

**2025** LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
ELECTIONS

# *SERVICE* **PLAN**

This Service Plan provides all election stakeholders with early advice on how the election will be delivered.

[ntec.nt.gov.au](http://ntec.nt.gov.au)



Northern Territory  
Electoral Commission

Published by the Northern Territory Electoral Commission  
[www.ntec.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntec.nt.gov.au)

© 2025. This publication is copyright.

No part may be reproduced by any process, except in accordance with the *Copyright Act 1968*.

For requests concerning reproduction and rights please direct all enquiries to the Northern Territory Electoral Commission.

Level 3, TCG Centre  
80 Mitchell Street  
Darwin NT 0800

GPO Box 2419  
Darwin NT 0801

Phone: 08 8999 5000

Fax: 08 8999 7630

Email: [ntec@nt.gov.au](mailto:ntec@nt.gov.au)

ABN: 84 085 734 992

# CONTENTS

## Contents

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE.....	1
ELECTORAL INTEGRITY.....	5
ELECTION TIMETABLE .....	9
CORPORATE MANAGEMENT.....	10
VENUES AND MATERIALS.....	13
PUBLIC AWARENESS .....	14
ENROLMENT .....	18
NOMINATIONS AND CANDIDATES .....	21
DONATION DISCLOSURE .....	26
VOTING SERVICES .....	28
COUNTING VOTES .....	34
NON-VOTER ACTIVITIES .....	39

# BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

## Introduction

Delivering elections in the Northern Territory requires substantial planning, preparation and coordination.

The Service Plan provides information to support planning and participation in the upcoming 2025 Local Government Elections, and to promote transparency in the election process and effective coordination of election activities.

The NT Electoral Commission (NTEC) aims to provide a positive voting experience for electors and access to information for all electoral participants and stakeholders to plan and prepare their activities accordingly.

Furthermore, the Service Plan is a resource for employees and service providers who support the NTEC to deliver elections and highlight the importance of their involvement.

The understanding of election processes, roles, rights and responsibilities contributes to the delivery of high quality electoral services and a successful election.

## Agency values

The NTEC is committed to its purpose, vision and agency values.

**Purpose:** Provide independent and high quality electoral services to Territorians.

**Vision:** Maintain public confidence in electoral processes in the Northern Territory and raise awareness to support participation.

### Values:

- **COLLABORATE** – we are inclusive and work with our stakeholders and Territorians for the best outcome.
- **INTEGRITY** – we conduct ourselves in a fair, honest and ethical manner in everything we do.
- **PROFESSIONAL** – we are committed to providing high quality, efficient and client focussed services to stakeholders and Territorians.
- **TRUST** – stakeholders and Territorians are confident that we deliver fair and transparent services to a high standard.

## Legal framework

The NT Electoral Commission is responsible for the conduct of all Northern Territory local government general elections and by-elections.

The conduct of the 2025 Local Government Elections will be governed by:

- *Local Government Act 2019*
- *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act (1978) (Cth)*
- Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021

## Local government in the Northern Territory

The Northern Territory has 18 local government council areas.

General elections for Barkly Regional Council were held in November 2024 following the dismissal of all elected members while under official management during 2023-2024.

The inaugural general elections for the newly established Groote Archipelago Regional Council (formerly a ward of East Arnhem Regional Council) were held in March 2025.

On 23 May 2025, the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Community Development (by Gazette notice No. S32) dismissed all elected members of Coomalie Community Government Council who had been suspended while the council was under official management. The same Gazette notice called for a general election to be held for Coomalie Community Government Council on 23 August 2025.

The Coomalie Community Government Council general election will be held concurrent to the 2025 Local Government Elections, which will deliver general elections for 15 local government councils in the Territory.

The table over the page provides information about all 18 local government councils in the Northern Territory, each council's ward structure (where there are wards) and the number of elected members of the council. Where a council does not have an elected mayor, a president or mayor of the council is chosen by and from the councillors.

When all NT local government areas participate in a periodic general election, this translates to the conduct of 62 elections for 165 elected positions.

For the 2025 Local Government Elections (and Coomalie Community Government Council's general election), if all elections are contested, there will be 54 elections to conduct for 144 elected positions.

Local government area	Wards and no. of elected members per ward	Elected members
Alice Springs Town Council	-	8 councillors 1 elected mayor
Barkly Regional Council*	Alpurrurulam Ward (1), Alyawarr Ward (4), Kuwarrangu Ward (2), Patta Ward (5)	12 councillors 1 elected mayor
Belyuen Community Government Council	-	5 councillors
Central Desert Regional Council	Akityarre Ward (2), Anmatjarre Ward (4), Northern Tanami Ward (2), Southern Tanami Ward (4)	12 councillors
City of Darwin	Chan Ward (3), Lyons Ward (3), Richardson Ward (3), Waters Ward (3)	12 councillors 1 elected mayor
Coomalie Community Government Council#	Adelaide River Ward (2), Batchelor Township Ward (2), Coomalie Rural Ward (2)	6 councillors
East Arnhem Regional Council	Birr Rawarrang Ward (2), Gumurr Gattjirrk Ward (2), Gumurr Marthakal Ward (3), Gumurr Miwatj Ward (3), Gumurr Miyarrka Ward (2)	12 councillors
Groote Archipelago Regional Council*	Central Ward (4), East Ward (2), West Ward (2)	8 councillors
Katherine Town Council	-	6 councillors 1 elected mayor
Litchfield Council	Central Ward (2), North Ward (2), South Ward (2)	6 councillors 1 elected mayor
MacDonnell Regional Council	Iyarrka Ward (2), Ljirapinta Ward (3), Luritja Pintubi Ward (3), Rodinga Ward (4)	12 councillors
City of Palmerston	-	7 councillors 1 elected mayor
Roper Gulf Regional Council	Never Never Ward (3), Numbulwar Numburindi Ward (2), Nyirranggulung Ward (3), South West Gulf Ward (3), Yugul Mangi Ward (2)	13 councillors
Tiwi Islands Regional Council	Bathurst Island Ward (6), Milikapiti Ward (3), Pirlangimpi Ward (3)	12 councillors
Victoria Daly Regional Council	Daguragu Ward (1), Milngin Ward (1), Pine Creek Ward (1), Timber Creek Ward (1), Walangeri Ward (1)	5 councillors
Wagait Shire Council	-	5 councillors
West Arnhem Regional Council	Gunbalanya Ward (3), Kakadu Ward (3), Maningrida Ward (4), Minjilang Ward (1), Waruwi Ward (1)	12 councillors
West Daly Regional Council	Nganmarriyanga Ward (1), Thamarrurr/Pindi Pindi Ward (4), Tyemirri Ward (1)	6 councillors

\* not participating in 2025 Local Government Elections as general elections already held

# participating in a general election to be held concurrent to the 2025 Local Government Elections

## Unincorporated areas of the Northern Territory

There are also some areas of the Northern Territory that are not covered by a local government area which are referred to as unincorporated areas.

