

electoral administration bulletin

The
Electoral
Commission



Issue 208 (Wales) – 7 March 2018

Electoral registration: update on changes to anonymous registration

As set out in [Bulletin 197](#), the anonymous registration scheme has been changed to make it easier for domestic abuse survivors to register to vote.

The Representation of the People (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 have made changes to the provisions for anonymous registration.

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 AEA and SAA, our guidance on

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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](#).

anonymous registration, contained in [Part 4: 'Maintaining the register throughout the year'](#), has been updated to reflect these changes.

The [anonymous registration application form](#) has also been updated, and now contains a template attestation that applicants may use.

Our [guide](#) to anonymous registration for professionals working with survivors of domestic violence, produced in partnership with Women's Aid, has similarly been updated.

Changes taking effect from 1 July 2018

The Representation of the People (England and Wales) (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.

Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer induction and mentoring scheme

The Wales Electoral Coordination Board (WECB) was established in 2017 and fulfils a key role in the coordination of electoral events and in wider electoral activity, modernisation and reform in Wales. It also facilitates greater collaboration between Returning Officers (ROs), Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and other key partners. The members of the Board include a selection of Regional Returning Officers, ROs and EROs from across Wales, and representatives from the Electoral Commission, Welsh and UK Governments and the Association of Electoral Administrators are advisers to the Board.

Soon after its establishment, the Board identified a need to support ROs/EROs who are new to the role in order to help them undertake their duties effectively. In response, the Board has developed an induction and mentoring scheme for new ROs/EROs which will offer support in a practical way.

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.

The scheme, which is being launched this month, will involve the WECB and the Electoral Commission in Wales making contact with each new RO/ERO when they are appointed and providing them with a guide to the role which includes links to guidance and information on key contacts. The RO/ERO will also be assigned a mentor who will be an experienced RO/ERO in Wales who will be able to offer them practical advice and support as they undertake their new role.

The WECB is currently looking at ways of extending the scheme to Electoral Services Managers.

If you would like to find out more about the scheme, or there is a new RO/ERO appointment in your authority, please contact the team in Wales by e-mailing infowales@electoralcommission.org.uk.

Legislation update

[The Wales Act 2017 \(Consequential and Saving Provisions\) Regulations 2018](#) were laid in the UK Parliament on 28 February and are due to come into force on 1 April 2018.

When the Regulations come into force they will:

- Extend the legislative competence of the Assembly to include the devolution of the franchise for local government elections and the registration of electors for local government elections in Wales.
- Amend various provisions set out in the Police and Crime Commissioners Elections Order 2012. These amendments will include various amendments to the nomination form and consent to nomination for Police and Crime Commissioner elections in Wales, the reflection of the devolution of the franchise for local government elections in Wales, and of the registration of local government electors in Wales.
- Give the Welsh Ministers powers to make provision in respect of the conduct of Assembly elections and other specified matters.

The Regulations still need to be approved. We will let you know of their progress and notify you when they have come into force through a future Bulletin. Once they have been approved we will also revise our guidance and provide clarification of how these Regulations will work in practice.

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 for local authorities in England](#). We will be promoting these more widely and making resources available (in English and Welsh) 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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The Electoral Commission, Wales
Companies House, Crown Way, Cardiff, CF14 3UZ
Tel: 0333 103 1929
Textphone: 18001 020 7271 0500
infowales@electoralcommission.org.uk
www.electoralcommission.org.uk
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