 39