

# electoral administration bulletin

The  
Electoral  
Commission



Issue 197 (Scotland) – 7 March 2018

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### Scottish Government consultation on electoral reform

A reminder about the Scottish Government's consultation and details of how to respond.

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### Electoral registration: update on changes to anonymous registration

Further information about changes to the anonymous registration process.

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.

### Scottish Government consultation on electoral reform

As set out in [Bulletin 192](#), the Scottish Government published a [consultation paper](#) on 19 December 2017 on electoral reform. The consultation seeks views on what kind of electoral reforms are needed for future Scottish Parliament and local government elections.

The consultation is closing on 12 March 2018. The Commission will be responding to the consultation paper and we would encourage anyone who has not yet responded to do so by the deadline.

Details of how to respond can be found in the consultation paper or responses can be made online at <https://consult.gov.scot/elections/electoral-reform/consultation/>.

### Public awareness - resources to raise awareness of and help prevent electoral fraud

We have produced a suite of resources to raise awareness of and help prevent electoral fraud. These resources, which have been launched as part of a campaign with Crimestoppers and the Cabinet Office, focus on the message '**Your vote is yours alone.**' They highlight what constitutes electoral fraud, and aim to empower voters to protect their vote. They encourage people to report any concerns to Crimestoppers.

These resources have been made available to local authorities in England ahead of the scheduled elections that are taking place on 3 May, but they can also be used more widely, including for any by-elections you may have in your area. They are currently available from our [resource hub](#). We will be promoting these more widely ahead of future scheduled elections.

The current resources include:

- 2 videos – one is set in a polling station and the other in a home with someone casting their postal vote. Both videos depict intimidation, bribery and impersonation
- 2 posters (available in English, Punjabi, Urdu and Bengali)
- A leaflet (multi-lingual in English, Punjabi, Urdu and Bengali)
- Online banners
- Social media posts and content schedule
- Template press release

### **Electoral fraud data**

Each year, we collect data from police forces about cases of alleged electoral fraud and receive monthly returns from all 45 police forces across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our analysis report and data on reported allegations throughout 2017 can be found [here](#).

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### **Electoral registration: update on changes to anonymous registration**

As set out in [Bulletin 186](#), the anonymous registration scheme has been changed to make it easier for domestic abuse survivors to register to vote.

The Representation of the People (Scotland) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and the Representation of the People (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2018 have made changes to the provisions for anonymous registration which take effect from 1 April 2018.

The following persons are now additionally able to attest an application for anonymous registration:

- Any registered medical practitioner.
- Any registered nurse or midwife.
- Any person who manages a refuge. A 'refuge' means accommodation together with a planned programme of therapeutic and practical support for victims of, or those at risk of, domestic abuse or violence.

In addition, an attestation from the police can now be from a police officer of or above the rank of **inspector** (changed from superintendent) of any police force in the UK.

The list of court documents has also been extended to include:

- A domestic violence protection order made under Section 28 of the Crime and Security Act 2010 or Section 97 of, and Paragraph 5 of Schedule 7 to, the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2015.
- A female genital mutilation protection order made under Section 5A of, and Paragraphs 1 or 18 of Schedule 2 to, the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003.

Following consultation with the SAA, AEA and the Elections, Referendums and Registration Working Group, our guidance on anonymous registration, contained in [Part 4: 'Maintaining the](#)

[register throughout the year'](#), has been updated to reflect these changes.

The [anonymous registration application form](#) is in the process of being updated, and now contains a template attestation that applicants may use. The form will be available from 1 April when the new provisions take effect.

We are working with Scottish Women's Aid to produce a guide to anonymous registration for professionals working with survivors of domestic violence. We will update you in a future Bulletin when this resource is available.

### **Changes taking effect from 1 July 2018**

The Representation of the People (Scotland) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and the Representation of the People (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2018 also:

- Broaden the circumstances in which an elector can be deleted from the register based on one piece of evidence that an elector has died.
- Require the subject of a review to be notified of the outcome only if a hearing is requested or a representation is made, and change the right to appeal in certain circumstances.
- No longer require written confirmation to be provided to an elector where they change their open register status.
- Require additional messaging to be included on the voter registration form relating to nationality checks and setting out that failure to provide the required information (including any previous address within the last 12 months) may delay an application to register.

These provisions **only take effect from 1 July**. Our guidance for Electoral Registration Officers and the suite of voter registration forms will be updated to reflect these changes and we will confirm in a future Bulletin when this has been done.

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