



Frequently Asked Questions
relating to
Manawatū District Council Elections



Enrol

Q Can I view the electoral roll?

A Yes, the electoral roll will be open for public inspection at the council's office and Feilding Public Library from 15 July 2022 to 12 August 2022.

Q How do I know whether I am enrolled?

A You can check your enrolment status on www.vote.nz

The Electoral Commission will be undertaking a roll update campaign in early July 2022 for the Parliamentary Electoral Roll which forms the basis of our roll for the local authority election.

If you do not receive a letter in the post during late June/early July 2022, the chances are you are not enrolled or your details are incorrect.

Q How do I enrol to vote in these elections?

A If you are on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll at an address in the Manawatū district, you will automatically appear on the roll that is used for these elections.

If you are not on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll, or are unsure if your details are up to date, you can enrol or check your details by one of these methods:

- enrol online at <https://vote.nz/enrolling/enrol-or-update/enrol-or-update-online/>
- ring 0800 36 76 56 to arrange for a form to be sent to you in the mail
- send your name and address to Free text 3676 for a form to be sent to you in the mail
- download a form at <https://vote.nz/enrolling/enrol-or-update/other-ways-to-enrol/>
- Pick up an enrolment pack from the Council office.

If you are on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll at an address in another district, but own property within the Manawatū district and it is not your main residence you may be able to enrol as a Ratepayer elector. Refer to Deputy Electoral Officer to enrol as a Ratepayer elector.

Q I am a student and spend my time in different places. Where should I enrol?

A You should enrol where you spend the greater part of your time.

Q1. I am a New Zealand Māori, do I need to enrol on the Māori roll?

A Not necessarily. If you are enrolling for the first time you can decide whether you want to go on the Māori Electoral Roll or the General Electoral Roll by signing the appropriate panel on the Parliamentary Elector Enrolment form.

However, if you have already made that choice you will have to wait until the next Māori Option period to change, which occurs following the next census, likely in 2023. The last Māori Option period was in 2018.

Q I turn 18 on Election Day. Can I vote?

A Yes, but you need to make sure you have enrolled which you can do provisionally from the age of 17 and it automatically changes when you turn 18.

You will also need to apply for a special vote.

You can do both if you call at the Council office during the voting period from 16 September, however your enrolment must be done by 6 October 2022.

Q We own a business in your area and pay rates, but we don't live in your area – do we get a say in the local elections?

Yes, subject to being eligible to become enrolled as a ratepayer elector and becoming enrolled.

In no case does this allow you to have two votes at the election.

If you are the sole ratepayer for the property (i.e. the rate account is only in your name), then you can apply to be the Ratepayer Elector.

If you are a joint ratepayer (i.e. the rate account is in more than one name), or the rate account is in the name of a Trust or Company etc., you must appoint a nominee to vote on behalf of the joint ratepayers or entity. For the case of companies, corporations, trusts etc., the nominee should be a member or officer of the entity.

Refer to Deputy Electoral Officer for enrolment and special voting details. If enrolment is after 12 August they will need to do a special vote.

Q I own a property in the district but it is not my fulltime residence. How do I get on the Ratepayer Electoral Roll?

A Refer to Deputy Electoral Officer for enrolment and special voting details. If enrolment is after 12 August they will need to do a special vote.

Q I am on the Māori electoral roll, does this affect who I can vote for?

A Yes. The Manawatū District Council has established a Māori ward and the Horizons Regional Council has established Māori constituencies. You will be voting for candidates that stand for election to the Māori ward / constituency.

Stand

Q What is the role of a councillor?

A A councillor:

- Participates in strategic and long-term planning for the whole district;
- Participates in setting a budget and rates
- Develops policy across a wide range of activities and services;
- Represents the district at functions as required;
- Reviews and develops bylaws for the district;
- Advocates on a wide range of issues;
- Coordinates and forms partnerships with other spheres of government and other agencies;
- Participates in the appointment and performance review of the Chief Executive Officer;
- Acts on all these matters within a legislative and regulatory framework
- Monitors the performance of the council organisation

Q What is the role of the Mayor?