### **Electors enrolled in these areas are not required to vote in the 2025 Local Government Elections.**

Unincorporated areas in the NT include:

- Alyangula
- Cox-Daly unincorporated region
- Darwin unincorporated areas (Channel Island, Charles Darwin, East Arm, Hidden Valley, Wickham)
- Darwin Waterfront Precinct
- Marrakai-Douglas Daly unincorporated region
- Nhulunbuy
- Northcrest
- Yulara

### **Key**



Legislation reference



New initiative

# ELECTORAL INTEGRITY

## Privacy



The NTEC is bound by the *Information Act 2002* as well as the privacy obligations in the *Electoral Act 2004* and the *Electoral Act 1918 (Cth)*.

There are strict provisions about privacy relating to the handling of personal information from the electoral roll, and for upholding the secrecy of the vote when providing assistance to voters who need help to cast their vote.

## Management of misinformation and disinformation

The spread of misinformation and disinformation during elections across Australia is increasing.

**Misinformation** is false information shared without harmful intent, often due to misunderstanding or error.

**Disinformation**, on the other hand, is deliberately false information spread with the intention to deceive or manipulate.

The NTEC has an online misinformation and disinformation register which will be updated where required for the 2025 Local Government Elections to publicly highlight and correct inaccurate, prominent and harmful information that relates to the conduct of the elections and electoral processes.

The register will summarise the identified misinformation and disinformation, provide relevant correct information and list any actions taken to counter the false claims. The register is limited to content that regards electoral processes only so that it does not interfere with political debate or the NTEC's duty to conduct elections impartially.

Members of the public and election stakeholders can bring items they consider to be misinformation and disinformation about electoral processes to the attention of the NTEC via email to [ntec@nt.gov.au](mailto:ntec@nt.gov.au).



The NTEC will consider the lawfulness of certain electoral communications and take enforcement action where breaches of electoral legislation have occurred.

However, the NTEC has no role in enforcing truth in political advertising in the NT.

## **Feedback and complaints management**

The NTEC values all feedback to ensure continuous improvement to its processes and practices.

To support the 2025 Local Government Elections a dedicated service centre will manage feedback and complaints from the public through a variety of modes including, email, telephone and on social media.

Complaints alleging breaches of law should be in writing and include any supporting evidence.

The NTEC treats feedback and complaints confidentially, however in some circumstances the NTEC may be required to disclose information to resolve the feedback or complaint.

Where parties involved in a complaint have publicised the matter, the NTEC may confirm the existence of the complaint with the media but will not discuss the details.

The NTEC may also make public comment regarding feedback or complaints where necessary to ensure electors are aware of a situation and/or have accurate information.

## **Constructive compliance**

The NTEC uses 'a constructive compliance' approach which focusses on providing electoral participants with resources to understand and comply with their obligations.

Where necessary and appropriate, enforcement tools may be used to assist compliance.

Complaints alleging a breach of the law will be assessed and investigated or referred to another agency as appropriate.



The NTEC may pursue legal proceedings against any person committing an offence against local government electoral legislation and regulations.

## **Systems security**

The NTEC operates in a shared services environment and receives security support through the Department of Corporate and Digital Development. The NT Government employs contemporary cyber security controls and active monitoring in line with Australian Government recommendations. External security testing and assurance occurs to protect electoral information and systems.

## Storage and security of ballot papers



The NTEC manages the security and storage of ballot papers in accordance with a number of provisions in the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021.

All ballot materials must be kept securely until the completion of any proceedings with the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NTCAT) post-election or until the Commissioner is satisfied they are no longer required for any further functions under the *Local Government Act 2019* or the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021.

The NTEC employs a ballot paper manager who is responsible for the security and storage of ballot papers during the election period, including access to the secure facilities or areas where ballot papers are held.

Further ballot paper security measures include:

- quality control measures to ensure ballot papers are printed accurately and in the quantities specified
- procurement of secure satchels for the transfer of live ballot materials
- secure storage of ballot papers that can only be accessed by authorised staff.

## Court of Disputed Returns

Eligible persons may dispute the validity of an election by making an application to the Court of Disputed Returns. The eligible persons are:

- a candidate in the election
- a prospective candidate in the election whose nomination was rejected
- a voter entitled to vote at that election
- the NT Electoral Commissioner.

The application must be made with the Registrar of NTCAT no later than 21 days after the conclusion of the election to which it relates. For the 2025 Local Government Elections, the last day for disputing the validity of the election is Monday 29 September 2025.

## **Election reports**

Each individual council will receive an election report regarding the general election specific to their local government area.

Following the individual council reports, the NTEC will produce a consolidated report for the 2025 Local Government Elections which will be presented to the Speaker of the NT Legislative Assembly and tabled in parliament. The NTEC's general election reports make recommendations for legislative reforms relating to elections as well as internal policies, and provide information and data regarding:

- the election's public awareness campaigns and reach
- enrolment
- nominations
- voting services
- voting outcomes (including turnout and participation)
- post-election management (including non-voter processing)
- corporate activities.

# ELECTION

## TIMETABLE

- **Friday 23 May:** Application for postal votes open
- **Friday 11 July:** Nominations open
- **Tuesday 22 July:** Electoral roll closes (5:00pm)
- **Thursday 31 July:** Nominations close (12 noon)
- **Friday 1 August:** Declaration of nominations and draw for ballot paper positions
- **Monday 4 August:** Postal vote mail out commences
- **Monday 11 August:** Early voting and mobile voting commences
- **Saturday 23 August:** Election day
- **Saturday 23 August:** Initial count of ordinary election day and early postal votes (from 6:00pm)
- **Monday 25 August - Thursday 4 September:** Count period
- **Friday 5 September:** Deadline for the return of postal votes (12:00pm)
- **Friday 5 September:** Distribution of preferences (commences as soon as practicable after completing the counts of the final intake of postal votes)
- **Monday 8 September:** Declaration of the election result
- **Friday 26 September:** Last day to apply to NTCAT to dispute the validity of the election.

# CORPORATE MANAGEMENT

## External service providers

To conduct elections in the Northern Territory, the NTEC engages with external service providers to support logistics, materials and communications, procuring services such as:

- accommodation
- advertising
- creative (for the public awareness campaign)
- freight and courier services
- materials
- postal services
- printing services and paper products
- travel and transport
- website design and support

## Arrangements with NTG agencies

Delivering the 2025 Local Government Elections involves collaboration and support from a number of Northern Territory Government agencies responsible for providing shared service support.

