

# Elections FAQs (frequently asked questions)

## The election in your area 2025

### Local government principal areas – Staffordshire County Council

Summary of key deadlines	
Event	Date
Registration deadline	11 April 2025
Postal vote application deadline	14 April 2025 at 5pm
Proxy vote application deadline (non emergency)	23 April 2025 at 5pm
Voter Authority Certificate application Deadline	23 April 2025 at 5pm
Emergency proxy application deadline	1 May 2025 at 5pm

# How/where to vote

Issue/question	Answer
Date of elections	<b>1 May 2025</b> (polling hours: 7am to 10pm).
How do I find out where my polling station is?	Your poll card should tell you the location of your polling station. Alternatively, contact the elections office.
Polling hours?	Polling hours are between 7am – 10pm.
What methods of voting are there?	- In person at the polling station - By post - By proxy
I have lost / not received my poll card	You do not need your poll card to vote. If you have lost your poll card, your local elections office can tell you where your polling station is. If you have not received a poll card you should check that you are registered.

# Information on candidates

Issue/question	Answer
Who is standing in the elections / where I can get information about the candidates?	Most candidates will post leaflets through letterboxes before the election. They may also produce manifestos of their policies, display posters, hold meetings or have websites with information. You can also contact the candidates or parties for more information.

# Count, results.

Issue/question	Answer
How are the votes counted?	<p><b>Local government principal area and parish councils</b></p> <p>The local government and parish elections are conducted using the first-past-the-post.</p> <p>Voters should place a cross (X) in the box to the right of the name of the candidate for whom they wish to vote.</p> <p>The candidate who receives the most votes in the electoral area will be elected.</p>
When will the results be announced?	<p>The votes will be counted overnight on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May with the local totals declared following the count.</p> <p>Visit our website to find out all results</p>

## General information Registration

Issue/question	Answer
Am I registered to vote?	<p>You can find out by contacting your local elections office.</p> <p>If you are unable to check this information transfer caller to the elections office.</p> <p>If you do not have the details, provide contact details from <a href="http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/your-election-information">www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/your-election-information</a> using the callers postcode or direct them to 0800 3 280 280</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applications to register should be made <b>as soon as possible</b>.</li><li>• Applications must be made by 11 April 2025.</li></ul> <p>Applications received after 11 April 2025 will not be in time for the elections on 1 May 2025, but they will be registered for future elections.</p>

Issue/question	Answer
How do I register to vote?	<p>You can apply to register online at <a href="http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote">www.gov.uk/register-to-vote</a></p> <p>Alternatively, you can apply by filling in a form and returning it to your elections office – you can download a form from <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-to-vote-if-youre-living-in-the-uk">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-to-vote-if-youre-living-in-the-uk</a> or ask for one to be sent to you.</p> <p>Applications to register should be made as soon as possible.</p> <p>Applications must be made by 11 April 2025.</p> <p>Applications received after 11 April 2025 will not be in time for the elections on 1 May, but they will be registered for future elections.</p>
Missed the deadline to register to vote	<p>You have missed the deadline to get on the register at your current address for the elections on 1 May 2025.</p> <p>However, you can register now for future elections and referendums.</p> <p>You can apply to register online at <a href="http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote">www.gov.uk/register-to-vote</a></p> <p>Alternatively, you can apply by filling in a form and returning it to your elections office – you can download a form from <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-to-vote-if-youre-living-in-the-uk">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-to-vote-if-youre-living-in-the-uk</a> or ask for one to be sent to you.</p>
How do I register for future elections and referendums?	<p>You can apply to register online at <a href="http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote">www.gov.uk/register-to-vote</a></p> <p>You can also apply by filling in a form and returning it to your elections office.</p> <p>Once you are registered, you do not need to apply again unless your circumstances change, for example, you move home.</p>
I applied to register ages ago but I'm still not on the register.	<p>The Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) needs to verify your identity before adding your name to the register.</p> <p>In some cases, the ERO will need to contact you to ask for more information to process your application.</p> <p>If you want to check the progress of your application please contact the elections office.</p> <p>The register will be updated regularly ahead of these elections, with the final update due on 24 April 2025.</p>
Am I eligible to register to vote?	<p>You can only vote if you are registered.</p> <p><b>Age requirements to register:</b></p> <p>You are 16 or over but you <b>cannot</b> vote until your 18th birthday.</p> <p><b>Nationality requirements to register:</b></p> <p>You must be a British, Irish, a qualifying EU citizen or an EU citizen with retained rights, or a qualifying Commonwealth citizen (i.e. you</p>

