

How-to-vote cards

Legislative Assembly

Disclaimer: This factsheet is a general overview provided by the Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) and should not substitute legal advice. Unless specified otherwise, all references are to the Electoral Act 2004, effective from 1 July 2021. Please consult the legislation and seek independent legal advice as necessary.

What is a how-to-vote card?

How-to-vote (HTV) cards allow election participants to communicate how they would like their supporters to vote and distribute their preferences in an election.

Authorisation requirements

HTV cards must have an authorisation statement in a sufficient font size to be read by the intended audience containing:¹

1. the **name** and **address** of the person authorising the publication or distribution (a post office box is not permitted), and
2. the name and address of the printing company, and
3. if the material is intended to be viewed from two sides, the above-mentioned authorisations **must appear on both sides**, and
4. the source of the funding for that material, whether an associated entity, candidate, political party, third-party campaigner or otherwise.

The address required is:

- if the authoriser is a person – the street name and locality of the person’s residence (a post office box does not satisfy the requirement).
- If the authoriser is an organisation – their business address (in full) or address of their primary office.

Examples:

- *Authorised by J Day Smith Street Darwin NT. Printed by Armadillo Printing, 25 Winnellie Road, Winnellie NT.*
- *Authorised by A Smith, Party A, 10 Gregory Terrace Alice Springs, NT. Printed by Anteater Publishing, 25 Stott Terrace, Alice Springs NT.*

What does the ballot paper look like for each division?

HTV cards should show the candidates in the same order as they are on the ballot paper to make it as easy as possible for voters to follow their card. The candidates and their order on the ballot paper is finalised at the declaration of nominations.

The declaration of nominations occurs as soon as possible after nominations close and includes a public draw by random selection to decide the ballot paper order. For the 2024 Territory Election this will occur at 3pm on Thursday 8 August 2024.

¹ See section 270
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How-to-vote cards must not be misleading or deceptive

HTV cards must not be published or distributed if they are likely to:²

- mislead a voter
- deceive a voter
- improperly interfere with a voter casting a vote
- contain an untrue or incorrect statement.

If following a HTV card will lead a voter to casting an informal ballot, then it is considered misleading.

For example, a HTV card showing a 1 next the preferred candidate but with no other marks or instructions is misleading as it would lead to an informal vote. However, that HTV card would not be considered misleading if in addition to the 1 in the box there are clear and prominent instructions *advising voters to mark all other boxes in their own order of preference*.

Where can how-to-cards be distributed

HTV cards can be distributed outside of prohibited zones at voting centres.

If campaigning is not permitted at an early voting centre or there is no designated campaign area at an election day voting centre, a pamphlet holder will be made available for campaign material (e.g. how to vote cards) for candidates in divisions determined by the NTEC (based on those divisions adjoining the division the voting centre is located in).

Campaign material must be given to the voting centre manager of the voting centre before the voting centre opens.

NTEC cannot print HTV cards for you.

Does the NTEC need to approve HTV cards?

The NTEC does not need to approve HTV cards. However we are happy to check over the cards to ensure they are compliant with requirements. If you would like cards checked please send a proof to:

netc@nt.gov.au

Handy hints

- Add some colour to your design, if you print plain white how-to-vote cards people may mistakenly attempt to submit your card instead of their ballot paper – which would be an informal vote.
- HTV cards cannot have the word 'ballot paper' written on them.

² See section 270(3)

Examples

HOW TO VOTE 1

Candidate B

Example District

Place the number one (1) in the square opposite the candidate of your choice.


You must number every square in the order of your preference.

2 Candidate A

1 Candidate B

3 Candidate C

Authorised by J Day Smith Street Darwin NT. Printed by Armadillo Printing, 25 Winnellie Road, Winnellie NT.



Correct – HTV card shows correct voting instructions

HOW TO VOTE 1

Candidate B

Example District

You must number every square in the order of your preference.


Candidate A

→ 1 Candidate B

Place a '1' in this box, then number all other boxes in the order of your choice

Candidate C

Authorised by J Day Smith Street Darwin NT. Printed by Armadillo Printing, 25 Winnellie Road, Winnellie NT.



Correct – HTV card shows correct voting instructions

HOW TO VOTE 1

Candidate B


Example District

Candidate A

1 Candidate B

Candidate C

Authorised by J Day Smith Street Darwin NT. Printed by Armadillo Printing, 25 Winnellie Road, Winnellie NT.



Incorrect – HTV card show does not show correct voting instructions and if followed will lead to an informal vote

| Version | Date | Author | Changes made |
|---------|---------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 2.0 | 2 August 2024 | Chris Brack, Financial Disclosure and Compliance Manager | Updated for 2024 Territory Election |