The Department of Corporate and Digital Development provides significant support for the NTEC across a number of business units:

- Agency Business Systems
- Banking Services
- Budgets and Finance
- Cyber Security
- Digital Learning and Innovation
- Digital Solutions

- ICT Technology Services
- NT Fleet
- NT Property Management
- Payroll
- Project Management Office
- Website Design and Support
- Workforce Services.

## Staffing

During major elections a significant casual workforce is engaged, including voting centre staff as well as short term casual contracts (3-6 months) and a small number of positions filled by electoral specialists.

For the 2025 Local Government Elections, there will be approximately 400 casual electoral positions filled by approximately 300 staff, as a large number of staff will work more than one position during the election period.

Staffing costs are the greatest expense of any election.

## Staff training

Training is provided to all voting centre staff primarily via online training courses. The online courses are aligned to the type of voting centre staff are employed to work in.



The courses were developed by the NTEC in conjunction the Department of Corporate and Digital Development and are hosted on the NTG's MyLearning portal.

Face to face training is also provided to voting centre managers, and all remote and urban voting staff in addition to the online training courses.

## Health and safety management

The NTEC, through its election design, will respond to any public health directions but has continued to follow health and safety guidelines from the Department of Health.

However, masks and hand sanitiser will not be supplied in voting centres as they have been for recent past elections. Voters, voting staff, candidates, scrutineers and campaign workers are welcome to bring and use their own.

### ***Fatigue management***

The NTEC, as with all electoral commissions, is increasingly conscious about the need to reduce the risk of fatigue in its election workforce when delivering major elections within fixed statutory timelines. During voting and counting periods, particularly on election day/night, fatigue can impair functioning and increase safety risks.

The NTEC acknowledges the importance of the timely counting and publication of election results. To support the count process within the application of the fatigue management policy, additional resources will be allocated where required.

### ***eSafety***

The NTEC is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of its staff within the digital environment.

The NTEC is a signatory to a joint referral protocol with the eSafety Commissioner, an initiative championed by the Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand. This protocol is a coordinated effort among federal, state and territory electoral commissions to protect election workers from online abuse during elections.

The protocol establishes a process for electoral commissions to request assistance from the eSafety Commissioner in cases where election staff are targeted by online threats. This includes incidents of adult cyber abuse and the distribution of illegal or restricted content.

NTEC election staff will receive information on eSafety and the application of the protocol during the election.

# VENUES

## AND MATERIALS

### Voting centre premises

Many of the venues used as voting centres for the 2025 Local Government Elections, in particular for early voting and on election day, will be located in council owned buildings. This is because councils are able to provide their assets to offset some of the costs of their elections.

Therefore, many of the voting centre venues that will be used for the 2025 Local Government Elections were not necessarily used in the 2024 Territory Election or the 2025 federal election.

In order to further reduce costs to councils for their elections, there will be a reduction in voting centres in urban and regional areas.



The NTEC will have a 'find my nearest voting centre' tool on its website to inform voters about the closest and available voting centres depending on when they want to vote.

### Voting centres and issuing of votes

**Early voting centres will carry ballot papers for elections in all council areas.** This means voters from any council area can visit any early voting centre and be issued with the appropriate ballot papers.

All early voting centres will become election day voting centres and only these election day voting centres will be able to issue ballot papers for every council area.

All other election day voting centres will only be able to issue ballot papers for the council area they are located in. This includes ballot papers for each ward that has an election in that council area.

Remote voting teams will only carry ballot papers for the council area they are servicing. This includes ballot papers for each ward that has an election in that council area.

Urban voting teams – which visit hospitals and correctional centres in Alice Springs, Darwin and Katherine – will carry ballot papers for elections in all council areas.

## **Election offices and scrutiny centres**

The NTEC's Darwin office will be the main election office for the 2025 Local Government Elections, and from mid-July to mid-September 2025 a staffed election office will also be open in Alice Springs. The locations of the offices are:

- Darwin: Level 3, TCG Centre, 80 Mitchell Street
- Alice Springs: First floor, Alice Plaza.

There will also be 2 scrutiny centres for the election for the duration of the count period, one in Darwin and one in Alice Springs. The Alice Springs scrutiny centre will coordinate and conduct the counts for 3 councils in Central Australia: Alice Springs Town Council, Central Desert Regional Council and MacDonnell Regional Council. The locations of the scrutiny centres are:

- Darwin: Ground floor, RCG House, 83-85 Smith Street, Darwin City
- Alice Springs: First floor, Alice Plaza.

## **Materials**

Election materials are delivered to early voting centres and election day voting centres the day before voting opens. This equipment includes voting screens, ballot boxes, recycling bins, signage and additional furniture where required.

The NTEC has not had to procure any new cardboard materials for the 2025 Local Government Elections.

## **Electronic mark off devices**

Electronic mark off devices are used at all voting centres and are able to work offline when required. This allows for voters to be marked off an electronic certified list when they are issued with a ballot paper. The mark off system also assists with preventing multiple voting and provides live voter turnout statistics.

The Electoral Commission Queensland is loaning approximately 500 devices to the NTEC to support the electronic mark off of voters.

## **Ballot papers**

Ordinary ballot papers are issued to all enrolled voters who vote at a voting centre including absent and early absent voters.

Declaration ballot papers are issued to postal voters, and those voters who cannot be found on the NT electoral roll or those voters who have been marked as having already voted, but state they have not yet voted.

Ballot papers are printed after the declaration of nominations once the candidate order on each ballot paper has been determined.

# PUBLIC AWARENESS

## Communications campaign

The communications campaign will focus on 3 calls to action to voters throughout the election process:

### 1. **Check your enrolment** – mid June - Late July

- Encourage voters to check their enrolment status, update their details if necessary, and ensure they are eligible to vote.

### 2. **Educate and empower** – July

- Empower voters to take action.
- Educate voters about the election, voting options and the election process.
- Emphasise the importance of voters to evaluate the information they encounter and check the facts.
- Encourage voters to share this knowledge and empower their friends and family.
- Encourage community organisations to share information with their audiences.

### 3. **Vote** – early to late August

- Motivate voters to exercise their democratic right by participating in the election and voting.

Across the Territory the NTEC will run a multichannel campaign through TV, radio, digital/ social media, signage, letter box drop and print media to raise awareness about the election and the above calls to action. The campaign will also include:

- attendance at local events and stalls in community locations to discuss and promote the election
- collaboration with community leaders and local influencers to encourage participation
- a dedicated webpage on the NTEC website with clear and accessible information on enrolment, voting locations, and key election dates
- a service centre for enquiries and support.