A The Mayor is elected by the district as a whole and, as one of the elected members, shares the same responsibilities as the Councillors. In addition the Mayor also has the following roles:

- Presiding at Council meetings including ensuring the orderly conduct of business during meetings;

- Advocating on behalf of community and representation of its interests;
- Spokesperson for the Council;
- Ceremonial head of the Council;
- Providing leadership to the other members of the Council and the people of the area;
- Fulfilling the responsibilities of a Justice of the Peace (while the Mayor holds office);
- Leading the development of the Council's plans, policies and budgets for consideration by the members of the Council.

Q What qualifications and experience do I need to be a candidate?

A You must be a New Zealand citizen and be a parliamentary elector anywhere in New Zealand.

Other requirements are that:

- You are nominated by two electors in the area you are standing for.
- You or your spouse/partner must not have concerns or interests in contracts over \$25,000 with the council.
- If you are subject to a Court Order under section 31 of the Protection of Personal Property Rights Act 1988, you should take legal advice.
- If you are an employee of the council, you must resign before taking up your position as an elected member. The rules of some councils may require you to take leave for campaigning prior to the election.

You do not need to reside in the area (district or ward) that you are standing for.

You do not need any formal qualifications. Elected members come from all walks of life and generally have a desire to serve their community.

Q Which local government positions am I able to run for?

A You can choose to stand for election for any position in a city council, district council or regional council. You are able to run for mayor, councillor, community board member or local board member.

If you choose to stand for more than one position there are some restrictions and rules:

- You cannot stand for both a district council and a regional council.

- Where a council has both an ‘at large’ and wards system of representation, you cannot stand as councillor for both positions.
- You cannot stand as councillor for more than one ward in a council.

But

- You can stand for both mayor and councillor.

Q What is an “at large” councillor?

A These councillors are elected by the electors of the whole district– not just by electors from part of the district.

Some councils elect all their councillors at large (city or district-wide), while some have councillors who are elected to a specific ward, while others have a mixture of both.

The mayor of the Manawatū District is elected at large.

The councillors are elected from three wards:

- Feilding Ward (General Ward)
- Rural Ward (General Ward)
- Ngā Tapuae o Matangi (Māori Ward)

Regional councillors are elected on a constituency basis.

Q How many elected members are there?

A The Manawatū District Council will be made up of the following twelve members:

- Mayor
- Five Councillors elected from the Feilding Ward
- Five Councillors elected from the Rural Ward
- One Councillor elected from Ngā Tapuae o Matangi

Q What does, ‘at large’, ‘ward’ and ‘constituency’, mean?

A If you are standing ‘at large’, then you are standing for the whole council area rather than from its wards.

If you are standing for a ‘ward’ these are parts of a council area that have been determined by population and communities of interest. These can be either general wards or Māori wards.

If in a regional council, the term ‘constituency’ is used rather than ‘ward’.

Q When I stand for election, can I be affiliated with an organisation or group?

A Yes, if you belong to a political party or other group, you may want to identify with them. However, you don't have to have any affiliations. If this is your situation, you can identify as, 'independent' or leave the space blank when you fill out your nomination form.

If you do have a specific affiliation, the electoral officer may require a letter of consent from the party, organisation or group giving its consent for you to use the affiliation.

Q How many people do I need to nominate me?

A You need two people to nominate you.

Q Who is able to nominate me?

A Nominators must be on the electoral roll for the area (city, district, constituency, ward, community board or local board) for which you are standing, e.g. if you are standing for election to a specific ward, you must be nominated by two electors from that ward who are on the electoral roll for that ward. You are not able to nominate yourself.

Q When do nominations open?

A Nominations open on Friday 15 July 2022 and close at 12 noon on Friday 12 August 2022.

Q Where do I get a nomination form from?

A Nomination forms are available from the Council office and from the Council website www.mdc.govt.nz/elections from 8:00am Friday 15 July 2022.

Your nominators must fill it in. You must agree to being nominated and will also need to sign the form.

Nominations close on Friday 12 August 2022 at 12 noon. Nominations must be lodged with the electoral officer, deputy electoral officer or an electoral official at the council you are standing for.

Do not leave lodgement until the last day because if there any problems with the details provided there might be insufficient time to resolve them and you could miss out.

Q Do I need to be on the Māori electoral roll or of Māori descent if I am standing for election in a Māori Ward?