Issue/question	Answer
	<p>have leave to enter or remain in the UK or don't require leave to enter or remain in the UK) permanently living in the UK.</p> <p><b>Voting restrictions based on nationality:</b></p> <p><b>EU citizens</b> (who are not also a British, Irish or Commonwealth citizen) can register and vote at local government and PCC elections if they are either a citizen of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denmark, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal and Spain who is resident in the UK, has permission to enter or stay in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man, or who does not need permission</li> <li>• any other EU country who on or before 31 December 2020 was legally resident in the UK, had permission to enter or stay in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man, or who did not need permission, and this has continued without a break</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk">www.homeoffice.gov.uk</a> .</p> <p><b>Other registration types:</b></p> <p>Some people can register, even though they are not permanently living in the UK. These are <a href="#">Service Voters</a>, <a href="#">Crown Servants</a> posted overseas or <a href="#">overseas electors</a> – see those sections for further information.</p>
<p>If I pay council tax am I automatically registered?</p>	<p>No. Electoral registration is a separate process performed by your local Electoral Registration Officer.</p> <p>The law does not allow names to be automatically added to the electoral register from Council tax records.</p> <p>Elevate more complex queries to the elections office.</p>
<p>I'm a student and I'm not sure where I should register to vote.</p>	<p>Students may be entitled to register at both their home address and their college/university (term time) address.</p> <p>It is an offence to vote more than once in a national election, but if you are registered in two different local council areas, you may vote in each.</p>
<p>I'm homeless / live on a house boat / caravan / in a mental hospital / remanded in custody. Can I register?</p>	<p>Yes. You can make something called a 'declaration of local connection'.</p> <p>You can apply by filling in a form and posting it to your elections office.</p> <p>Transfer to elections office or supply their contact details if you have them.</p>

# Voter identification

Issue/question	Answer
Do I need to show ID in order to vote?	Yes – all electors voting in a polling station will need to show photographic ID to the polling station staff in order to be issued with a ballot paper.
What photographic ID can I use?	<p>International travel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Passport issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or a British Overseas Territory</li> <li>- A passport or passport card issued by an EEA state or a country whose citizens are Commonwealth citizens</li> </ul> <p>Driving and Parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Driving licence issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, or an EEA state (this includes a provisional driving licence)</li> <li>- A Blue Badge</li> </ul> <p>Local travel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Older Person’s Bus Pass funded by the UK Government</li> <li>- Disabled Person’s Bus Pass funded by the UK Government</li> <li>- Oyster 60+ Card funded by the funded by the UK Government</li> <li>- Freedom Pass</li> <li>- National Entitlement Card issued by a local authority in Scotland</li> <li>- 60 and Over Welsh Concessionary Travel Card</li> <li>- Disabled Person’s Welsh Concessionary Travel Card</li> <li>- Senior SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland</li> <li>- Registered Blind SmartPass or Blind Person’s SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland</li> <li>- War Disablement SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland</li> <li>- 60+ SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland</li> <li>- Half Fare SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland</li> </ul> <p>Proof of age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identity card bearing the Proof of Age Standards Scheme hologram (a PASS card)</li> </ul> <p>Other government issued documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Biometric immigration document*</li> <li>- Ministry of Defence Form 90 (Defence Identity Card)</li> <li>- Ministry of Defence Form 100 (HM Armed Forces Veteran Card)</li> <li>- National identity card issued by an EEA state</li> <li>- Electoral Identity Card issued in Northern Ireland</li> </ul>