The communications campaign will also include targeted campaigns for key groups of voters.

### ***Communications for remote communities***

- Provide culturally appropriate materials to address the needs of remote voters.
- Provide educational materials in plain English, local languages and in video format.
- Deliver a multichannel communications campaign using local remote and Aboriginal media organisations.
- Work with Local Authorities and key stakeholders to promote the election within their communities.
- Train NTEC casual staff in cultural awareness to support engagement in remote communities.

### ***Communications for youth***

- Deliver a targeted social media campaign with relatable content to engage young voters.
- Provide educational materials in plain English and in video format.

### ***Communications for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities***



- Develop educational materials in plain English and commonly spoken languages in the NT, and make available in every voting centre and on the NTEC website.
- Collaborate with CALD organisations and programs to distribute communications to CALD voters.

### ***Communications for voters with a disability and the elderly***

- Promote voting centres that are accessible to voters with a disability.
- Promote assisted voting services and postal voting to support participation.
- Collaborate with disability and elderly organisations and programs to distribute communications to disabled and elderly voters.

## **Media**

The media is a critical stakeholder not only to ensure transparency and integrity in election processes, but also in promoting the election and key election dates.

The NTEC will work closely with the media during the preparation, voting and counting periods of the election and aim to maintain a transparent and cooperative relationship with the media ensuring they have the information needed to inform the public accurately about the election. This will include:

- media briefings and press conferences to provide updates on election preparations, key milestones, and important announcements

- timely media releases containing essential information about the 2025 Local Government Elections
- access to the Electoral Commissioner and Deputy Electoral Commissioner for interviews and expert commentary on the election
- background briefings to journalists to enhance their understanding of electoral processes
- prompt responses to any inaccuracies or concerns in media coverage
- a media resource centre on the NTEC website, offering downloadable materials, images, and videos for use.

# ENROLMENT

## Changes to electoral boundaries

There have been some changes to the electoral boundaries for local government since the previous general elections in 2021.

### ***City of Palmerston***

On 1 July 2022, the external boundary of the City of Palmerston was extended to include previously unincorporated and prescribed areas to the north-west of Palmerston, including Elrundie, Tivendale, Wishart and part of Berrimah, excluding Northcrest.

### ***East Arnhem Regional Council***

With the establishment of the Groote Archipelago Regional Council, the external boundaries of the East Arnhem Regional Council were changed with the abolition of the Anindilyakwa Ward. This change came into effect on 1 September 2024.

### ***Groote Archipelago Regional Council***

A prospective Warnindilyakwa Regional Council was established on 16 August 2022, with the Groote Archipelago Regional Council being officially constituted on 1 September 2024. An inaugural general election was held in March 2025, and the council will therefore not be included in the 2025 Local Government Elections.

## Joint roll arrangement

The NT electoral roll is managed by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) under a joint roll arrangement between the Governor-General and the NT Administrator. Under this arrangement the AEC is responsible for:

- processing enrolments and deletions
- managing the geographic and electoral boundary information that underpins the electoral roll
- maintaining the quality of the roll by undertaking enrolment stimulation activities and reviewing the accuracy of voter and address information
- removing voters from the roll where there is evidence that they are no longer resident at their enrolled address.

The NTEC assists voters to follow the appropriate processes to enrol or update their enrolment details with the AEC, including performing its own enrolment stimulation activities.

## FDEU – Federal direct enrolment update

Part of the joint roll arrangement involves the AEC running its FDEU program in the Northern Territory. The FDEU and the AEC's online enrolment service are now the top 2 sources of enrolment nationally and in the NT.

The FDEU uses data from trusted third parties (like Services Australia and the Australian Tax Office) to identify voters who have moved or need to be enrolled. Until 2022, the FDEU program required mail delivery to a street address which meant it did not operate in most rural and remote areas of the NT. Following a successful trial in late 2022, the AEC expanded its FDEU program in April 2023 to include community mail bags and email addresses, so it now captures more voters in rural and remote areas.

This expansion, coupled with significant enrolment activities particularly in remote areas in the lead up to the Voice referendum in October 2023 and the 2024 Territory Election, has had a positive impact on the NT's enrolment rate.

## Enrolment by council area

As at the 31 March 2025, the NT's enrolment rate was 94.2% (the highest it has ever been) with 154,877 voters enrolled and approximately 9,500 eligible voters not on the electoral roll.

**Table 2: NT enrolment by local government area as at 31 March 2025**

Local government area	Enrolled electors
Alice Springs Town Council	17,071
Barkly Regional Council	4,614
Belyuen Community Government Council	168
Central Desert Regional Council	2,689
Coomalie Community Government Council	741
City of Darwin	52,236
East Arnhem Regional Council	6,475
Groote Archipelago Regional Council	1,148
Katherine Town Council	6,867
Litchfield Council	13,846
MacDonnell Regional Council	3,960
City of Palmerston	26,194
Roper Gulf Regional Council	4,430

<b>Local government area</b>	<b>Enrolled electors</b>
Tiwi Islands Regional Council	1,807
Victoria Daly Regional Council	1,881
Wagait Shire Council	348
West Arnhem Regional Council	4,393
West Daly Regional Council	2,254
<b>Unincorporated areas</b>	
Alyangula	357
Nhulunbuy	1,760
Yulara	329
Other unincorporated areas	1,309
<b>Total enrolment</b>	<b>154,877</b>

## Enrolment stimulation activities

The communications plan for the 2025 Local Government Elections will be delivered in 3 phases, with the first phase being election awareness and enrolment (see page 15).

The following activities will be undertaken to promote election awareness and enrolment in the lead up to the election:

- a comprehensive advertising campaign across digital and traditional media platforms
- attendance at events, exhibitions and shopping centres
- direct communications to electors through SMS, email and letterbox drop
- stakeholder engagement to encourage distribution of promotion material.

## Declaration voting



Amendments to the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021 created a savings provision that allows eligible voters who are not enrolled in the NT at the close of electoral roll date for a local government election, a chance for their vote to be counted at that election.

Unenrolled voters can cast a declaration vote by completing and signing a declaration vote envelope. Their ballot paper is placed inside the envelope and scrutiny of all declaration envelopes occurs during the count period.

All declaration envelopes are forwarded to the AEC and eligible electors are added to the roll using the envelope as an enrolment form. Where the entitlement to vote is confirmed, the ballot papers are admitted to the count. Where voters are unable to be enrolled or are found to be already enrolled in a different council area, their declaration vote is rejected.

