

2017 Local Government Ordinary Elections

Service Charter for Local Government Elections

August 2017



Foreword

Under the Local Government Act the Western Australian Electoral Commission is responsible for the conduct of all local government elections which are run as postal ballots. Councils which choose to run their elections as an attendance ballot may also enter into an agreement for the Electoral Commission to conduct those elections.

In 2017 the Commission is charged with conducting 85 elections for councils as postal ballots and four attendance ballots.

This Service Charter provides an overview of the services to be delivered to the key customers and stakeholders of elections run by the Commission at the 2017 local government ordinary elections.

Local government provides an important range of services for communities throughout Western Australia. It is therefore important that elections for local government offices are conducted in accordance with the highest standards of professionalism, probity and impartiality.



David Kerslake
Electoral Commissioner

Introduction

The Western Australian Electoral Commission provides all local governments in Western Australia with electoral roll services covering eligible electors residing within their districts and conducts ordinary and extraordinary elections, as well as other local government polls when requested to do so.

In accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995*, where a local government wishes to have their election conducted as a postal election, the Electoral Commissioner must be responsible for the conduct of that election. Some local governments also request the Commission to conduct their election as an in person election.

The timetable for the 2017 elections is set out on the following pages. The key dates are

Close of roll: 5:00 pm Friday, 1 September 2017

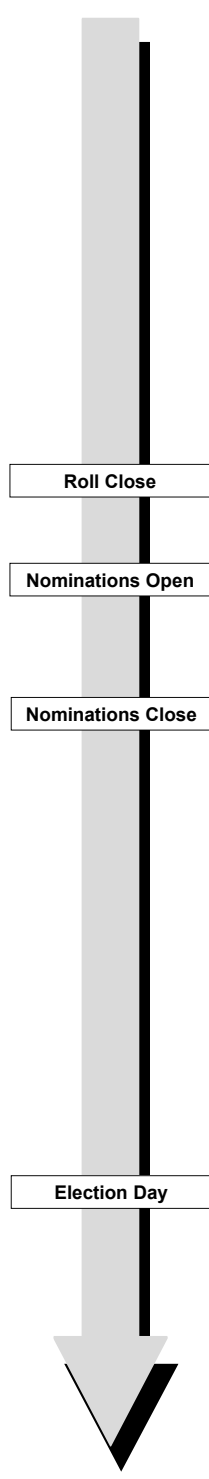
Close of nominations: 4:00 pm Thursday, 14 September 2017

Election Day: Saturday, 21 October 2017

2017 Postal Election Timetable

Days to Polling Day	Local Government Act	References to Act/Regs	Day	Date
80	Last day for declaration to have the Electoral Commissioner conduct a postal election.	LGA 4.20 (2)(3)(4)	Wed	2/08/2017
80	A decision made to conduct the election as a postal election cannot be rescinded after the 80th day.	LGA 4.61(5)	Wed	2/08/2017
70	Electoral Commissioner to appoint a person to be the Returning Officer of the Local Government for the election.	LGA 4.20 (4)	Sat	12/08/2017
70 to 56	Between the 70th/56th day the CEO is to give Statewide public notice of the time and date of close of enrolments. Preferred date Wednesday 16 August 2017	LGA 4.39(2)	Sat to Sat	12/08/2017 to 26/08/2017
56	Last day for the CEO to advise the Electoral Commissioner of the need to prepare a residents roll.	LGA 4.40(1)		26/08/2017
56	Advertising may begin for nominations from 56 days and no later than 45 days before election day. Preferred date Wednesday 30 August 2017	LGA 4.47(1)	Sat	26/08/2017
50	Close roll 5.00 pm	LGA 4.39(1)	Fri	1/09/2017
45	Last day for advertisement to be placed calling for nominations.	LGA 4.47(1)	Wed	6/09/2017
44	Nominations Open First day for candidates to lodge completed nomination paper, in the prescribed form, with the Returning Officer. Nominations period is open for 8 days.	LGA 4.49(a)	Thu	7/09/2017
38	If a candidate's nomination is withdrawn not later than 4.00 pm on the 38th day before election day, the candidate's deposit is to be refunded.	Reg. 27(5)	Wed	13/09/2017
37	Close of Nominations 4.00 pm on the 37th day before election day.	LGA 4.49(a)	Thu	14/09/2017
36	Last day for the CEO to prepare & certify an owners & occupiers roll for the election. Last day for the Electoral Commissioner to prepare & certify a residents roll.	LGA 4.41(1) LGA 4.40(2)	Fri	15/09/2017
29	Commencement of lodgement of Country Local Government District election packages with Australia Post. Delivery dependent on normal Australia Post standards.		Fri	22/09/2017
26	Public Holiday		Mon	25/09/2017
24	Commencement of lodgement of Metropolitan Local Government District election packages with Australia Post. Delivery dependent on normal Australia Post standards.		Wed	27/09/2017
22	The preparation of any consolidated roll under subregulation (1) be completed on or before 22nd day before election day.	Reg. 18(2)	Fri	29/09/2017
19	Last day for the Returning Officer to give Statewide public notice of the election. Preferred date Wednesday 20 September 2017	LGA 4.64(1)	Mon	2/10/2017
19	Commence processing returned election packages		Mon	2/10/2017
0	Election Day Close of poll 6.00 pm	LGA 4.7	Sat	21/10/2017

