October 2020 Local Council Elections

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| Dear Voter,This is a mailout sent by Vision Australia and Blind Citizens Australia (Vic) on behalf of the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC).**Why have I been sent this information?**The purpose of this mailout is to ensure that all eligible Victorian voters who are blind or have low vision are provided with accessible information for the upcoming local council elections in October this year.**Important Information Summary**Local council elections will be held in October 2020 and these elections will be conducted by post. There will be no elections for Casey City Council, South Gippsland Shire Council and Whittlesea City Council as these councils are under administration.To be able to vote, voters must be enrolled by **4 pm on Friday 28 August**. Ballot packs will be mailed to voters from 6 to 8 October 2020.Make sure you complete and post your vote as soon as possible so that it is in the mail before the **close of voting at 6 pm on Friday 23 October.**You can **register to receive braille or large print ballot papers.** Please **call (03) 8620 1222 before Tuesday 15 September 2020**. Late registrations cannot be accepted. You do not need to register again if you have registered for past elections. The VEC will contact you shortly to confirm you still want to receive braille or large print ballot papers.Information in this communication covers: * [Enrolling to vote in local council elections](https://view.s10.exacttarget.com/?qs=b8536fefe546a5b24ae0f370d2d401902a67b64070f1d5d2c8c9488b677c51ff2be35a10c200f932e33f4adbfbd94cf26e0029d8b6f987ab3f26b5ff254c83307ef14c96530b3a81175f76d043e076cb#Enrolling%20to%20vote%20in%20local%20council%20elections)
* [Voting in local council postal elections](https://view.s10.exacttarget.com/?qs=b8536fefe546a5b24ae0f370d2d401902a67b64070f1d5d2c8c9488b677c51ff2be35a10c200f932e33f4adbfbd94cf26e0029d8b6f987ab3f26b5ff254c83307ef14c96530b3a81175f76d043e076cb#Voting%20in%20local%20council%20postal%20elections)
* [Voting in the Melbourne City Council elections](https://view.s10.exacttarget.com/?qs=b8536fefe546a5b24ae0f370d2d401902a67b64070f1d5d2c8c9488b677c51ff2be35a10c200f932e33f4adbfbd94cf26e0029d8b6f987ab3f26b5ff254c83307ef14c96530b3a81175f76d043e076cb#Voting%20in%20Melbourne%20City%20Council%20elections)
* [Standing as a candidate in the October elections](https://view.s10.exacttarget.com/?qs=b8536fefe546a5b24ae0f370d2d401902a67b64070f1d5d2c8c9488b677c51ff2be35a10c200f932e33f4adbfbd94cf26e0029d8b6f987ab3f26b5ff254c83307ef14c96530b3a81175f76d043e076cb#Standing%20as%20a%20candidate%20for%20the%20local%20council%20elections)
* [VEC providing safe postal elections](https://view.s10.exacttarget.com/?qs=b8536fefe546a5b24ae0f370d2d401902a67b64070f1d5d2c8c9488b677c51ff2be35a10c200f932e33f4adbfbd94cf26e0029d8b6f987ab3f26b5ff254c83307ef14c96530b3a81175f76d043e076cb#VEC%20providing%20safe%20local%20council%20elections)
* [Is voting compulsory?](https://view.s10.exacttarget.com/?qs=b8536fefe546a5b24ae0f370d2d401902a67b64070f1d5d2c8c9488b677c51ff2be35a10c200f932e33f4adbfbd94cf26e0029d8b6f987ab3f26b5ff254c83307ef14c96530b3a81175f76d043e076cb#Is%20voting%20compulsory?)
* [What if I forget to vote?](https://view.s10.exacttarget.com/?qs=b8536fefe546a5b24ae0f370d2d401902a67b64070f1d5d2c8c9488b677c51ff2be35a10c200f932e33f4adbfbd94cf26e0029d8b6f987ab3f26b5ff254c83307ef14c96530b3a81175f76d043e076cb#What%20happens%20if%20I%20forget%20to%20vote?)
* [Questions?](https://view.s10.exacttarget.com/?qs=b8536fefe546a5b24ae0f370d2d401902a67b64070f1d5d2c8c9488b677c51ff2be35a10c200f932e33f4adbfbd94cf26e0029d8b6f987ab3f26b5ff254c83307ef14c96530b3a81175f76d043e076cb#Questions?)
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| [**Learn more about Victorian local elections**](https://cl.s10.exct.net/?qs=f013256e9dd7460265551bac96515153c041b15b193cad2b46cb99d2c13227cf5ba357d95ab4843db19886083b25a3fd3ed0cc26213d3648) |

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| **Enrolling to vote in local council elections**In a local council election, there are two types of enrolment: State-enrolled and council-enrolled.**State-enrolled voters**If you are on the State electoral roll, you will be automatically enrolled for the October local council elections.To be on the State electoral roll, you must be an Australian citizen, 18 years of age or more on election day (Saturday 24 October 2020) and have lived in Victoria for at least one month. If you would like to check if you are on the State electoral roll, you can call the VEC on 131 832.If you are on the roll but have moved house, changed your postal address or name and not yet updated your enrolment details, you can do this online at [vec.vic.gov.au](https://cl.s10.exct.net/?qs=f013256e9dd74602c192660eb0d61ad074d7d15d8eb1e346ae7ae9010d0a107454375a531b6cd13de302fb2a79ec0560f91e7cbb47ab7925) or by calling the VEC and requesting a paper enrolment form be mailed to you. VEC staff can pre-complete the form with details you provide over the phone and place a tactile marker on the form so that you know where to sign. A reply-paid envelope will also be sent with the form for its return.Enrolment updates and new enrolments must be completed by **4 pm on Friday 28 August 2020.**If you would like to receive **free VoterAlert SMS or email** voting reminders, please include your mobile number or email address on your enrolment form (and advise the VEC staff member if they are pre-completing your form).**Council-enrolled voters**Council-enrolled voters must be 18 years or older on election day (Saturday 24 October 2020) and not be a State-enrolled voter within the councilIf you were **on the roll at the last council election** for a property that you own and that is located in a different council to where you live, you will be automatically sent a ballot pack for that property in October.If you are **not an Australian citizen**, but:* You live in and pay rates for a property or;
* You pay rates on a property you occupy (for example a shop tenant) in the council area but do not have any other voting rights or
* You own a property that is located in a different council to where you live but you were not on the roll for the last council elections