A No. To be eligible you must be a New Zealand citizen and your name must be on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll (anywhere in New Zealand).

You will need to be nominated by two electors whose names appear on the Māori electoral roll within the area of election for which you are standing.

Equally if you are on the Māori electoral roll you can stand in a general ward, and will need to be nominated by two electors whose names appear on the general electoral roll within the area of election for which you are standing.

Q How much will it cost me to stand?

A You will need to pay a nomination deposit of \$200 GST inclusive. This deposit applies to each issue (election) you stand for.

The funds must be deposited with the Electoral Officer at the same time your nomination is submitted. It is recommended you pay the nomination deposit by online/internet banking (or EFTPOS or cash at the Council office) noting that cheques are no longer accepted.

If you poll more than 25% of the lowest polling successful candidate for FPP elections you will receive your nomination deposit back.

Q Can I withdraw my nomination as a candidate?

A Only if it is withdrawn before the close of nominations. You cannot withdraw voluntarily after nominations have closed. If you decide to opt out, your name will still appear on the voting document. If you do change your mind and decide not to run for election after you have been nominated, let your electoral officer know who will talk through the issues with you.

However, if you become incapacitated with serious illness or injury and unlikely to be able to perform the functions and duties if elected to office, you can apply to withdraw on those grounds. You will need verification from a doctor and lawyer about your situation. See your local electoral officer if you need more information about this process.

Q What is a candidate profile statement?

A You may provide a candidate profile statement when you lodge your nomination. This is a statement of up to 150 words containing information

about yourself and your policies and intentions if elected to office. The profile statement will be included in the voting packs that all electors receive.

If your candidate statement is submitted in Māori and English, the information contained in each language must be substantially consistent with the information contained in the other language. Each language has to be within a 150-word limit.

Your profile statement must be true and accurate. The Electoral Officer is not required to verify or investigate any information included in your statement.

Your profile can include a recent passport size colour photograph.

In addition, your candidate profile statement must state whether or not your principal place of residence is in the area you are seeking election, e.g., 'My principal place of residence is in the Lambton Ward', or 'My principal place of residence is not in the Lambton Ward'. This is not part of the 150-word limit.

See section 61 of the Local Electoral Act 2001 for more information.

Q Does a criminal record affect a person standing as a council candidate?

A No, not at all for city, district, and regional council elections.

Q How long is the term of the elected member?

A Three years.

Q Is the role I want to stand for full-time or part-time?

A This varies between councils and between roles within a council.

At Manawatū District Council the role of Mayor is considered full-time, and the role of a Councillor is considered part-time.

Q How much will I get paid?

A Pay and allowances are determined by the Government's Remuneration Authority. The pay rates vary according to population size and other factors. You can see all the councils remuneration schedules by clicking on this link to the [Local Government Members \(2021/22\) Determination](#).

More information about how the Remuneration Authority determines pay can be found [here](#).

Q Do I need to be resident in the city, district or region I am standing for?

A No, but you must be on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll (anywhere in New Zealand) and provide proof that you are a New Zealand citizen.

Q How many offices can I stand for?

A You can stand for mayor, and ward councillor. However, if elected to more than one position, you will take up the highest ranked position.

You cannot stand for more than one ward.

You cannot stand for both a regional council and one of its constituent district or city councils or a community board.

Q I am a serving police officer. Can I stand for council and continue to work as a police officer?

A Yes. There are no longer any restrictions on police officers standing for local authority elections, apart from the normal eligibility criteria.

Q Can I raise campaign funds from donations to offset electoral expenses?

A Yes, you can raise funds from donations to help offset your campaign expenses. There is very specific legislation about donations and expenses which you need to abide by.

Refer to deputy electoral officer for more information if needed.

Q How much can I spend on my campaign?

A Candidates have campaign expenditure limits to ensure there is a level playing field for all candidates in regard to how much money they can spend on campaigning. The limits are population based and set by law.

Mayoralty: \$20,000

Feilding Ward: \$14,000

Rural Ward: \$14,000

Ngā Tapuae o Matangi \$3,500

If you stand for more than one position, the amount you can spend is the highest amount for one position (eg standing for Mayor and Councillor). You cannot add positions together to allow you to spend more than the limit.