Issue/question	Answer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Voter Authority Certificate</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">Anonymous Elector's Document</a></li> </ul> <p>You will only need to show one form of photo ID. It needs to be the original version and not a photocopy.</p> <p>*An eVisa is a biometric residence document in digital form. Currently no other form of photographic ID can be presented in digital format.</p> <p>A comprehensive list of accepted photographic identification is available on the elector's poll card or at <a href="https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voting-and-elections/voter-id/accepted-forms-photo-id">https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voting-and-elections/voter-id/accepted-forms-photo-id</a></p>
<p>I don't have any photographic ID – what can I do?</p>	<p>If you don't have any photographic ID and you want to vote in a polling station then you will need to apply for some.</p> <p>You can get a Voter Authority Certificate for free by applying online or downloading an application form.</p> <p>Alternatively, if you do not wish to vote in a polling station, you could vote by post. You must complete an application to vote by post by <b>5pm on Monday 14 April.</b></p>
<p>My ID has expired, can I still use it?</p>	<p>Provided that your ID still bears a current, good likeness, you can use photographic ID that has expired to vote in the polling station.</p>
<p>My ID has my old address on it, can I still use it?</p>	<p>Provided that your photographic ID bears your name and a current, good likeness, you can use that ID in the polling station to be issued with a ballot paper.</p> <p>Polling station staff will not consider information on the ID other than your name and photograph when checking it.</p>
<p>I've changed my name/got married since I registered to vote, but my ID is in my old name, can I still use it?</p>	<p>Polling station staff may ask for additional proof of identity to resolve any discrepancy between the name on the ID and the elector's name on the electoral register.</p> <p>If possible, you should take proof of the name change to the polling station with you, such as a deed poll certificate or marriage certificate.</p>
<p>How do I apply for a Voter Authority Certificate?</p>	<p>You can submit an application online at <a href="https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate">https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate</a></p> <p>Alternatively, you can download an application form and apply directly to your local authority.</p>
<p>When do I need to apply for a</p>	<p>You must submit your application for a Voter Authority Certificate by <b>5pm on Wednesday 23 April.</b></p>

Issue/question	Answer
Voter Authority Certificate by?	If your application for a Voter Authority Certificate is submitted after this point then you will not be able to use it at the polls on 1 May 2025, and if you want to vote in the polling station you will need to provide another form of accepted photographic ID.
What is a Voter Authority Certificate?	<p>A Voter Authority Certificate is a free document containing a photograph of the applicant, supplied by the Electoral Registration Officer. You can apply for if you don't have any other forms of accepted photographic ID to use in a polling station.</p> <p>If you're registered anonymously, you can get a special version called an Anonymous Elector's Document.</p>

## Postal and proxy voting

Issue/question	Answer
Who can apply for a postal vote?	Anyone who is registered to vote can apply for a postal vote. If you are not yet registered, you should apply now. You can submit a postal vote application alongside your registration application.
How do I get a postal vote?	<p>You can apply online to vote by post: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote">https://www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote</a></p> <p>Or you can download postal forms from <a href="http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/how-cast-your-vote/voting-post">www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/how-cast-your-vote/voting-post</a> or get them from the elections office.</p> <p>You now have to give your national insurance number as well as your date of birth and signature when applying to vote by post. The application form must be returned to their local elections office.</p>
What is the deadline for applying for a postal vote for the elections on 1 May 2025?	<p>Your application to vote by post must be received by <b>5pm on 14 April 2025</b>.</p> <p>If you are not yet registered, the deadline to apply to vote by post is still 5pm on 14 April 2025, but your application to register to vote must have reached the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) by 11 April 2025.</p>
If someone calls after the	<b>1 May 2025 poll only:</b>



