

electoral administration bulletin

The
Electoral
Commission



Issue 348 (England) – 25 January 2023

May 2023 elections: guidance update

We wanted to take the opportunity to remind you of recent updates to our guidance and resources in preparation for the May polls, and to highlight when you can expect to see the remaining updates required to reflect the changes introduced by the Elections Act.

ERO guidance

In November 2022, we published updates to the core [ERO guidance to support the Voter Authority Certificate and Anonymous Elector's Document](#) application processes. The guidance has also been updated with FAQs and to reflect changes to the emergency proxy provisions.

RO guidance

Planning resources for ROs, such as the [election timetable for scheduled local elections on 4 May 2023](#), the [project plan for local elections in England](#) and the [risk register for local elections in England](#), as well as an updated version of [our key planning considerations guidance](#), were published in December 2022.

The core RO guidance and supporting resources are also being updated to reflect the changes that will be in effect for the May 2023 polls. These are being published on a rolling basis, with the final updates on track to be completed by 8 February. This will include publication of the polling station handbook and related resources, including the updated template briefing slides for polling station staff. Please note that this will not be the final print-ready version of the polling station handbook, but a final text version reflecting the voter ID process, which is being made available to support administrators in planning their polling station training. As in previous years, hard copies of the polling station handbook will be distributed in March.

Following the close of our consultation on draft guidance for ROs on assistance with voting for disabled voters last week, we are now working to finalise the guidance, taking into account the feedback we have received. We expect to publish the final guidance in the week commencing 6 February.

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Information on the publication of guidance and resources for the May 2023 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 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.

Candidates and agents guidance

Guidance and resources for candidates and agents have also been updated to reflect the Elections Act provisions and the changes to the subscriber requirements. Updates to Part 5 of the guidance to reflect the Voter Authority Certificate application process are still to be made and these will be completed by 31 January.

We have also updated the [Campaigner Code of Conduct](#) to reflect the new voter ID requirement. The changes inform campaigners that they are free to inform voters of the need for photo ID at certain elections and of how to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate, but that they should not handle paper applications or assist voters with completing online applications.

Voter ID resources

The artwork files for the following Voter ID resources are now available on request to local authorities wanting to adapt them to fit their circumstances:

- Guide for Staff and Volunteers
- Voter booklet
- Posters
- Social media assets

Requests for these files should be made to partners@electoralcommission.org.uk.

Regrettably, a template press release we recently published to help local authorities raise awareness of the new voter ID requirement incorrectly stated that driving licences issued by Commonwealth countries are an acceptable form of photo ID, which they are not. We have now amended the release and you can download the updated version [here](#).

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

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