



User Guideline

How-to-vote cards and social media

Political stakeholders use social media to communicate with electors, including suggesting how to vote in an election.

This User Guideline outlines the rules for how-to-vote card (HTVC) distribution and publication via social media.

For the Secret Harbour By-election, HTVC registration opens 8am Wednesday 22 July 2026 and closes 5pm Friday 21 August 2026.



What is a HTVC?

A HTVC is a card, pamphlet, handbill, or other similar document (physical or digital) that is given to an elector to instruct them on how to vote in an election.

It is a requirement for anyone seeking to publish or distribute a HTVC to register it with the WAEC before being able to legally do so.

To be suitable for registration with the Commission, a HTVC must meet certain criteria, including:

- Identifies on whose behalf the card is being distributed or published
- Includes an authorisation statement;
- Includes a registration statement.

A HTVC is not suitable to be registered with the Commission if:

- It is likely to mislead or deceive an elector in relation to casting their vote;
- It is likely to induce the elector to mark the ballot paper in a way inconsistent with official ballot paper instructions; or
- It contains an error or offensive material.



Can a HTVC be posted on social media?

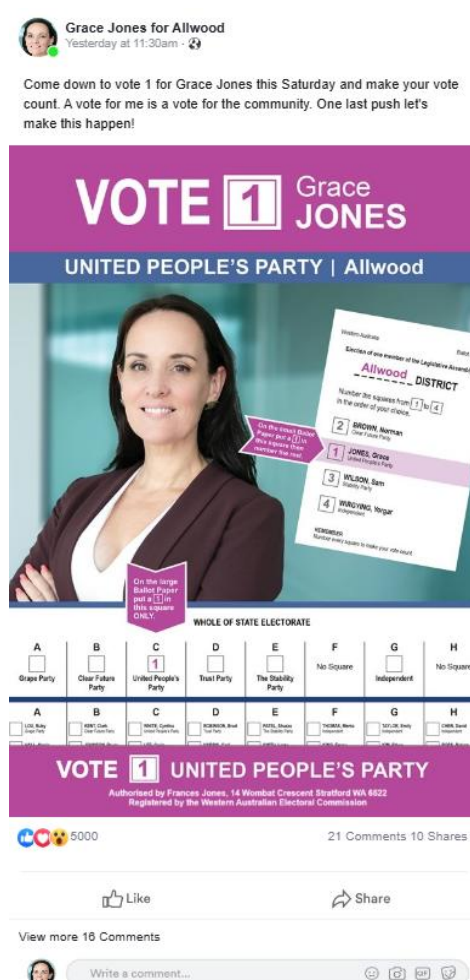
A HTVC can be posted or shared on social media only if it is identical to a HTVC registered by the Commission. All registered HTVCs will appear on the WAEC website.

A HTVC will only be considered registered if it is an exact replica of the respective HTVC as displayed on the WAEC website. Even minor alterations or differences may result in the document being considered an unregistered HTVC.

If a social media post is not intended to represent a registered HTVC but meets the necessary criteria to be considered a HTVC in its own right, it may constitute publication of an unregistered HTVC.

Publishing an unregistered HTVC is an offence under the *Electoral Act 1907*. Registered HTVCs posted on social media must include the name and address of the authorising person, political party, or group; a general authorisation statement on the social media account will not satisfy this requirement. Publishing a HTVC without including authorisation is an offence under the *Electoral Act 1907*.

Example: In the example below on the left, Grace has posted a cropped version of her HTVC. This is an example of posting an unregistered HTVC and is an offence. The post below on the right is acceptable as the full HTVC that has been registered has been posted online.

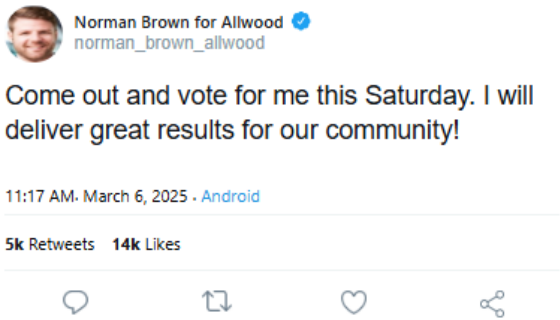


Is a social media post considered a HTVC if it has not been produced in hard copy?

A HTVC can be an electronic document or online post; there is no requirement for it to be a physical document.

A social media post may be considered to be a HTVC if:

- it is published for the purpose of instructing electors on how to vote in an election;
- it lists or shows candidates or groups in an election; and
- it indicates or depicts how to vote.

	If the purpose of the social media post is to illustrate the above, it must be registered with the Commission to be published.
	How can I use social media to encourage voting for a specific election candidate or group without registering a HTVC? Stakeholders may want to encourage electors to vote a certain way without registering a HTVC. This could be where a HTVC has already been registered by the Candidate, Party, or group for the district, or it could be that a stakeholder wishes to publish more general information about voting preferences. In these circumstances, social media posts must not do the following: • list or show candidates or groups in an election; and • indicate or depict how to vote; or • contain a representation of the ballot paper that shows markings indicative of a preference for who to vote for. Example: Norman is a candidate in the Allwood district and has made a social media post encouraging voters to vote for him in the election on the weekend. This does not constitute a HTVC as it doesn't list the candidates in the election, indicate how to vote or contain representations of the ballot paper. This post does not require registration.  A screenshot of a Twitter post from 'Norman Brown for Allwood' (@norman_brown_allwood). The post text says: 'Come out and vote for me this Saturday. I will deliver great results for our community!'. It is dated 11:17 AM, March 6, 2025, and shows 5k Retweets and 14k Likes. The interface includes icons for replies, retweets, likes, and sharing.
	I've created a HTVC for social media use, and it has been registered, but now I need to make changes so that it is print ready - what do I do? A registered HTVC can be replaced by the distributor of the HTVC via application to the WAEC. If the replacement HTVC is accepted and registered the original HTVC will be cancelled and removed from the WAEC website.
	I've seen a social media post that looks like an unregistered HTVC - what do I do? All registered HTVCs are required to contain the statement: "Registered by the Western Australian Electoral Commission". Checking for this statement in the posted document is a good first step in gauging whether it is a registered HTVC. The WAEC website will list every HTVC that is registered in relation to State elections. If the HTVC cannot be located on the WAEC website, please submit a complaint/feedback form to WAEC- Complaints and Feedback Webform.

Further information

This User Guideline contains general information only. It is not a substitute for the legislation. It is your obligation to comply with legislation. The Commission can provide general guidance but is not able to offer legal advice. If you are in doubt as to your obligations, please seek independent legal advice.

Visit the [Commission website](#) or contact the Election Line on 13 63 06 or +61 8 9214 0400 (overseas callers).