Issue/question	Answer
<p>deadline – 5pm on 14 April 2025.</p>	<p>You have missed the deadline to apply for a postal vote for the forthcoming election.</p> <p>You may be able to apply for a proxy vote up until <b>5pm on 23 April 2025</b> if you can't attend the polling station. You will need to state the reason why you can't attend the polling station on the form.</p> <p>For some types of proxy vote you may be able to apply online <a href="https://www.gov.uk/apply-proxy-vote">https://www.gov.uk/apply-proxy-vote</a> or you can download a paper from <a href="https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voting-and-elections/ways-vote/apply-vote-proxy">https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voting-and-elections/ways-vote/apply-vote-proxy</a></p>
<p>I haven't received my postal ballot paper yet.</p> <p>For 1 May 2025 poll.</p>	<p>Returning Officers must dispatch postal votes as soon they can, but cannot do so until after nominations have closed and ballot papers have been produced. However, dispatch dates will vary.</p> <p>If you applied in time to be included in the 2 April register update, your postal vote will be part of the first batch of postal votes sent out.</p> <p>Otherwise you will be added to one of the various register updates that are published throughout the election period. We will send you a postal vote as soon as you are added to the register through one of those updates.</p> <p>If it hasn't arrived by 25 April, or you have lost it, you can get a replacement postal ballot pack in person from your local elections office, from 25 April up until 5pm on polling day. You will need identification.</p> <p>If you have spoilt your ballot paper or postal voting statement, you can get a replacement until 5pm on polling day. <b>Do not destroy or throw away your postal ballot papers.</b> You will need to return them before you can get a replacement.</p>
<p>For what period does my postal vote last?</p>	<p>You can apply for a specific election or referendum, or for a specific time period, or for a maximum of 3 years which lasts until you cancel it or move home.</p> <p>The maximum period is calculated as being the 3<sup>rd</sup> 31<sup>st</sup> January after your application was granted.</p> <p>The Electoral Registration Officer will write to you to inform you about the expiry of your postal vote to enable you to reapply.</p> <p>You can contact the elections office if you need to know exactly when your postal vote is due to expire.</p>
<p>How does the postal voting statement work?</p>	<p>This document will arrive in your postal vote pack alongside your ballot paper. It must be completed or your vote will not count.</p> <p>You will need to provide your signature and date of birth. This will be checked against the signature and date of birth you previously supplied to the Electoral Registration Officer.</p>

Issue/question	Answer
	More detailed instructions will be provided in your postal ballot pack, or you can contact your local elections office for more information.
Why do I have to give my date of birth and signature? How is it secret?	<p>When you apply for a postal (or proxy) vote you must provide your date of birth and signature.</p> <p>When you get your postal ballot paper there will be a separate statement on which you will be asked for the same details. This is for security reasons and the details must match those you previously provided for your vote to be counted.</p> <p>However, rest assured that the statement is separated from the ballot paper when it is received. This happens before the sealed ballot paper envelope is opened. This keeps your vote secret; no one will be able to find out how you voted.</p> <p>If they want to discuss any aspect of postal vote security or who has their personal details further, escalate to elections office.</p>
How secure is a postal vote?/ Any question or challenge about the security of voting.	<p>It may be an offence to complete a postal vote that is not your own (unless a vote has asked you for help to mark their ballot paper), or to intimidate voters.</p> <p><b>If you have evidence</b> that electoral fraud has been committed you should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact the police as quickly as possible using the non-emergency number 101. You should be prepared to give them a statement and substantiate your allegation.</li> <li>• If you are worried about giving your name to the police, you can also report electoral fraud anonymously by contacting CrimeStoppers by phone on <b>0800 555 111</b> or online at <a href="http://crimestoppers-uk.org">crimestoppers-uk.org</a></li> </ul> <p><b>If you think</b> that electoral fraud <b>may</b> have been committed you should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First speak to the Electoral Registration Officer or Returning Officer for your local area</li> </ul>
I opted for a postal vote but I don't want to post it/I'm too late to post it	<p><b>If you are an individual (not a campaigner):</b></p> <p>You can drop off your own (and those of 5 other electors) postal vote on polling day at the elections office, or to certain polling stations in the area. Make sure you do it before 10pm.</p> <p>When you hand your postal vote in you will be required to complete a postal vote return form.</p> <p>You cannot be given another ballot paper at the polling station.</p> <p><b>If you are a campaigner:</b></p>