# NOMINATIONS AND CANDIDATES

## Candidate information sessions

Candidate information sessions for local government elections are coordinated by councils. A representative from the NTEC also attends these sessions to provide key election information to prospective candidates about the nomination process, campaigning and authorisation requirements, financial disclosure obligations and details about the count process and results. The Local Government Association of the NT (LGANT) and the Local Government Unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development may also attend candidate information sessions.

Prospective candidates should check with their local council for details and dates about candidate information sessions being conducted in the lead up to the 2025 Local Government Elections.

## Nominations

The nomination dates for the 2025 Local Government Elections are:

- nominations open Friday 11 July 2025
- nominations close 12 noon, Thursday 31 July.

### ***Eligibility to nominate***

To be eligible to be elected to an NT local government council, a person MUST:

- be enrolled in the local government area they wish to contest
- hold a principal place of residence within the local government area
- not hold a judicial office (Justice of the Peace excepted)
- not be bankrupt
- not be sentenced to a term of imprisonment of 12 months or more
- not be a staff member of the local government council
- not be a staff member of the local government subsidiary where the council is a constituent council of that local government subsidiary

- not be indebted to the council for rates or surcharges (and failed to discharge the debt within 6 months after the debt became due and payable)
- not be certified mentally unfit to carry out the functions of a member
- not be disqualified from managing a corporation
- not be disqualified from being an officer of an incorporated association
- not be a member of the Commonwealth House of Representatives or Senate
- not be a member of the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly
- not determined by NTCAT to be unfit to be a council member
- not been found guilty of offences of corrupt and improper practices at elections within the last 2 years.

### ***Nomination forms***

Nomination forms are available on the NTEC website. Unlike Legislative Assembly elections in the NT, there is no nomination deposit required to lodge a nomination.

Prospective candidates for local government elections must be nominated by a 'nominator' who is enrolled to vote in the council area the person is nominating for.

Neither the prospective candidate nor the nominator are required to be enrolled in the specific ward the prospective candidate is nominating for, they just need to be enrolled in the council area generally.

## **Declaration of nominations**

The declaration of nominations is a public event that will be held on Friday 1 August 2025, the day after nominations close.

The declaration of nominations includes the draw for ballot paper positions for each contested local government election (mayor and councillor elections). This is performed using a device which randomly generates a number for each candidate, one at a time, which becomes their position on the ballot paper.

The outcomes of any uncontested elections (where the number of nominations received is equal to the number of vacancies) will also be declared.

After the declaration of nominations, the NTEC will revise the remote voting schedule in consideration of any required changes due to uncontested or failed elections. The NTEC website will be updated to reflect any changes.

## **Campaigning**

To protect the integrity of elections, there are laws that regulate campaign material and activities.

Candidates must ensure they are aware of all regulations relating to:

- election or campaign material
- the broadcast and publication of election or campaign material
- the authorisation of election or campaign material
- the display of election signage
- campaigning activities near voting centres.

### ***Campaign material***

Campaign material is defined as an advertisement, document or any other thing that is intended to promote the electoral prospect of a particular candidate or group of candidates for an election. This includes (but is not limited to):

- an electoral advertisement
- a printed document containing an electoral matter such as a handout, pamphlet, how-to-vote card, poster or sign
- a message containing electoral matter sent by telephone or broadcast by electronic means
- published materials containing electoral matter
- car stickers or decals.
- a campaign sticker.

Campaign material must:

- be authorised
- not be misleading or deceptive about the administration or delivery of the electoral process
- be placed in compliance with the relevant rules.

### ***Authorisation of campaign material***

All campaign material, both printed and digital, must have an authorisation statement in sufficient font size to be read by the intended audience containing:

- the name and address of the person authorising its publication or distribution (not a PO Box)

- if printed, the name and address of the printer
- if the material is double sided, the above authorisations must appear on both sides
- the source of funding for the material if it is not self-funded.

Even if the candidate has their name on the campaign material, it must still have an authorisation statement.

If the authoriser is a person, the street name and locality is sufficient, for organisations the full street address must be provided.

### ***Election signage***

Local government councils and the Department of Logistics and Infrastructure (for road reserves) have rules regarding the placement of election signage.

Most of the guidelines and policies about the display of election signage are similar across jurisdictions and include rules about the permitted timings, size, location and positions, and installation materials. The NTEC website provides links to the current guidelines and policies.

### ***Canvassing of votes at voting centres***

Canvassing for votes is not permitted within 10 metres of the entrance to an early, mobile and election day voting centre for local government elections.

Pamphlet display stands to hold campaign material will not be available at any voting centres. Candidates and their supporters must hand out campaign material.

Canvassing of votes includes:

- placement or display of handouts and posters
- distributing pamphlets, how-to-vote cards and other campaign material
- soliciting the vote of a person
- inducing a person to not vote for a particular candidate
- inducing a person not to vote at an election
- using a loud speaker, public address system, amplifier or similar to broadcast election matter that is audible within the prohibition zone of a voting centre.

### ***Campaigning resources***

A candidate handbook, fact sheets, related forms and links to further resources are all available on the NTEC website.

## **Scrutineers**

Scrutineers for candidates play an important role in ensuring the transparency and integrity in elections.

Scrutineers are appointed by candidates to observe voting in voting centres and the counting of votes in scrutiny centres on behalf of their candidate. All scrutineers must provide a scrutineer appointment form signed by their candidate before commencing their duties in a voting centre or scrutiny centre.

Scrutineers often:

- witness the sealing and unsealing of ballot boxes
- provide assistance to voters who need help to cast their vote when requested by a voter
- witness assistance being provided by a voting centre manager to voters who need help to cast their vote
- object to the formality of ballot papers during a vote count.

Scrutineers cannot:

- interfere with voters voting, or voting staff issuing votes, or the counting of votes
- handle ballot papers in any way
- photograph or film while in a voting centre or scrutiny centre but are permitted to take a photo of a count results slip once advised by the table manager or count supervisor.

### ***Scrutineer resources***

The scrutineer appointment form and a scrutineer handbook are available on the NTEC website.

# DONATION DISCLOSURE

Donation disclosure requirements for local government elections came into effect in July 2022, the year after the 2021 Local Government Elections. Candidates for the 2025 Local Government Elections are required to submit information about donations and loans (whether they are cash or non-cash donations and loans) they receive to use for campaigning in the elections.

The NTEC must make this information available for public viewing by publishing it on its website.

Disclosure and the publication of campaign donations returns provide greater transparency of candidate funding of election campaigns.

