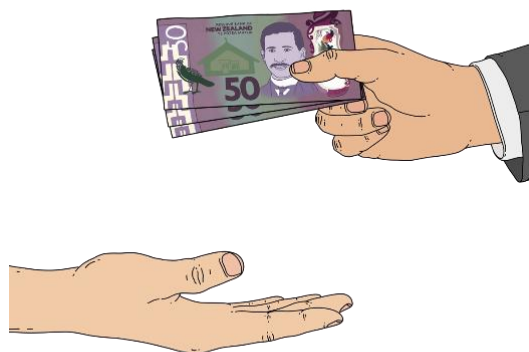




Election Access Fund: How to apply



October 2022
Updated May 2025

About the Electoral Commission



The Electoral Commission looks after the running of **parliamentary elections** in New Zealand.

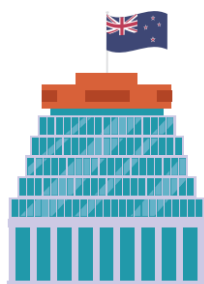


Parliamentary elections are when people get to **vote** in:

- **general elections**
- **by-elections.**



When you **vote** you get to have your say about who you think should win an election.

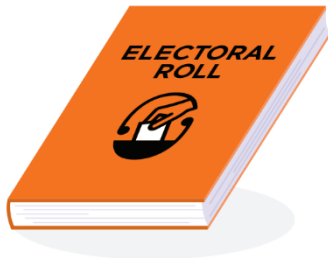


General elections are when people vote on who they want in Parliament.



By-elections happen when a member of Parliament leaves their role before a general election.

When this happens people in their area vote on who will replace them.



The Electoral Commission also works to keep the **electoral rolls** up to date.



The **electoral roll** is a list of all the people who have **enrolled** to vote.

Enrolling means you fill in a form to add your name to the **electoral roll**.

About the Election Access Fund



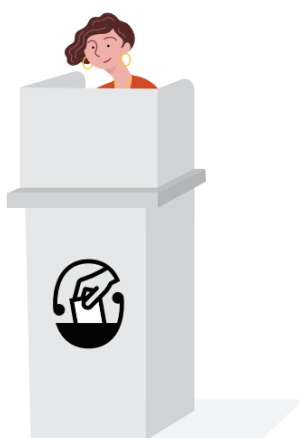
The Electoral Commission has set up a new fund called the **Election Access Fund**.



In this Easy Read document we will call the Election Access Fund the **Fund**.



The Māori name for the Fund is Te Tomokanga – Pūtea Whakatapoko Pōtitanga.



The Fund is to support disabled **candidates** in parliamentary:

- general elections
- by-elections.



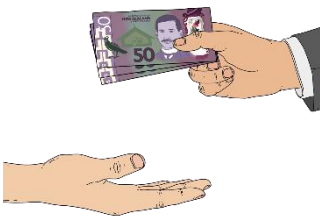
Candidates are people who:

- stand for election
- **campaign** to get people to vote for them.



Campaigning means candidates:

- tell people what they want to do if they get into Parliament
- ask people to vote for them.



The Fund can be used by disabled candidates to pay for any extra costs of standing / campaigning in an election due to their disability.



If you are part of a political party you may want that party to choose you as their candidate.



You can ask for money from the Fund to pay for things to do you're your disability you need when you to campaign for the party to choose you.

Who can apply for the Fund?



You can apply for the Fund if you are all of these:

1. a **disabled** person
2. standing as a candidate or wanting to be the candidate for your party in a parliamentary election / by-election
3. someone who faces **barriers** to doing this because of your disability that non-disabled people do not face
4. someone who fits the **rules** about who can be a candidate.





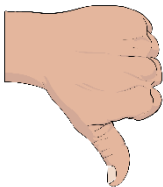
The Fund uses the same way of deciding who is **disabled** as the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**.



The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** is a law lots of countries have agreed to.



It says what governments must do to make sure disabled people get the same rights as everybody else.



Barriers are things that make it harder for disabled people to do things.

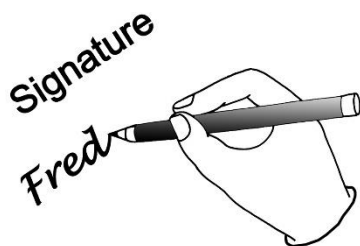


The **rules** about who can be a candidate are in a law called the Electoral Act 1993.



When you stand as a candidate it can be:

- on your own
- with a party.



To tell us you meet the rules to apply you have to sign a **legal statement**.



A **legal statement** is something you:

- write down
- sign to say it is true.

If it is not true then you may have broken the law.



If you are standing for election you also need to send us a copy of your announcement saying you are standing as a candidate.