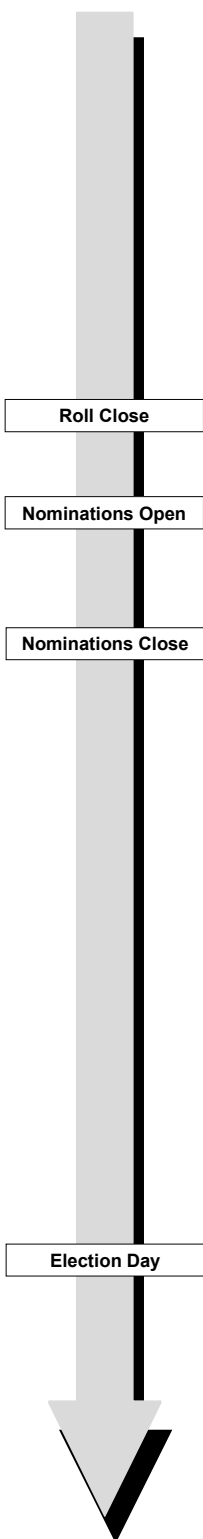
Post Election Day	Post Declaration	References to Act/Regs	Day	Date
5	Election result advertisement.	LGA 4.77	Thu	26/10/2017
14	Report to Minister. The report relating to an election under section 4.79 is to be provided to the Minister within 14 days after the declaration of the result of the election.	Reg.81	Sat	4/11/2017
28	An invalidity complaint is to be made to a Court of Disputed Returns, constituted by a magistrate, but can only be made within 28 days after notice is given of the result of the election.	LGA 4.81(1)	Sat	18/11/2017



2017 In Person Election Timetable

Days to Polling Day	Local Government Act	References to Act/Regs	Day	Date
80	Last day for declaration to have the Electoral Commissioner conduct an in person election.	LGA 4.20 (2)(3)(4)	Wed	2/08/2017
70	Electoral Commissioner to appoint a person to be the Returning Officer of the Local Government for the election.	LGA 4.20 (4)	Sat	12/08/2017
70 to 56	Between the 70th/56th day the CEO is to give Statewide public notice of the time and date of close of enrolments. Preferred date Wednesday 16 August 2017	LGA 4.39(2)	Sat to Sat	12/08/2017 to 26/08/2017
56	Last day for the CEO to advise the Electoral Commissioner of the need to prepare a residents roll.	LGA 4.40(1)		26/08/2017
56	Advertising may begin for nominations from 56 days and no later than 45 days before election day. Preferred date Wednesday 30 August 2017	LGA 4.47(1)	Sat	26/08/2017
50	Close roll 5.00 pm	LGA 4.39(1)	Fri	1/09/2017
45	Last day for advertisement to be placed calling for nominations.	LGA 4.47(1)	Wed	6/09/2017
44	Nominations Open First day for candidates to lodge completed nomination paper, in the prescribed form, with the Returning Officer. Nominations period is open for 8 days.	LGA 4.49(a)	Thu	7/09/2017
38	If a candidate's nomination is withdrawn not later than 4.00 pm on the 38th day before election day, the candidate's deposit is to be refunded.	Reg. 27(5)	Wed	13/09/2017
37	Close of Nominations 4.00 pm on the 37th day before election day.	LGA 4.49(a)	Thu	14/09/2017
36	Last day for the CEO to prepare & certify an owners & occupiers roll for the election. Last day for the Electoral Commissioner to prepare & certify a residents roll.	LGA 4.41(1) LGA 4.40(2)	Fri	15/09/2017
31	Preferred date: Notice of Election advertisement	LGA 4.64(1)	Wed	20/09/2017
31	Issuing of postal election packages is to commence [Date of election notice or as soon as practicable after this day]	Reg. 44(2)	Wed	20/09/2017
31	Commencement of absent voting [Date of election notice or as soon as practicable after this day]	Reg. 54(2)	Wed	20/09/2017
31	Commencement of early voting [Date of election notice or as soon as practicable after this day]	Reg. 59(2)	Wed	20/09/2017
22	The preparation of any consolidated roll under subregulation (1) be completed on or before 22nd day before election day.	Reg. 18(2)	Fri	29/09/2017
19	Last day for the Returning Officer to give Statewide public notice of the election. Preferred date Wednesday 20 September 2017	LGA 4.64(1)	Mon	2/10/2017
4	Absent voting closes 4.00pm	Reg. 54(2)	Tue	17/10/2017
1	Early voting closes 4.00pm	Reg. 59(2)	Fri	20/10/2017
0	Election Day Close of poll 6.00 pm	LGA 4.7	Sat	21/10/2017