## **Campaign donation returns**

If a candidate receives donations totalling \$200 or more from the same donor during the disclosure period, they must submit a campaign donation return with details of the donation and the donor.

If a candidate receives a loan of \$1,500 or more (not from a bank or financial institution) during the disclosure period, they must also submit a campaign donation return with details of the loan and the lender.

Candidates must not receive any anonymous donations or loans during the disclosure period.

If candidates do not receive any donations or loans, or what they receive does not meet the thresholds, there is no requirement to submit a return (i.e. nil returns are not required).

Donors and lenders for local government elections do not have to submit returns.

Candidates must keep all records related to donations and loans reported in a campaign return for at least 4 years.

## Disclosure period

The disclosure period for the 2025 Local Government Elections starts on Tuesday 1 July 2025 and ends on Monday 22 September 2025. This means any donations (over \$200) or loans (over \$1,500) received by candidates during this time must be reported.

Campaign donation returns are due 40 days after the end of the disclosure period, which is 1 November 2025.

Candidates only need to submit one return for the entire disclosure period (unlike Legislative Assembly elections which require multiple returns).

## Donation disclosure resources

Handbooks, fact sheets, campaign donation return forms, and disclosure periods can be found on the NTEC website.



The NTEC Financial Disclosure and Compliance Manager can be contacted at [disclosure.ntec@nt.gov.au](mailto:disclosure.ntec@nt.gov.au) or on 8999 7618.

# VOTING

## SERVICES

For the 2025 Local Government Elections the following voting options will be available to electors:

- postal voting
- early voting
- remote mobile voting
- urban mobile voting
- election day voting.

### Postal voting

Any enrolled Territory voter can apply for a postal vote.

For the 2025 Local Government Elections, postal vote applications are open from 23 May 2025. Applications can be made via an online form on the NTEC website or by calling the NTEC.



Postal vote application forms now include the requirement to provide details of any person applying for a postal vote on behalf of someone else.

The deadlines for postal vote applications for the 2025 Local Government Elections are:

- 5:00 pm, Tuesday 19 August to overseas postal addresses
- 5:00 pm, Thursday 21 August for Australian postal addresses.

Voters already registered as a general postal voter with the AEC do not need to apply for a postal vote for the 2025 Local Government Elections as their postal vote will automatically be processed for this election. Voters who would like to become a general postal voter (i.e. automatically sent a postal vote for any election they are eligible to vote in) need to complete an online general postal voter application form via the AEC website.

Postal votes for the 2025 Local Government Elections must be completed by the voter by 6:00 pm on election day, Saturday 23 August 2025.

Completed postal votes must be returned to the NTEC by 12 noon on the second Friday after election day, Friday 5 September 2025.

A returned postal vote will only be accepted if the certificate on the back of the postal vote envelope has been signed and dated, and therefore declared, by the voter.

Postal votes sent to overseas addresses are not guaranteed to arrive before the voting deadline, nor are they guaranteed to be returned to the NTEC by the deadline, due to current international postal conditions. If a postal vote to an overseas address is highly unlikely to make the timeframes, the voter will be advised by the NTEC and provided with a valid excuse for not voting in the election.

## Early voting

Any Territory voter can vote early.

Early voting for the 2025 Local Government Elections will open on Monday 11 August 2025 and close at 6:00pm on Friday 22 August 2025.

Early voting centres will be open for the following hours:

Monday 11 August – Friday 15 August	8:00 am – 5:00 pm
Saturday 16 August	8:00 am – 3:00 pm
Monday 18 August – Thursday 21 August	8:00 am – 5:00 pm
Friday 22 August	8:00 am – 6:00 pm

Voting centre	Location
<b>Alice Springs</b>	Alice Springs Town Council – 93 Todd St
<b>Casuarina</b>	Casuarina Library – 17 Bradshaw Tce
<b>Coolalinga</b>	Coolalinga Central – 425 Stuart Hwy
<b>Darwin City</b>	Darwin Entertainment Centre – 93 Mitchell St
<b>Katherine</b>	Katherine Central Shopping Centre – 5 Katherine Tce
<b>Palmerston</b>	Palmerston Recreation Centre – 11 The Boulevard

All early voting centres will have ballot papers for every council election.

All early voting centres will become election day voting centres that will have ballot papers for every council election. Other election day voting centres will only be able to service the council area they are located in.

## Mobile voting – remote

Electors in remote locations are visited by remote voting teams as they are likely to be more efficiently and appropriately serviced by a mobile team due to having limited or no access to early or election day voting centres, or postal voting services.

Remote voting teams will travel from Monday 11 August 2025 to Friday 22 August 2025.

Remote mobile voting teams will only carry ballot papers for the council area they are servicing. This includes ballot papers for each ward that has an election in that council area.

The remote voting schedule considers all communities where evidence indicates a voter population of 10 or more. After the declaration of nominations, the remote voting schedule is adjusted to account for uncontested elections where voters in certain remote communities may not be required to vote.

The remote voting schedule will be available on the NTEC website once confirmed. Please note the schedule is subject to change following feedback from local stakeholders at any time in the lead up to the election, and can change during the voting period when circumstances inadvertently arise.

## **Mobile voting – urban**

Urban voting teams will service Alice Springs, Darwin and Katherine and visit the following locations:

Alice Springs

- Alice Springs Correctional Centre
- Alice Springs Hospital

Darwin

- Darwin Correctional Centre
- Darwin Private Hospital
- Palmerston Hospital
- Royal Darwin Hospital

Katherine

- Binjari community
- Katherine Hospital
- Rockhole community

Urban voting teams will carry ballot papers for every council election.

When visiting hospitals and correctional centres, urban voting teams will provide voting services to patients and inmates, as well as to staff and visitors at the venue at the time.

The NTEC has contacted aged care centres, retirement villages and independent living centres in urban and regional centres where relevant to arrange postal votes for their residents, however voting mobile teams will visit remote based care centres as part of their schedule. Postal votes have been arranged for eligible prisoners at Barkly Work Camp and Datjala Work Camp and eligible patients at Gove and Tennant Creek Hospitals.

## Election day voting

Election day for the 2025 Local Government Elections is Saturday 23 August 2025 and all election day voting centres will be open from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Only those election day voting centres that were also early voting centres (listed first in the table below) will be able to issue ballot papers for all council areas. All other election day voting centres will only carry ballot papers for the local area they are located in. This includes ballot papers for each ward that has an election in that local government area.

