

## **EAD this can help you when you vote guide**

### **What to tell the election official**

Tell the official at the voting table your full name (family name and first names), address and date of birth.

The official will check the electoral roll to see if your name is on it and that you can vote. If you need to, you can print these details on a piece of paper and give it to the official at the table.

### **Ballot papers**

The official will then give you a ballot paper. If your council has a popularly elected mayor, or is conducting a referendum or poll, you may be given more than one ballot paper.

Take the ballot paper or ballot papers to a voting booth in the polling place where you can mark your votes in privacy.

### **Casting a formal vote**

Depending on the number of vacancies to be filled different voting systems are used in local government elections. To cast a formal vote you must follow the instructions on the ballot paper.

#### Electing one councillor or the mayor

You must place a "1" in the square next to the candidate of your choice. You may vote for other candidates by giving preferences starting with "2" and consecutively numbering as many other candidates as you wish.

#### Electing two councillors

In an election where there are two or more vacancies, candidates can form into groups on the ballot paper and have a group voting square for 'above the line voting', if two or more groups request it. In this case you can either vote above or below the line.

To vote above the line, you must place the number "1" in a group voting square for the group of your choice. You may allocate preferences for other groups, starting with the number "2".

To vote for individual candidates below the line, you must place a "1" in the square next to the candidate's name of your first choice. You may allocate preferences starting with "2" to other candidates of your choice.

#### Electing three or more councillors

The number of preferences required is at least equal to the number of vacancies as shown in the 'Directions for Voting' on the ballot paper.

Where there are group voting squares on the ballot paper you can vote above the line by placing the number "1" in one group voting square. You may allocate preferences starting with "2" for other groups of your choice.

By placing a "1" above the line in only one group voting square, you have indicated preferences for all the candidates in that group, in their order on the ballot paper. The vote stops with the last candidate in that group and preferences do not continue to any other candidates on the ballot paper.

If you vote above the line and give your first preference to Group A, your second to Group B and third to Group F, and each group has seven candidates - you have given preferences 1-7 to the candidates in Group A, 8-14 to the candidates in Group B, and 15-21 to the candidates in Group F. In this case the vote stops with the last candidate in Group F and preferences do not continue to any other candidates on the ballot paper.

Alternatively, you can vote below the line for individual candidates by consecutively numbering from "1" in the order of your choice for at least half the number of vacancies. You may continue numbering as many other candidates as you choose to give them your preferences.

**The ballot box**

When you finish marking the ballot papers fold them so the votes cannot be seen and place the ballot papers in the appropriate ballot boxes as you leave the polling place.

**No absent interstate or overseas voting**

Unlike state or federal elections, there is no absent, interstate or overseas voting available in local council elections. This means that if you are outside your local government area or ward (if your Council has wards) on election day, you cannot vote, unless it is at a principal polling place.

Each Council area with wards will have at least one principal polling place appointed. If you are on the roll for that council area, you will be able to vote at the principal polling place.

**Your name is not on the roll**

If your name is not on the roll or has been marked off the roll as having voted due to an error by the election official you are still entitled to vote and you can apply for a Section Vote. You will be handed an envelope, which has a declaration, which the official will complete for you and ask you to sign. The official will then witness your signature, retain the envelope and issue you with your ballot papers. After completion bring the ballot papers back to the official. The official will insert the folded ballot papers into the envelope, seal it and place it in a ballot box.

**Secret vote**

No one is entitled to know how you voted. Some electors are concerned that placing their ballot papers in an envelope which they sign will enable any person to identify their vote.

Only the Returning Officer or an appointed official and in the presence of Scrutineers will open these envelopes. Special directions are given on the handling of these ballot papers involving their removal from the envelope and immediate placement in a ballot box so that the vote cannot be seen.

**Special help**

People who cannot write or read the instructions, or who have a disability can arrange for a friend or relative to help them vote. They can also ask an election official for help.

**Spoilt ballot papers**

If, by mistake or accident your ballot paper is spoilt, do not tear or throw it away, return it to the election official for replacement.

**Need assistance**

If you need assistance or if you do not understand how to mark your ballot paper please ask an election official.