Post Election Day	Post Declaration	References to Act/Regs		Date
5	Election result advertisement.	LGA 4.77	Thu	26/10/2017
14	Report to Minister. The report relating to an election under section 4.79 is to be provided to the Minister within 14 days after the declaration of the result of the election.	Reg.81	Sat	4/11/2017
28	An invalidity complaint is to be made to a Court of Disputed Returns, constituted by a magistrate, but can only be made within 28 days after notice is given of the result of the election.	LGA 4.81(1)	Sat	18/11/2017



Western Australian Electoral Commission

Service Commitments

Local Governments that have asked the Electoral Commissioner to conduct their elections can expect the following:

- Elections to be conducted impartially, effectively, efficiently and professionally
- Compliance with all legislative and regulatory requirements
- Timely provision of election cost estimates for consideration by Council
- Consultation with Commission staff either face-to-face or via telephone to determine each local government's election requirements such as polling place locations, advertising and candidate information sessions
- Timely updates on progress with election preparations and the completion of key milestones
- The appointment of competent, informed and well trained Returning Officers
- Council staff needed to perform nominated electoral duties to be given appropriate training, including the provision of suitable manuals and guides
- Provision of accurate and complete certified electoral rolls and enrolment data
- Where requested, attendance by experienced Commission staff at candidate information sessions
- Provision of comprehensive election information on the Commission's website along with accurate and timely election results
- Helpful and courteous support and advice from Commission staff
- Clear points of contact for election related matters
- The opportunity to provide the Commission with feedback both during and after the election
- Timely provision of candidate refund reports to Council
- Provision of a comprehensive election report specific to each local government
- Results of post-election stakeholder surveys to be reported back to local government CEOs.

Local Governments

Service Commitments

- Postal election cost estimates to be provided to existing local government customers by February 2017
- Input into each local government's election requirements to be sought by 3 August 2017
- Certified electoral rolls to be provided to local governments before the close of nominations
- Notification of election results to the Minister for Local Government by 4 November 2017
- Candidate refund reports to be provided to local governments in a user friendly format by December 2015
- Provision of individualised election reports and election invoices to local governments by January 2018
- All complaints and enquiries to be acknowledged within 24 hours or the next business day and further responded to as soon as practicable.

Local Government Assistance to the Commission

In effectively and cost efficiently conducting postal elections for local governments, the Commission requires the assistance of local government management and staff in regard to:

- Suitable polling place locations
- Localised promotion of the elections in community newspapers, notice boards, libraries, websites and the like
- Responding to requests for information by the Commission accurately, thoroughly and in a timely manner
- Supplying local government staff to issue Replacement Election Packages prior to election day (postal elections)
- Supplying local government staff to issue early votes prior to election day (in person elections)
- Abiding by any legal requirements and other obligations regarding payment for electoral services
- Maintaining an accurate owners & occupiers roll in accordance with legislative requirements and ensuring its completeness prior to the Commission creating the merged roll.

