

# 2020 General Election and referendums: Rules once voting starts and on election day

## Summary of the rules

Campaigning and advertising about parties, candidates or the referendum issues is still allowed before and during advance voting, which runs from 3 October to 16 October.

However, campaigning, or doing anything which obstructs or influences voters, and any election advertising or referendum advertising is prohibited inside advance voting places or within 10 metres of the building entrance or area set aside for voting ('the buffer zone').

You may see scrutineers in voting places. They are appointed by candidates to observe the election, and can photograph the lists of people who have voted. They can't communicate with voters. They can wear party colours and a lapel badge.

These rules also apply anywhere on election day itself, 17 October, until voting closes at 7pm.

## Advance voting rules

### Inside advance voting places or within 10 metres of the entrance, during voting hours –

**Don't influence voters** or advise them about voting/not voting for a candidate, political party, or referendum option in the Cannabis and End of Life Choice Act referendums.

**Don't display campaign material**, or wear or distribute it, except for a lapel badge or rosette.

**Don't take part in demonstrations** or processions related to the election or referendums. This includes using a megaphone.

**Don't film or take photos** of ballot papers or of people as they vote, or in a way that disrupts voting. If you are a candidate or promoter (e.g. referendum groups) and want to be filmed voting, you must arrange this beforehand with the Returning Officer.

**You may wear a party or referendum lapel badge or rosette.** These can feature a referendum option, party colours, a party name and branding, but not a candidate name. It will need a promoter statement.

**You can display party colours**, such as streamers, but only on people or vehicles.

### Anywhere during the advance voting period –

- **Don't poll voters** about how they voted.
- **You may contact voters offering help to get to a voting place.**
- **You may campaign elsewhere**, outside the buffer zone. You are also free to express political views online.

## Election day rules

### Anywhere on election day, 17 October

**Don't deliver campaign material** or display, wear or distribute it, except for a lapel badge or rosette. Don't publish any election or referendum advertising. If you deliver material on Friday 16 October, people might complain thinking it was delivered on election day.

Election hoardings should be taken down before election day. Sign-written vehicles, bumper stickers or flags with party or candidate material must not be in public view on election day.

**Don't influence voters** or advise them about voting/not voting for a candidate, political party, or referendum option in the Cannabis and End of Life Choice Act referendums. The exemption for personal political views shared online does not apply on election day. This means individuals' social media posts (and associated profile images) could breach election day rules.

**Don't take part in demonstrations** or processions related to the election or referendums. This includes using a megaphone.

**Don't poll voters** about how they voted, but also about anything election-related on election day.

**Don't take film or take photos** in voting places – any filming must be arranged in advance.

**You may wear a party or referendum lapel badge or rosette.**

**You may display party colours**, such as streamers, but only on people or vehicles.

**You may leave up fixed signage on party HQs** and MP offices, if it's up before election day and not related to the election campaign.

**You may contact voters offering help to get to a voting place**, or reminding them it is election day, but don't influence how they vote. If you are going to call voters, you can check your 'script' with us.

**You may only leave up website material** that is election or referendum related if the material is not updated on election day, is only available to people who voluntarily access it, and the site isn't advertised.

The Electoral Commission does not actively monitor conduct on election day, or buffer zones during advance voting, but we will respond if there are complaints.

We can remove material that breaks the rules.

To make a complaint or find out about the rules, contact us on 0800 36 76 56 or email [enquiries@elections.govt.nz](mailto:enquiries@elections.govt.nz)