Voting centre	Location
<b>Issuing ballot papers for all council areas:</b>	
<b>Alice Springs</b>	Alice Springs Town Council - 93 Todd St
<b>Casuarina</b>	Casuarina Library - 17 Bradshaw Tce
<b>Coolalinga</b>	Coolalinga Central - 425 Stuart Hwy
<b>Darwin City</b>	Darwin Entertainment Centre - 93 Mitchell St
<b>Katherine</b>	Katherine Central Shopping Centre – 5 Katherine Tce
<b>Palmerston</b>	Palmerston Recreation Centre - 11 The Boulevard
<b>Issuing ballot papers for Alice Springs Town Council only:</b>	
<b>Braitling</b>	Braitling Primary School - 80 Head St
<b>Gillen</b>	Gillen Primary School - 55 Milner Rd
<b>Issuing ballot papers for City of Darwin only:</b>	
<b>Malak</b>	Sanderson Middle School – 60 Matthews Rd
<b>Nightcliff</b>	Nightcliff Middle School – 90 Aralia St
<b>Issuing ballot papers for Katherine Town Council only:</b>	
<b>Tindal</b>	Tindal Community Hall – Easton Pde
<b>Issuing ballot papers for Litchfield Council only:</b>	
<b>Berry Springs</b>	Berry Springs Primary School - 1150 Cox Peninsula Rd
<b>Howard Springs</b>	Whitewood Hall - 310 Whitewood Rd
<b>Humpty Doo</b>	Taminmin College - 70 Challoner Crct
<b>Issuing ballot papers for City of Palmerston only:</b>	
<b>Moulden</b>	SWELL Leisure Centre – 33 Tilston Ave
<b>Rosebery</b>	Palmerston College 7-9 Campus – 185 Forrest Pde
<b>Issuing ballot papers for Wagait Shire Council only:</b>	
<b>Wagait Beach</b>	Wagait Community Centre – 142 Wagait Tower Rd

## **Absent voting**

An absent vote is a vote issued at a voting centre to a voter enrolled for a local government area different to the one the voting centre is located in.

Only early voting centres will be able to issue absent votes at the 2025 Local Government Elections including on election day when they all become election day voting centres. Additionally, urban voting teams will issue absent votes.

All other election day voting centres and all remote voting teams will only be able to issue ballot papers for the local government area they are located. They will not issue absent votes.

Absent votes will not be counted on election night. Following election day, absent votes are exchanged so that all absent votes for Central Australian local government areas are sent to the Alice Springs scrutiny centre, and absent votes for the remaining areas are sent to the Darwin scrutiny centre.

## **Declaration voting**

A person who cannot be found on the electoral roll, but is entitled to vote, can be issued with a declaration vote after completing and signing a declaration envelope. The voter's ballot paper is then placed in the envelope as it needs further scrutiny and processing to determine whether it can be admitted to the count.

All declaration envelopes are forwarded to the AEC and eligible electors are added to the electoral roll using the envelope as an enrolment form. Where the entitlement to vote is confirmed, the ballot papers are admitted to the count. Where voters are unable to be enrolled or are found to be already enrolled in a different council area, their declaration vote is rejected.

Additionally, voters who are found to be already marked off as having voted, but state they have not yet voted, can also be issued with a declaration vote.

## **Assisted voting**

There are a number of ways assistance can be provided to voters who need it. Any voter may bring in a nominated person to provide the assistance they need in a voting centre. This is usually a family member or friend, or voters can ask for assistance from a scrutineer or the voting centre manager.

### ***Physical assistance***

- Lower voting screens - at table height are available in every voting centre for use by voters in a wheelchair, or who need to sit down while casting their vote.
- In car voting – is available to voters who may have mobility issues, or other concerns entering a voting centre. The voter may need someone to request voting assistance, and the voting centre manager can bring a ballot paper to the voter outside the voting

centre.

- Writing assistance – can be provided to someone who is unable to hold a pen or pencil to mark their ballot paper.
- Magnifying tools – are provided in every voting centre.
- Disabled parking bays – are available in convenient locations at every early voting centre and election day voting centre.

### ***In-language support***

- Nominated persons – like a friend or family member can provide assistance to voters in any language.
- Multi-lingual guides – about voting in 14 languages are available as handouts in every voting centre and on the NTEC website.
- In-language videos – in 13 Aboriginal languages and easy English are available on every issuing device in all voting centres and on the NTEC website.
- Local assistants – are employed in remote communities where possible to provide information to voters in-language and interpret for the team leader when giving assistance direct to voters.

## **Voter community groups**

There are a number of groups of voters that are considered their own community group as they may face barriers to participation and/or require extra support. The NTEC is contacting these communities via peak bodies or similar to provide awareness of the election, arrange specialised voting services (for example mobile voting or postal voting) or develop tailored resources and communications.

These groups of voters include:

- Aged care residents
- CALD communities
- Defence personnel – especially those deployed or on training exercises during the voting period
- Pastoral station residents/workers via NT Cattlemen's Association
- Prisoners via correctional centres and work camps
- Remote residents via NT land councils
- Voters with a disability.
- Young voters.

# COUNTING

## VOTES

### Count systems

Local government elections in the NT involve single vacancy elections (electing one person to a position) and multi vacancy elections (electing multiple people to a position).

Single vacancy positions are counted using the preferential system and will be conducted manually. For the 2025 Local Government Elections, there will be 5 mayor elections and up to 9 councillor elections for wards with only one position, that are single vacancies.

The remaining councillor elections are multi vacancy elections and are counted using the proportional representation system. The first preference counts for these elections will be conducted manually, after which ballot papers are entered into count software (called Easy Count) which is used for proportional representation counts.

### Formality

A ballot paper is formal (and therefore counted) if:

- the voter's first choice (or preference) is clear, and
- the first choice is indicated by a number one (1), a tick (✓) or a cross (x), and
- the first choice is followed by the voter's sequential order of choices for each remaining candidate.

The general rule is: if the voter's intention is clear, the ballot paper should be counted.

However:

- one blank square, provided it is the voter's last choice, does not make the ballot paper informal
- corrections to numbers, numbers written outside the squares, drawings and messages do not make the ballot paper informal – provided it is otherwise marked correctly.

A ballot paper is informal if:

- it is totally blank
- there is no number one (1), a tick (✓) or a cross (x)

- it has a number one (1), a tick (✓) or a cross (x) against 2 or more names
- 2 or more squares have been left blank
- a number has been repeated
- writing on the ballot paper identifies the voter.

## **Election night - initial count of first preferences**

Counts will be conducted at scrutiny centres. There will be a main scrutiny centre in Darwin and Alice Springs, and on election day, all election day voting centres will become scrutiny centres from 6:00 pm.