Note: Some of the above activities can be undertaken or arranged by the Commission (e.g. the hiring of casual staff to issue replacement votes), but associated costs will need to be recouped from the local government.

Candidates

Service Commitments

Candidates nominating for Mayoral, Shire President or Councillor local government elections can expect the following:

- Clear, accurate and timely information about their rights and responsibilities as a candidate
- Access to any scheduled candidate information sessions run jointly by the Commission and a local government
- Provision of a comprehensive electronic candidate pack that covers all information required for an effective nomination
- Efficient and timely nomination processes, with the ability to negotiate a mutually convenient time to nominate with the Returning Officer
- Timely provision of accurate electoral roll data for the district or ward they are contesting
- Advice and accurate information relating to the appointment of scrutineers
- Helpful and courteous service and advice from Commission electoral staff
- Online access to accurate and timely election results
- Clearly documented policies and protocols relating to formality, re-counts and declarations
- The opportunity to provide feedback to the Commission via an online survey after the election.

Targeted Service Standards for Candidates

- Access to the relevant district or ward electoral roll in electronic form before the close of nominations
- A comprehensive candidate USB to be made available on request or at the time of nomination
- All complaints and enquiries to be acknowledged within 24 hours or the next business day and further responded to as soon as practicable.

Candidate Assistance to the Commission

- Nominating candidates have all necessary requirements ready at the appointed time for their nomination, including compliant profile, suitable photograph image (optional) and nomination fee)
- Scrutineers are correctly appointed in a timely fashion
- Requests for information or advice are made through the Returning Officer in the first instance
- All candidate election material and advertising is correctly authorised.

Electors

Service Commitments

Eligible Western Australian electors can expect the following:

- Accurate and complete electoral rolls for each Local Government district and/or ward
- Accurate, user-friendly and timely information about when, how and where to vote
- Ballot papers, postal election packages, statutory advertising, a website and other election materials that are accurate, timely and easy to read and understand
- The receipt of election packages where applicable with sufficient time to allow all electors to return their completed voting papers prior to election day
- Helpful and responsive call centre, enquiry and complaints management services
- Courteous, informed and helpful electoral staff
- Accurate and timely reporting of election results and figures.

Targeted Service Standards for Elector

- All postal election packages are posted to electors at least two weeks before polling day (postal elections)
- Ballot papers available for the issuing of early votes from the date of the election notice (voting in person elections)
- All advertised polling places are accessible and open between the hours of 8.00 am and 6.00 pm on polling day (Electors in postal elections only attend on polling day to return a completed election package)
- All formal complaints and enquiries to be acknowledged within 24 hours or the next business day and further responded to as soon as practicable.

Elector Assistance to the Commission

- The elector certificate included on the declaration envelope within each postal vote package must be signed by the elector to ensure their ballot paper(s) is admitted to the count
- Ballot papers are completed in accordance with instructions to ensure a formal vote is lodged
- Completed postal vote packages are posted or hand delivered in time to reach the Returning Officer by 6.00pm on election day.

Electoral Staff

Service Commitments

At local government elections, local government staff and Commission personnel may be appointed to roles involved in the conduct of the election. All electoral staff appointed by the Commission can expect:

- Appropriate and sufficient training for the role to be performed (typically a combination of online and face-to-face training)
- Provision of comprehensive, easy-to-read training materials, manuals and/or guides
- Clear points of contact for all enquiries.
- For casual staff:
 - efficient and timely recruitment processes, including electronic advice as to their application's success or otherwise
 - accurate advice and information concerning their conditions of employment, location, remuneration and position responsibilities
 - accurate and timely payment, subject to all the necessary information being provided.

Targeted Service Standards for Electoral Staff

- Electoral staff receive accurate and timely information on their responsibilities and entitlements (as applicable)
- All electoral staff are provided with the appropriate training manual or material in advance of performing their duties
- All complaints and enquiries to be acknowledged within 24 hours or the next business day and further responded to as soon as practicable

Electoral Staff Assistance to the Commission

- Electoral staff read and understand the training and instructional material provided and seek clarification or assistance where required
- Employment and payment forms are completed accurately and returned to the Commission in a timely manner
- Timesheets are completed accurately and honestly and are signed once finalised.

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