



Election 2026 law changes and key dates

The Electoral Amendment Bill was introduced to Parliament in July 2025.

It proposed making several changes to the Electoral Act 1993 including changing cutoff dates for electoral enrolment, changing voter eligibility for prisoners, changing the methods the Electoral Commission use to communicate with the public, increasing the size of the Electoral Commission's board, and changing rules around financial reporting and influencing voters.

Key law changes

- The last day to enrol to vote will be 13 days before election day to allow the Commission to complete enrolment processing before election day.
- Reinstating a prisoner voting disqualification for prisoners sentenced to less than three years for offences committed after the Bill takes effect, which extends the current ban for prisoners sentenced to more than three years.
- Setting in law an advance voting period of 12 calendar days before election day.
- Creating a new offence to prohibit the provision of free food, drink or entertainment within 100m of the entrance of a voting place while voting is taking place.

Key election dates

- **Midnight, 6 August**
Last day for Māori who are already enrolled to change roll types
- **7 September**
Candidate nominations open
- **4 October, Writ Day**
The Governor-General issues formal direction to the Electoral Commission to hold the election. Anyone who enrolls after this date casts a special vote.
- **21 October**
Overseas voting starts
- **25 October**
Last day to enrol to vote in the election
- **26 October**
Advance voting starts
- **6 November**
Regulated period ends. All election advertising must end. Signs must be taken down by midnight.
- **7 November, election day**
Voting places open from 9.00am to 7.00pm
- **7 November, election night**
Preliminary election results released progressively from 7.00pm on electionresults.govt.nz
- **27 November**
Official results for the 2026 General Election declared