If you are asking your party to choose you as a candidate you also need to send us a copy of an email to your **party secretary** saying you want to be a candidate



The **party secretary** is 1 of the people who run your political party.

What can the Fund be used for?



People will use the Fund for many different things.

Some ideas of what the Fund could be used for are:



- paying to having New Zealand Sign Language interpreters so you can understand what is happening at campaign events



- paying for the travel or accommodation costs of a support person at campaign events.



The Fund will **not** cover costs like advertising as this is a cost that all candidates have to cover.



The Fund will **not** cover things in your political party that are not to do with them choosing you as their candidate.



This includes things like:

- volunteering
- petitions which are when lots of people sign to say they support something
- raising money for the party
- social events that are not about being a candidate.

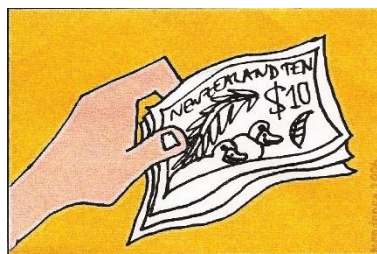


We will pay for costs that are:

- the amount you need to spend

and

- **reasonable.**



Reasonable costs means things like

- not paying for a very expensive thing when you could easily get something cheaper
- not paying for more of something than you need.



We can assist you with making your application.



We will give you information about what costs are reasonable for things like:

- accommodation like hotel rooms for support people who are travelling with you
- travel
- food for people who are travelling with you.



How do I apply for money from the Fund?



To apply for the Fund you can fill out a form at:

**[elections.nz/getting-involved/
election-access-fund/](https://elections.nz/getting-involved/election-access-fund/)**



You can also contact us:

- by **email** at:

electionaccessfund@elections.govt.nz



- by **phone** on:

0800 36 76 56.



When you contact us we will:

- send you an application form
- ask if you would like to meet with us.

If you meet with us we will:



- go through the application with you
- tell you what you need to do.



You can bring a support person if you need 1.



It is a good idea to try to think of all the things you may need money from the Fund for.



Once your application is ready it will be looked at by the **Applications Panel**.

The **Applications Panel** is a group of people who make decisions.

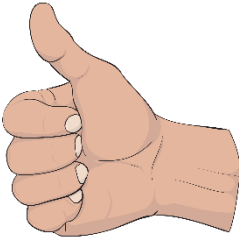


The Applications Panel will tell us if they think what you have asked for fits the rules about the Fund.

We will then decide if you can get funding.



We will tell you what we have decided as soon as we can.



If we say yes to your application we will write a document called an **agreement**.

The agreement will say:

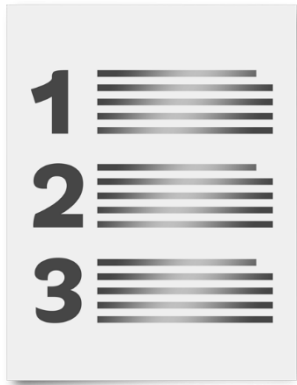


- how much money the Fund will pay you
- what the money is to be used for.



When you have signed the agreement we will pay you the money.

You then need to pay for the things you need.



You will need to keep a list of every time you spend money that shows:

- what date you spent the money
- what you spent the money on
- how much money you spent.



You will also need to keep proof of your spending like receipts.



If you do not spend all the money you will need to give us back the money you have left.

What happens with my information?



The Electoral Commission will keep your information private.

You will be able to:

- see what information we have about you
- get information changed if it is wrong.



The Electoral Commission will need to say how the Fund has been used.



This will mean things like:

- how many people applied to the Fund
- what kinds of things money was spent on
- how much money was spent.

We will say this in a way that means people cannot tell who any of the people who got money are.

What do I do if I have a problem with the Fund?



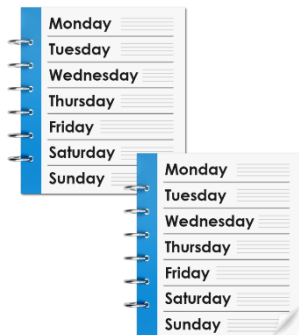
You can make a **complaint** if you are unhappy with:

- how we have done things
- our decision to pay you money or not.



A **complaint** is when you:

- tell us what you think has gone wrong
- ask for things to be changed.



We will look at your complaint:

- as soon as possible
- in no more than 2 weeks.



To make a complaint you can contact us by **email** at:

electionaccessfund@elections.govt.nz



You can contact us by **phone** on:

0800 36 76 56

More information



You can find more about the Fund on our **website**:

elections.nz/getting-involved/election-access-fund/



You can contact us by **email** at:

electionaccessfund@elections.govt.nz



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This information has been written by the Electoral Commission.



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make It Easy service of People First New Zealand Inc. Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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