

Ballot paper formality

Legislative Assembly elections



**Northern Territory
Electoral Commission**
EVERY vote counts!

To assist in understanding the ballot paper formality rules required under a full preferential voting system, the following guidelines are provided.

Formal votes

To vote in Northern Territory Legislative Assembly elections, you are required to write the number '1' in the square next to the candidate who is your first choice. You must then place consecutively increasing whole numbers (starting with the number 2) in the candidate square on the ballot paper for each of the other candidates until a number is placed in all squares.

A ballot paper is formal if you have shown a first preference and numbered all squares in order of your choice. You must not repeat or skip a number in the series and your intention must be clear.

Changes to numbers, numbers written outside the squares, drawings and slogans do not make your ballot paper informal provided the ballot paper is otherwise marked correctly. For example, you can cross a number out and write another number beside it if you have made a mistake. As long as your intention is clear your vote will count.

Under Division 2, [section 94\(6\)](#) of the *Electoral Act 2004*, a cross (×), a tick (✓) or the figure one (1) is taken to be the first preference of a voter.

Informal votes

A ballot paper is informal if:

- It is totally blank
- There is no number 1 or a cross (×) or a tick (✓)
- The number 1, a cross (×) or a tick (✓) appear against two or more names
- Two or more squares have been left blank
- A number has been repeated
- There is a break in the number sequence e.g. 1, 3, 4
- Writing on the ballot paper identifies you as the voter.

Directions are included on the ballot paper that reminds you to number every square to make your vote count.


A number of examples of formal and informal ballot papers are pictured on page 2.


Informal


NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA
Electoral Act 2004


BALLOT PAPER
Election of one Member of the Legislative Assembly
for the Division of


SAMPLE
Number the boxes 1 to 5 in
the order of your choice.
Remember, number every box to make your vote count.

 C CANDIDATE
Party A

 A CANDIDATE
Party C

 G CANDIDATE
Independent

 B CANDIDATE
Party B


 R CANDIDATE
Independent


SAMPLE


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Independent

 B CANDIDATE
Party B

 R CANDIDATE
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Formal


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Party B


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