All candidates are required to lodge an electoral donations and expenses return within 55 days after the day on which the successful candidates are declared to be elected (public notice of final results). If a candidate is outside NZ on this day, the return must be filed within 76 days after election result day. If this is not done, the non-return will be advised to the NZ Police. This return needs to be made before a candidate nomination deposit is refunded.

Q When is the campaign period?

A Election campaigning can start at any time and continue up to and including election day.

Q Can people already elected onto council use council resources to campaign?

A No, current elected members cannot use council resources for their campaigns.

Q Are there any rules about using social media?

A Yes. Councils have policies or guidelines for web and social media use related to campaigning. They will not permit council social media pages to be used by anyone (candidates or members of the public) for electioneering or campaigning in the three months before election day. Councils monitor their websites and take down any campaign related posts.

Q What does 'authorisation of advertising' mean?

A Election advertising, using any media, including social media, must identify either you or your agent. The publication of any advertisements (in any newspaper, periodical, notice, poster, pamphlet, handbill, billboard or card, or broadcast over radio or television) for candidates requires the written authorisation of you or your agent.

The advertisement must contain a statement setting out you or your agent's true name, or at whose direction, it is published and the street address (not a PO box) of their residence or business. This applies during your entire campaign.

Q Where and when can I put up election signs?

A Election signs are permitted on private property (with the owner's consent). The sign must be erected in a stable fashion, not be a hazard to

the public or to traffic safety, and must comply with the Council's district plan/bylaw.

Signs are only allowed in the two-month period leading up to election day, and must be removed prior to election day.

For State Highways, signs must meet Waka Kotahi/NZTA rules for any signage.

Election signs are not permitted on council property or road reserves.

Q Complaints about electoral signage

A Refer complaints about electoral signage to the Compliance and Enforcement Team, e.g:

- The signs are in an unauthorised place;
- The signs don't have the required authorisation on them;
- The signs have been damaged / pulled over;
- The signs are bigger than they should be.

Q When do elected members take up their roles?

A Elected members take up office the day after the official result has been declared by public notice. However, they cannot act until they have sworn the oath of office which is usually at the first meeting of council. This first meeting is usually held as soon as practicable after the final election results are known.

Q Who are elected members responsible to?

A Ultimately the elected members' final responsibility is to the local community. The Minister of Local Government and the Auditor-General do have a role in ensuring that councils follow the law.

Vote

Q When is the next Council election?

A Election day is Saturday 8 October 2022. Voting closes at 12 noon on that day. The voting period starts on Friday 16 September 2022

The elections are by postal vote. Voting documents will be delivered from Friday 16 September 2022 to Wednesday 21 September 2022. Voters can return their vote anytime from when they receive their voting documents. Votes must be received by the Electoral Officer by the close of voting at

12 noon on Saturday 8 October 2022. Make sure your vote is in the mail by Wednesday 5 October 2022 to make sure it gets back to us in time.

Q When will election results be known?

A Voting closes at midday Saturday 8 October 2022. Progress results (approximately 90 per cent of votes cast) will be known early that afternoon, with preliminary results known on Sunday, 9 October 2022. Final results will likely to be declared on Thursday 13 October 2022. All results will be published on the council's website www.mdc.govt.nz/elections and displayed on a poster inside the Council's front door.

Q Who is running the election?

A The Electoral Officer has full responsibility for running the election.

Q What is the name of the Electoral Officer / Deputy Electoral Officer?

A Electoral Officer: Warwick Lampp
Deputy Electoral Officer: Allie Dunn

Q What type of voting method does the Council use?

A First Past the Post (FPP)

Q What issues (elections) can we vote for?

A Mayor and Councillors
One Councillor to be elected by voters in Ngā Tapuae o Matangi (Māori Electoral Ward)
Five Councillors to be elected by voters in the Feilding Ward
Five Councillors to be elected by voters in the Rural Ward
One Horizons Regional Council member to be elected by voters in the Raki Māori constituency
Two Horizons Regional Council members to be elected by voters in the Manawatū-Rangitīkei constituency

Q What does "election at large" mean?

A A member being elected "at large" means they are elected by electors of the whole district – not just by electors from part of the district.
The Mayor of the Manawatū District is elected at large.

Q What is the difference between Māori and General Wards?

