

electoral administration bulletin

The
Electoral
Commission



Issue 298 (England) – 21 December 2020

May 2021 elections: publication of supplementary guidance

Further to our last update in [Bulletin 297](#), we have now published the final part of our planned series of supplementary guidance to support electoral administrators with preparing for and delivering the May 2021 elections against the backdrop of the coronavirus pandemic. This document focuses on [managing the verification and count](#).

The guidance, which has been developed with the expert advice of our national public health bodies, and in consultation with the Elections, Referendums and Registration Working Group (ERRWG), AEA, Solace and Cabinet Office, supplements the core guidance for EROs and ROs by highlighting the additional challenges that you may face during the continuing public health situation to deliver the verification and count safely and effectively.

As we have set out previously, the supplementary guidance documents will be living documents in recognition of the changing landscape and ongoing developments in public health advice and legislation affecting the polls. We will update them as and when there is additional information to add, and highlight when any changes are made through the EA Bulletin.

In addition to our supplementary guidance for Returning Officers, we also plan to publish supplementary guidance for candidates, agents and political parties. This guidance will help them with understanding what they will need to do to navigate the election processes in the context of the pandemic and set out what they should expect during all stages of the electoral processes. We are also currently updating our suite of supporting resources for the May 2021 polls. We will confirm in future Bulletins when these are available.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please do contact [your local Commission team](#) who will be happy to help.

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EA Bulletins are issued on a regular basis. They are one of our key channels for communicating with Returning Officers, Electoral Registration Officers and their staff. Past issues of Bulletins for England, Scotland and Wales are available [here](#). You can also [subscribe to the EA Bulletins](#).

Please [keep us informed](#) of any staff changes within your team. This will help us to keep our mailing lists up-to-date.

We are sending you this newsletter as it contains important information about the Electoral Commission's work which is relevant to you. The newsletter forms part of the Electoral Commission's public task which has its basis in the Political Parties, Elections and

May 2021 elections: polling station handbooks and quick guides order form

We are now collecting orders for hard copies of polling station handbooks and quick guides for use at the May 2021 polls.

The deadline for completing the [online order form](#) is **Friday 22 January 2021**. We will be printing to order so it is important that you provide us with your figures by the deadline.

Please note that once you have submitted your order form, you will not be able to amend your order yourself. If you need to make any changes to your order, please contact [your local Commission team](#).

We will confirm the timing of the delivery of the hard copies in a future Bulletin.

May 2021 elections: management information survey

As part of our approach to monitoring the May 2021 polls, we are collecting management information from all Returning Officers with scheduled elections relating to how the polls will be managed in their area. Similarly to in previous years, this information will help to build up a clear picture of the arrangements that have been put in place across England for the delivery of the polls and will also provide key statistics which can be used with the media and other enquirers both reactively and proactively.

We have developed a [survey](#) to collect this information which covers areas such as scheduled dates of issue of poll cards and postal votes, numbers of polling stations and staff, and verification and count timings and venues. This year's survey is slightly longer than in previous years due to the inclusion of questions related to the impact of COVID-19 on preparations for the May 2021 elections. We understand how busy you are and very much appreciate your time in providing us with this important information.

We would be grateful if you could complete the survey by no later than **Friday 15 January 2021**. We have made available a [list of the questions](#) which you can use for reference before you complete the survey.

If you have any queries on any aspect of this, please contact [your local Commission team](#).

The Electoral Commission
3 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8YZ
Tel England: 0333 103 1928
Textphone: 18001 020 7271 0500
infoengland@electoralcommission.org.uk
www.electoralcommission.org.uk
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