

electoral administration bulletin

The
Electoral
Commission



Issue 303 (England) – 4 March 2021

May 2021 elections: guidance update

Further to [Bulletin 302](#), we can now confirm that the core guidance for Returning Officers and candidates and agents has been updated to reflect the proposed legislative changes to the nominations process.

All supporting resources, including the relevant nomination forms and updated template briefings for candidates and agents, have also been updated and republished on our website.

Whilst the nomination forms are prescribed, we have made some updates to make them as helpful as possible for candidates and agents. We have focussed on a clear and prominent addition to the cover page of the nomination packs that explains the changes, and have also shaded out the signature boxes that do not need to be completed for these elections. For the PCC and combined authority mayoral packs, we have also included a link to the table of requirements produced by Cabinet Office which sets out how many subscribers are needed in each area.

Supplementary guidance and resources

Further to [Bulletin 298](#) we have now published our [supplementary guidance for candidates, agents and political parties](#) to 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 would encourage you to share this with the candidates and agents in your local area to give them the information they need to be able to participate in the elections safely and with confidence.

As with our guidance for Returning Officers, this document 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, as well as with input from the Parliamentary Parties Panel.

The guidance has been added to our [dedicated supplementary guidance page](#) where you can easily access all the supplementary guidance on the Covid-specific aspects of preparations for the May

Contents

May 2021 elections: guidance update

Update on progress with publishing and updating our guidance and supporting resources.

May 2021 elections: public awareness update

Information on the launch of our campaign and links to resources to help raise awareness of the upcoming elections.

Electoral registration: Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas)

Information on and a link to our guidance on how to process an application from a citizen from Hong Kong.

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

2021 polls. We will continue to keep these documents under review and will highlight any amendments or additions to these in the change log at the front of each document.

The final versions of the polling station handbooks - for [local government and Police and Crime Commissioner elections](#), [local government and combined authority mayoral elections](#), [Police and Crime Commissioner elections](#) and [Mayor of London and London Assembly elections](#) - were published last month and can be found on our website. Hard copies will be delivered to those who have ordered them in March, as usual.

As always, if you have any questions or require any further assistance, please do contact your [local Commission Team](#).

May 2021 elections: public awareness update

There's less than one week to go until we launch our May 2021 voter registration campaign, 'Got 5?'. Don't forget to download your digital and print resources to help raise awareness of the upcoming elections, registration deadline and different ways to vote.

Voter registration campaign

Running a bath? Doing your laundry? Or waiting for the kettle to boil? To encourage as many people as possible to register to vote, we'll once again be running our 'Got 5?' voter registration campaign. It asks people to use five spare minutes they might have in their day to register – it only takes 5 minutes.

The campaign will go live next Tuesday across England, Scotland and Wales, and run up until 19 April. We will be advertising on TV, out-of-home billboards, video on demand (catch-up TV), digital audio, digital display and social media. This will also be supported by unpaid press, partnership and social media activity.

We have produced a [full suite of resources](#) to help you get involved in the campaign, including posters, digital graphics and banners, as well as template press releases and social media messages which you can adapt as you wish.

We will also continue to use the phrase "If you've never registered, or have recently moved house..." in many of our adverts to help ease the burden of duplicate applications on electoral administrators.

New animated videos – voter information

We've created two animated videos that can be used in the lead up to polling day on your website or social media channels to prepare voters for the elections.

The first covers 'How to vote in England' explaining when the elections are taking place and showing some example ballot papers and how to complete them.

The second video tells voters 'What to expect at the polling station'. It covers the public health measures that will be in place, including wearing a face covering, social distancing and bringing their own pen or pencil.

Referendums Act 2000. We will manage your personal information and contact details in line with the General Data Protection Regulation and UK data protection legislation as outlined in our privacy notice (<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/privacy-notice>)

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, you may [unsubscribe](#) at any time.

You can find the videos on our [YouTube channel](#) or [download the video files](#) to share on your platforms.

Updated frequently asked questions

We have also updated the [frequently asked questions \(FAQ\)](#) document with new information to help you answer some of the common questions you may be asked by voters as we approach the elections in May.

The document can be edited to fit the needs of your local authority. You will see yellow prompts where local amendments might be needed, but please do feel free to tailor the document as you see fit.

The document is primarily designed for you to share on your website, but you may also want to include this information in newsletters or in any other channels you use to reach your residents. The information contained in the document is accurate as of Monday 1 March.

Electoral registration: Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas)

The UK Government recently announced a new immigration route for Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas) (BN(O)) status holders, which opened from 31 January 2021. Under the Hong Kong BN(O) route, BN(O) status holders and their dependants will be able to apply to stay in the UK for up to five years, with the right to work and study. Anyone who is successful on the Hong Kong BN(O) route will have permission to enter or remain in the UK.

As a result, it is possible that there may be an increase in registration applications from new residents who hold a British Nationals (Overseas) passport and who will meet the nationality criteria and be eligible to register on that basis.

You can find more information in our guidance for Electoral Registration Officers [here](#).

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

© The Electoral Commission 2021