Issue/question	Answer
	<p>Campaigners cannot handle postal votes for other electors who are not close relatives or someone for whom they provide regular care.</p> <p>If those conditions apply, a campaigner can hand in their own plus up to 5 other postal vote packs per poll.</p> <p>You will be required to complete a postal vote return form.</p> <p>The definition of a campaigner is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a candidate at the election(s)</li> <li>• an election agent (or sub-agent)</li> <li>• employed by the candidate (for the purposes of the candidate's activities at the election)</li> <li>• a member of a registered political party who is carrying out activity to promote a particular outcome at an election</li> <li>• someone employed by a registered political party in connection with that party's political activities</li> </ul> <p>Close relatives are an individual's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• spouse or civil partner. Two people living together as if they were a married couple or civil partners are treated as such.</li> <li>• parent</li> <li>• grandparent</li> <li>• brother or sister</li> <li>• child or grandchild.</li> </ul> <p>Contact your local elections office for more in-depth questions on this and to find out where their office is or for the address of your polling station or a polling station where you can deliver your postal vote.</p>
<p>I have received my postal vote but I don't want to vote by post</p>	<p><b>If before 5pm on 14 April:</b> You can change your voting method for these elections if you haven't already returned your postal vote. You will need to contact the elections office. Provide elections office contact details if necessary.</p> <p><b>If after 5pm on 14 April:</b> You are too late to cancel your postal vote. You will only be able to vote by post for this election.</p> <p>You can cancel your postal vote for future elections by contacting the elections office.</p>
<p>Who can apply for a proxy vote?</p>	<p>Anyone who is registered to vote can apply to vote by proxy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your chosen proxy (i.e. the person voting on your behalf) must also be registered to vote. There are restrictions on the numbers of people a proxy may be appointed for. <a href="#">See question below.</a></li> <li>• If you or your proxy are not yet registered, you should apply now. You can submit a proxy vote application alongside your</li> </ul>

Issue/question	Answer
	<p>registration application. See question below for deadline dates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your proxy does not have to be registered to vote in the same area as you.</li> <li>• Your proxy may request that they receive your vote as a postal vote if they are unable to attend the polling station.</li> </ul> <p>To vote by proxy, you must have a reason – e.g. you will be away on holiday, you are away on business.</p> <p>You can chose to apply for a proxy vote for a particular election, a particular type of election, or all elections you are eligible to vote in.</p> <p>You may need to get your application attested depending upon the type of proxy vote you need.</p> <p>More information on the different types of proxy vote is available at <a href="https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voting-and-elections/ways-vote/apply-vote-proxy">https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voting-and-elections/ways-vote/apply-vote-proxy</a></p> <p>You can apply to vote by proxy online for some types of proxy vote - <a href="https://www.gov.uk/apply-proxy-vote">https://www.gov.uk/apply-proxy-vote</a>.</p> <p>Or you can download a form from <a href="http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/how-cast-your-vote/voting-proxy">www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/how-cast-your-vote/voting-proxy</a>, or get one from the elections office.</p> <p>You will need to supply your date of birth, National Insurance number and your signature on your application to enable identity verification.</p> <p>Contact your local elections office for more information and an application form.</p>
<p>Restrictions on the number of people a proxy can act for</p>	<p>It is an offence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for a person to knowingly appoint a proxy who is already acting as a proxy for two or more domestic electors</li> <li>• for a person who is registered as an overseas elector or a service voter to knowingly appoint a proxy who is already acting as a proxy for four or more electors (of which no more than two electors can be domestic electors)</li> </ul> <p>Domestic electors are those electors who are neither service voters nor overseas electors.</p>
<p>What is the deadline for applying for a proxy vote?</p>	<p>If you have access to the information, check whether the enquirer is registered or not and tailor the response accordingly.</p>

