

# What is the election process?

The local government elections will be conducted under the provisions of the Local Electoral Act 2001, the Local Electoral Regulations 2001, the Local Government Act 2002, the New Zealand Public Health & Disability Act 2000 and their amendments. Most local government elections are conducted using the First Past the Post system so the candidate with the highest number of votes wins. This year 10 councils, in addition to all 21 district health boards, will use the Single Transferable Vote system for the first time.

Elections for all local authorities throughout New Zealand are held every three years and are conducted by postal vote. This year, Election Day will be Saturday 9 October 2004 so all votes have to be received by this date.

Your council will have an electoral officer to run the election. This person is usually a council employee, although some councils employ contractors to conduct their elections. Existing councillors, elected members and anyone standing for election cannot be an electoral officer.

Voting documents will be sent to all eligible voters by post from Friday 17 September 2004. Voters will have three weeks to complete and return their voting forms. Completed voting documents must be returned to the electoral officer by 12 noon on Saturday 9 October.

A polling place for the issuing of special voting papers and for the receiving of completed voting papers will be available from Friday 17 September 2004 to 12 noon Saturday 9 October 2004.

Election results will be announced by the electoral officer as soon as practicable after voting closes. The electoral officer will also write to all candidates once the final election result is known. The term of office is for three years.

Successful councillors take up office on the day after the official declaration is made. However, before they can make any decisions, elected councillors must swear an oath of office. The oath is made at the first meeting of the new council. This meeting is usually held within two weeks of the official declaration of election results.



