

electoral administration bulletin

The
Electoral
Commission



Issue 309 (England) – 21 April 2021

May 2021 elections: COVID-19 emergency proxy application form

Further to [Bulletin 306](#), we have now made available a [COVID-19 emergency proxy application form](#) for use at the May elections.

The form will allow electors to apply:

- for an emergency proxy if they are self-isolating
- to appoint a new proxy if their existing proxy is self-isolating

EROs should note that where an elector has a permanent proxy arrangement in place and applies to change their proxy appointment due to COVID-19, the newly appointed proxy will remain as their appointed proxy for future polls. Whilst the form makes this clear, you could also contact any such electors after the election and explain the situation, making it clear that they would need to make a further application to re-appoint their original proxy.

You can find our guidance for EROs on processing proxy applications [here](#). As always, it will be important to process new applications as soon as practicable to ensure that your absent voter lists are up to date and available to candidates and political parties upon request.

May 2021 elections: new social media resources – completing your postal vote

With an expected increase in those choosing to vote by post in the upcoming elections, we have developed social media templates and graphics to raise awareness of [how to complete your postal vote](#) which you can use across your digital channels.

May 2021 elections: supporting voters with sight loss

RNIB have shared [a guide](#) and [video](#) with tips from people with sight loss. These are designed for polling station staff to help them support voters with sight loss.

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Information on and a link to a COVID-19 emergency proxy application form.

May 2021 elections: new social media resources – completing your postal vote

A link to social media templates and graphics to raise awareness of how to complete postal votes.

May 2021 elections: supporting voters with sight loss

A link to a guide and video with tips to help polling station staff support voters with sight loss.

May 2021 elections: polling station staff survey

Information on and a link to a polling station staff survey seeking feedback about their experiences on polling day.

May 2021 elections: post-election feedback and data collection

Information on how to submit feedback and data following the May elections.

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

May 2021 elections: polling station staff survey

We are working with two academics, Alistair Clark (Newcastle University) and Toby James (University of East Anglia), on a survey of polling station staff.

The survey is designed to collect feedback from staff about their polling day experiences, with a specific focus on the impact of the COVID-related measures in place this year. The survey will run from 6 May to 11 June. We will publish a summary of the survey findings in a future Bulletin.

We would appreciate your help in sharing this survey with your polling station staff. To support you in doing this, we've created a [one-page resource](#) which contains a scannable QR code. Polling station staff would be able to scan the code with a smartphone and complete the survey online via their device. The link to the survey will go live on the afternoon of polling day. Alternatively, in the week after polling day we will provide you with a link to the online survey, which you could then e-mail to polling station staff.

If you have any queries about the survey, please contact researchsurvey@electoralcommission.org.uk.

May 2021 elections: post-election feedback and data collection

As at previous elections, we will once again be collecting feedback and data on the administration of the polls.

Electoral administration feedback

Your feedback is important to us – it will not only inform our post-election reporting but will also help us to improve how we support you in delivering well-run elections in the future. The survey will be similar to ones issued after previous polls and will seek your views on various aspects of the poll including voter registration, nominations, polling day and the count. This year we would additionally like to hear how you dealt with the COVID-related impacts in your area and how these have affected your work during the polls. We will also be asking for your thoughts on the guidance and support provided by the Commission.

The [survey link](#) will be made live on Monday 10 May and the deadline for completion will be Friday 11 June.

If you have any queries about the feedback survey please contact researchsurvey@electoralcommission.org.uk.

Data collection

As highlighted in [Bulletin 302](#), we will once again be collecting [key administrative data](#) from Returning Officers. This data provides important evidence to support our work in reporting on elections in the UK.

As we did at the UK general election in 2019, we will be using an online portal to collect the data. We have created a [user guide](#) to help you use the portal which includes the contact details we plan to use to invite you to fill in the data (please note that email addresses are only shown where they are generic mailbox contacts). Please let us know if you think we have an incorrect email address listed for

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 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.

your team. Anyone without an active registration will get a registration email today (Wednesday 21 April).

We will be sending out emails inviting you to submit your data on 12 May, and the deadline for submission of data will be Monday 21 June.

For local elections we will be collecting some data at a ward level and for county council elections at an electoral division level. Users of Civica and Democracy Counts electoral management software will be able to generate a ward/electoral division data import file which you will be able to upload to the data portal rather than filling in the data manually. Further details can be found in the user guide.

If you have any queries about the data collection, please contact research@electoralcommission.org.uk.

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