After voting closes at 6:00 pm at a scrutiny centre:

- authorised officers open ballot boxes
- ballot papers are removed and unfolded
- ballot papers are then sorted by the candidate who received the voter's first preference
- informal ballot papers are placed in a separate pile and counted separately.

As soon as practicable after the completion of the initial count of first preferences, the results will be posted on the results page of the NTEC website: [www.ntec.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntec.nt.gov.au)

## **Fresh scrutiny – single vacancy elections**

After election day, a fresh scrutiny or 'check count' of ballot papers for the single vacancy elections will take place at the Darwin and Alice Springs scrutiny centres. This will check the initial count and is a full review of the counts conducted on election night.

At a fresh scrutiny:

- all ballot papers for single vacancy elections that were counted on election night are reviewed and counted again
- some ballot papers that were initially considered informal on election night may be deemed formal and placed against a candidate
- some ballot papers that were initially considered formal may be deemed informal and excluded from the count
- any mis-sorted ballot papers will be placed to the correct candidate.

Updated results from the fresh scrutiny will be published on the NTEC website.

## **Fresh scrutiny – multi vacancy elections**

On Monday after election day, all ballot papers for the multi vacancy elections will be batched ready to commence their entry into electronic count software called Easy Count.

These ballot papers are entered into Easy Count initially, then are re-entered by a second person for verification purposes. This verification acts as a fresh scrutiny.

With a manual initial count and 2 entries into Easy Count, this means the ballot papers for multi vacancy elections are counted 3 times.

## **Counting postal, absent and declaration votes**

Voters must complete their postal votes by 6:00 pm on election day. The deadline for the return of postal votes is 12 noon on the second Friday after election day (Friday 5 September 2025). For general elections there are often 2 or 3 counts or 'intakes' of postal votes during the count period, including the final count after the return deadline.

Absent votes are exchanged so they can be counted at the relevant scrutiny centre. This exchange occurs early in the first week of counting and once exchanged absent votes have arrived at the relevant scrutiny centre, they will be counted.

Declaration votes are issued where a voter cannot be found on the electoral roll and where the voter believes they have an entitlement to vote. Declaration votes are processed first to determine if they can be admitted to the count. Admitted declaration votes will be counted as soon as practicable after their processing is complete.

A full distribution of preferences cannot be conducted until all postal, absent and declaration votes have been admitted and undergone an initial count and fresh scrutiny.

A count schedule will be published prior to election day to give details about when counts of postal, absent and declaration votes can be expected.

## **Distribution of preferences – single vacancy elections**

To be elected to a single vacancy, a candidate must receive more than 50 per cent of the total formal votes for their election (i.e. 50% + 1).

The total number of formal votes cannot be determined until after the final deadline for postal votes has passed, and the last intake of postal votes has been admitted to the count.

After this, the total number of formal ballot papers can be determined. If a candidate receives more than 50 per cent of the first preference votes, they can be declared elected and no further counting is required.

If no candidate initially achieves more than 50 per cent of the first preference votes, a distribution of preferences is conducted. The candidate with the least formal votes is

'excluded.' Each ballot paper from the excluded candidate is then redistributed to the candidate next in line according to the voter's preferences.

This process continues until one candidate achieves more than 50 per cent of the formal votes, making them the elected candidate.

## **Distribution of preferences – multi vacancy elections**

Where there are multiple vacancies and therefore a proportional representation count, candidates must receive a quota of votes to be elected. The quota is calculated using the following formula:

$(\text{Total number of formal ballot papers} / \text{number of vacancies} + 1) + 1$

For example, if there are 2,000 formal ballot papers to elect 3 councillors for a ward, the quota would be:  $(2,000 / 3) + 1 = 501$ .

This means the ballot papers would be counted until 3 candidates achieved 501 votes.

After the total number of formal ballot papers has been determined, some candidates may achieve the quota on first preferences and can be declared elected. If some vacancies remain unfilled after the final first preference count, a distribution of preferences is required.

A distribution of preferences for a proportional representation count is similar to a preferential count as candidates with the lowest number of votes are excluded and their votes are distributed according to the voter's preferences. However, there is additional counting where any votes received by a candidate declared as elected that are in excess to the required quota (called 'surplus votes') are also proportionally distributed to the remaining candidates.

This adds significant complexity to the count which is why proportional representation counts are typically conducted using counting software. The NTEC uses Easy Count software.

All preferences on ballot papers with multiple vacancies are manually entered into Easy Count, and then re-entered by a second person for verification purposes. After the final intake of returned postal votes has been entered into Easy Count, the software will conduct the distribution of preferences for all of the required multi vacancy elections and produce the final results.

## **Recounts**

A candidate, can request a recount before the election results are officially declared, but must do so in writing clearly stating the reasons for the recount.

A recount request must identify specific ballot papers and significant counting errors or irregularities that could potentially change the election result for an election.

At any time before the declaration of the result of an election, the Electoral Commissioner may direct a recount. This directive can be based on a written request from a candidate or on the initiative of the Electoral Commissioner.

It is important to note that a recount is distinct from a fresh scrutiny which is a 'check count' of votes counted on election night.



Regulation 70 of the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021 describes the recount process.

## **Declaration of results**

The NTEC makes a public declaration of election results on the Monday following the distribution of references. For the 2025 Local Government Elections this date will be Monday 8 September 2025.

# NON-VOTER ACTIVITIES

## Non-voters

After any election, voters who did not vote at a voting centre, apply for a postal vote or provide a valid and sufficient reason for not voting, are compiled into a list of non-voters.

Non-voters are issued with an infringement notice to pay \$25 but are also given the opportunity to provide a valid and sufficient reason for not voting, or provide details of where they did vote. Not knowing about an election is not considered a valid or sufficient reason.

## Voting is compulsory

Voting at elections for all 3 levels of government (federal, territory and local) is compulsory in the Northern Territory.

Voters who know ahead of time that they will not be able to vote in person or access a postal vote are encouraged to contact the NTEC prior to election day to provide this reason.

Voters who are not likely to find out about elections by regular communication or advertising methods are encouraged to ensure a mobile phone number or email address is included in their enrolment details. The NTEC will advise every voter who has provided these contact details about either the commencement of early voting, when a remote voting team is visiting their community or, if they have not yet voted, about election day voting centre locations.

## Multiple voters

It is an offence for a voter to vote more than once at an election. Electronic voter mark-off advises voting staff immediately if a voter has already been marked off as having voted. This includes being issued with a postal vote.

However, there are a number of reasons where someone may be marked as having voted on different devices including where there is limited internet connectivity and devices are unable to synchronise regularly.

Post-election, data reports across all devices are generated to find apparent multiple voters which are then investigated by the NTEC.