A Members of Māori wards / constituencies are elected by those enrolled to vote on the respective Māori electoral roll; similarly members of general wards / constituencies are elected by those enrolled to vote on the respective general electoral roll.

Q Is it a postal vote and will I be sent my voting documents in the mail?

A All local authority elections will be conducted by postal vote. Voting documents will be delivered in the mail between Friday 16 September 2022 and Wednesday 21 September 2022.

Q I got my voting documents, but my partner didn't receive theirs.

A Voting documents are being delivered progressively between Friday 16 September and Wednesday 21 September 2022. If the enquiry is before Wednesday 21 September 2022, ask them to wait until after Wednesday 21 September and call back if voting documents are not delivered by that date.

If enquiry is after 21 September 2022, check the electoral roll to make sure the caller is enrolled correctly. If they are correctly enrolled, they will need to apply for a special vote. Refer them to Deputy Electoral Officer.

If the caller is not correctly enrolled, they will need to complete an elector enrolment form. They can pick one up at any New Zealand Post agency, or from the Council office, or they can enrol online at www.vote.nz, ring 0800 36 76 56 or send their name and address to Free text 3676. They will also need a special vote – refer them to the Deputy Electoral Officer for details on special voting.

Q I didn't receive my voting pack, how do I obtain a special vote?

A Voting documents are being delivered progressively between Friday 16 September and Wednesday 21 September 2022. If the enquiry is before Wednesday 21 September 2022, ask them to wait until after Wednesday 21 September and call back if voting documents not delivered by that date.

If enquiry is after 21 September 2022, check the electoral roll to make sure the caller is enrolled correctly. If they are correctly enrolled, they will need to apply for a special vote. Refer them to Deputy Electoral Officer.

If the caller is not correctly enrolled, they will need to complete an elector enrolment form. They can pick one up at any New Zealand Post agency, or from the Council office, or they can enrol online at www.vote.nz, ring 0800 36 76 56 or send their name and address to Free text 3676. They will also need a special vote – refer them to the Deputy Electoral Officer for details on special voting.

Q I received voting documents for (children, parent) and have Power of Attorney for them can I vote for them?

A No – Power of Attorney does not apply to voting on behalf of that person.

Q I received voting documents for (children, parent, etc) and have Power of Attorney for them. What should I do with the documents?

A If they are overseas, you could airmail them to the person or destroy them if that is not practicable.

If they are for an elderly parent who is unable to vote, please destroy them by ripping/cutting them up.

Q I received voting documents that do not belong to me and I don't know these people or where they have gone.

A Write GNA (Gone No Address) on the envelope and put them back in the mail.

Q What is that barcode that I can see through the return envelope or on the front of the voting document?

A It is a legal requirement to scan the barcode number to mark the electoral roll that you have voted so we can ensure that we do not receive two votes from the same person.

Q How do you ensure the secrecy of my vote?

A Envelopes containing a voting document cannot be opened until there is a JP present. The JP is required to sign off that the processes used by the Electoral Officer met the legal requirements.

The voter's name is not on the voting document.

When the envelope is opened the only thing the Electoral Officer is looking for is that the vote for each election is valid.

This means that for FPP they are making sure that the voter's intention is clear and they have not ticked or marked more than the number of candidates than there are vacancies.

Q Do I have to vote? I don't know any of these candidates

A No you don't have to vote. You also don't have to vote for all candidates or for all elections. But your vote is important because the people elected will be responsible for making decisions about what happens in your community for the next three years.

To help you get to know about the candidates:

- There may be candidate meetings being held if you wish to go and hear what policies the different candidates are advocating for. (If you know when these are held you may want to supply them or advise that they can find a list of these in the local paper)
- There is a candidate profile booklet that comes out with the voting documents in which there is a photo and a statement from candidates. This information will also be available on the Council website www.mdc.govt.nz/elections.
- Candidates may have their own website page, social media page(s), advertise in local newspapers or send out information to letterboxes in your area.
- Local newspaper(s) are likely to cover information about the election.

Q Do I have to vote for all the candidates for any issue? If I don't vote for all the candidates or all the issues on my voting document, will this invalidate my vote?

A Under FPP you can vote for as many candidates as you want but not more than the number of positions available on the voting document. So if you are electing five councillors then you can vote for up to five candidates. Remember, for FPP you tick the candidates you want to elect.