Issue/question	Answer
	<p>If you are amending an existing proxy vote or changing from postal to proxy, you must return your application by <b>5pm on 14 April 2025</b>.</p> <p>If your appointed proxy needs to have your vote as a postal vote, you will need to submit the proxy vote application and their postal proxy application by <b>5pm on 14 April 2025</b>. The elections office will be able to supply an application form for this purpose.</p> <p>New proxy applications (where you were previously going to vote at a polling station) must be received by <b>5pm on 23 April 2025</b>.</p> <p>If you are not yet registered, the deadline to apply to vote by proxy is still 5pm on 23 April 2025, but your application to register to vote must have reached the ERO by 11 April 2025.</p> <p>If the deadline has passed, you may be able to apply for an emergency proxy vote (see below).</p> <p>Refer to elections office if necessary.</p>
<p>What if I have missed the deadline to apply for a proxy vote?</p>	<p>You may be able to apply for an emergency proxy vote.</p> <p>If the emergency occurred after 5pm on 23 April, you can apply to vote by proxy for emergency medical reasons or if you are called away unexpectedly for work reasons.</p> <p>You can apply for an emergency proxy up until <b>5pm on polling day</b>.</p>
<p>I've been appointed as proxy for someone and I don't know how it works</p>	<p>It's simple to vote as someone's proxy. You vote in the same way as any other elector.</p> <p>You should ask the person who has appointed you as their proxy how they want you to vote on their behalf.</p> <p>You will be sent a proxy poll card with details of where you should go to vote. This will be near to where the person who appointed you lives.</p> <p>If you can't attend the polling station you can vote as proxy by post, but you must apply by <b>5pm on 14 April 2025</b>.</p> <p>If you are going to the polling station just tell the staff there that you are voting as a proxy and they will tell you what to do.</p> <p>Remember to take your photo ID, as you will need this in order to vote on behalf of the person who has appointed you as their proxy.</p> <p>Don't forget to take your proxy poll card – although you don't need it to vote, this will speed up the process.</p>
<p>I can't sign my application or I am unable to</p>	<p>There is a special system if you can't sign or sign in a consistent manner.</p>

Issue/question	Answer
sign in a consistent manner	<p>You will need to complete a special application form from the elections office.</p> <p>Refer to the electoral registration office.</p>

## Access issues

Issue/question	Answer
<p>What provision is made for disabled people?</p>	<p>There are different options for casting your vote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- at a polling station</li> <li>- by post</li> <li>- by appointing a proxy to vote on your behalf.</li> </ul> <p>Most polling stations will be fully accessible. The staff should be trained and have access to equipment to assist disabled electors to vote in secret or with the assistance of polling station staff.</p> <p>Disabled electors may also bring a companion who is 18 or over to assist them to vote at the polling station.</p>
<p>What provisions are made for blind or visually impaired voters?</p>	<p>Tactile voting templates and large print versions of the ballot paper that can be used for reference and magnifiers are available at all polling stations.</p> <p>You can take a companion with you who is 18 or over to assist you, or ask the presiding officer at the polling station for help.</p>
<p>What provision is there for non-English speakers?</p>	<p>Ballot papers cannot be printed in languages other than English.</p> <p>However, there may be guidance notes available in other languages. These may be available in the polling station.</p>
<p>What provision is there for wheelchair users?</p>	<p>Each polling station is different, but most are accessible for all voters.</p> <p>You can obtain more details about your polling station from the elections office.</p>