**You can apply** to council to vote in the council elections. You will need to **contact your local council** for a form to enrol, or to check to see if you are a council-enrolled voter. **Voting in local council postal elections**If you are on the roll for the elections by 4 pm on Friday 28 August, you will be sent a ballot pack in the mail. Ballot packs will be mailed from 6-8 OctoberIn the ballot pack you will find:* A ballot paper attached to statements and photographs of the candidates who have nominated
* Voting instructions
* A ballot paper envelope with a flap
* A reply-paid envelope.

**How to vote**1. Write 1 in the box next to the person who you want to win
2. Write 2 in the box next to your second choice
3. Keep numbering until all the boxes have a number
4. Use numbers only and don’t repeat any.

Friends, family members or neighbours can help you to complete your ballot paper, so long as they follow your instructions. Then:1. Put your completed ballot paper in the ballot paper envelope (the one with the flap on it) and seal it.
2. Fill in your details on the flap attached to the ballot paper envelope – we use this information to note that you have voted.
3. Put the sealed ballot paper envelope in the reply-paid envelope before you post it.

Make sure you post your vote as soon as possible so that it is in the mail before the **close of voting at 6 pm on Friday 23 October.** **Voting in Melbourne City Council elections****Melbourne City Council has special voting** rules. If you are on the roll for the Melbourne City Council elections, you will receive **two** ballot papers.On the small ballot paper, to choose the Leadership Team (Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor) you must number all the boxes in the order of your choice.The larger paper is for the councillor election. You can vote ‘1’ above the line for the group of councillors you want electedORYou can number the boxes below the line for the individual councillors. If you vote below the line, you must number every box below the line in the order of your choice.Then1. Put your completed ballot papers in the ballot paper envelope (the one with the flap on it) and seal it.
2. Fill in your details on the flap attached to the ballot paper envelope.
3. Put the sealed ballot paper envelope in the reply-paid envelope before you post it.

Make sure you post your vote as soon as possible so that it is in the mail before the **close of voting at 6 pm on Friday 23 October**.  **If you will be away from your address**You can ask us to send your ballot pack to a different address if:* You will be away when ballot packs are mailed (after Tuesday 6 October 2020) or;
* Your mailing address will change after the close of rolls (Friday 28 August 2020).

You will need to complete a Redirection of Ballot Pack Form. Call us on 131 832 to have this form sent to you. The form has instructions on how to submit your form.The Election Manager must receive your application by **5 pm on Thursday 17 September 2020.** **Standing as a candidate for the local council elections**If you wish to stand as a candidate in this election, nominations open on Thursday 17 September 2020 and close at 12 noon on Tuesday 22 September 2020.**How to nominate**To nominate, you must:* Complete a nomination form
* Complete mandatory Local Government Candidate training before submitting your nomination (for more information, visit the Local Government Victoria website or call them on 136 186)
* Make an appointment to submit your nomination form in person with the Election Manager for the council you are nominating in
* Pay a nomination fee of $250.

A Candidate Helper will be available online from Thursday 3 September 2020.**Online candidate information session**The VEC's recorded candidate information session can be streamed online from Thursday 3 September 2020. It will be complemented by State-wide interactive candidate seminars, which are based on the information session video.To watch the information session or find out how to join an online interactive seminar, visit [vec.vic.gov.au](https://cl.s10.exct.net/?qs=f013256e9dd74602c192660eb0d61ad074d7d15d8eb1e346ae7ae9010d0a107454375a531b6cd13de302fb2a79ec0560f91e7cbb47ab7925) **VEC providing safe local council elections**The VEC has a plan in place to make sure voters, candidates and VEC staff are safe from the coronavirus (COVID-19) disease. Strict hygiene and social distancing measures will be in place at all offices. **Is voting compulsory?**Voting is **compulsory for Australian citizens enrolled for the election and for any voters enrolled for the Melbourne City Council elections.**Voting is encouraged, but not compulsory if you are a council-enrolled voter. **What happens if I forget to vote?**You will receive a letter asking for an explanation. Please complete the form on the letter to tell us your reason. If you do not have a good reason for not voting, you may receive a fine. **Questions?**If you have any questions about this information and would like to speak to the VEC directly, please call 131 832.Please note: This communication has been distributed by Vision Australia and Blind Citizens Australia (Vic) on behalf of the Victorian Electoral Commission.If the person to whom this communication has been sent is deceased, please contact the respective organisation so that they may be removed from the mailing list. |

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| Vision Australia is a not-for-profit organisation. |
| Vision Australia 454 Glenferrie Road Kooyong, VIC, 3144, AU[Update Profile](https://cl.s10.exct.net/profile_center.aspx?qs=19d3e61a225df3206a1e2f7c5ed9347596f60e97a36f0ccb33cf110db3157a7c5cc84a94266693ca94743a40511bce06d97298424922d580bd4274cc2d0789790f244d8b4da02d91) |

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