You can decide not to vote for one or more of the different elections on your voting document. This does not invalidate all your other votes.

Q Do I have to post my voting document back?

A You can post it but make sure you have them in the mail by Wednesday 5 October 2022 to make sure it gets back to us in time (by 12 noon Saturday 8 October 2022)

However, you can also deliver to our voting box at the Council office 135 Manchester Street, Feilding, until 12 noon Saturday 8 October 2022.

Q I have lost my return envelope.

A You can use an envelope of your own and put the return address and Freepost number on it. The return address is on the voting document. The Freepost number is (enter number once known)

Q I am on the Unpublished Parliamentary roll and I want a special vote.

A Special voting is available at the Council office during office hours from 16 September 2022 until 12 noon Saturday 8 October 2022.

Q I spoiled my voting documents / I have made a mistake on my documents. What can I do?

A If you can amend it so that your voting intention is clear, then do so and initial the changes.

If necessary, we can issue you with a special voting document, but this will require you to complete a declaration. Refer to Deputy Electoral Officer for special voting.

Q Where can I have a special vote?

A Special voting is available at the Council office 135 Manchester Street, Feilding during Council's normal business hours.

Q I am going away and will not be here when the voting documents are posted out.

Refer to the Deputy Electoral Officer who may be able to organise for either the voting document to be sent to the voter, or a special vote to be sent to them.

Q Why can't I vote for a certain candidate who is standing for a different ward?

A You can only vote for the elections relevant to the area in which you live. You cannot vote for a candidate for the same district or region who is standing in another ward or constituency because you are not an elector of that ward or constituency.

Q My partner's voting document and mine are different. They have more/less things to vote for. Their list of candidates is different to mine.

A The council is using random name order on the voting documents. This could explain why the list looks different.

Another explanation could be because the council established Māori wards. If the caller and their partner are not on the same electoral roll (Māori/general) then this may explain why the voting documents are different.

If neither of these explanations apply, refer to Deputy Electoral Officer.

Q I have received two voting documents?

A Refer to Deputy Electoral Officer.

Q Do all the staff working on the election know who I voted for?

A No, your vote remains secret under the required roll scrutiny and counting procedures. Your name is not on the voting paper.

Q Can candidates help people vote or collect their voting documents to send in?

A No, candidates or their assistants must not collect voting documents from electors. Each elector should post or deliver their own voting document to the Electoral Officer.

It is an offence (carrying a fine of up to \$5,000 if convicted) to interfere in any way with an elector with the intention of influencing or advising the elector as to how he or she should vote. Candidates and their assistants should be mindful of this particularly if campaigning occurs in facilities such as rest homes or hospitals.

Q Can I help someone fill out their voting documents?

A Under the Local Electoral Act 2001, you cannot interfere or influence any person as to how they can vote.

If authorised by a voter who is physically impaired; is unable to read or write; or is not sufficiently familiar with any language or languages used on the document to vote without assistance, a person can assist them to vote as directed by the voter.

Q What happens to all the voting documents after the elections?

A They are delivered to the District Court and kept for 21 days so that the Court can access them should there be any application for recount or petition for inquiry.

After 21 days, the court is responsible for destroying them.

Q What is FPP?

A This is the First Past the Post voting system. The candidate or candidates that get the most votes win(s).

You should mark those you want to vote for with a tick in the circle. Do not vote for more than the number of candidates shown in the instructions.

Q When will we know the results of the election?

A Progress and preliminary results will be announced as soon as possible after 12 noon on Saturday 8 October 2022.

The official results will be announced when the final count is complete and special votes have been checked which will be between Thursday 13 October 2022 – Wednesday 19 October 2022.

Q How will I find out election results?

A Candidates will be advised as soon as possible after progress and preliminary results are known. This will be via phone. Candidates will be advised of results prior to the public release.

Progress and preliminary results will be released to the media and placed on Council's website www.mdc.govt.nz/elections as soon as possible after noon on Saturday 8 October 2022 once the candidates have been advised. A poster displaying election results will also be displayed inside Council's front door.

Q What do I need to do if I want to challenge the results of the election?

A Refer caller to the Deputy Electoral Officer.