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Tasmanian Electoral Commission
'19 LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Pre-Poll

Supplement Manual



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Introduction

What is pre-poll?

Under the *Electoral Act 2004*, the Tasmanian Electoral Commission (TEC) can appoint pre-poll polling places at which electors may vote during specific time periods before polling day.

The Electoral Commissioner determines the period each pre-poll centre is open for voting. At the 2018 Legislative Council elections the period at specific places varied from three weeks to two days.

As a general rule, your polling place will be open on weekdays from 8:30am – 5:30pm, with the polling place open until 6pm on the final Friday before polling day.

Who can vote at a pre-poll polling place?

A person is entitled to vote at a pre-poll polling place if they:

- expect to be unable to attend a polling place on polling day, or
- are a silent elector.

If the person is not a silent elector, the person must complete the pre-poll declaration form before being issued the ballot paper.

How is a pre-poll polling place different from an ordinary polling place?

Most of the functions and responsibilities of a Pre-Poll Manager are the same as those for a Polling Manager at an ordinary polling place on polling day. As a quick summary the main differences are:

- Pre-Poll staff are paid on an hourly rate instead of a day package
- Pre-Poll Managers undertake daily opening and closing of poll procedures
- A Pre-Poll Manager is responsible for opening and closing the premise over multiple days and is responsible for ensuring the secure overnight storage of election material - most importantly all used and unused ballot papers and netbooks
- Pre-Poll Managers complete different final close of poll procedures
- Pre-Poll Managers and their staff do not open ballot boxes and perform a scrutiny at close of polling

Preparing for the pre-poll period

Similar to an ordinary Polling Manager you are required to:

- check your election material allocation
- undertake face-to-face training
- set up your polling place, and
- count the ballot papers and charge the netbooks.

Responsibility for the collection of keys, building access details and overnight security arrangements may be your responsibility or may be undertaken by the Returning Officer's (RO) staff. Your RO will provide details concerning your polling place.

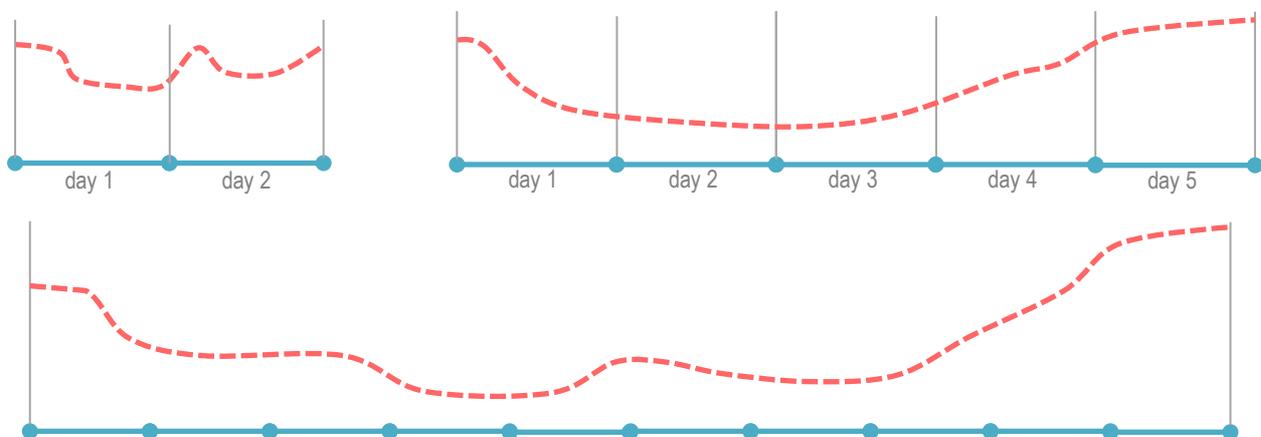
You will need to discuss the organised arrangements for the overnight storage of election material for your pre-poll centres with the RO. While most election items can be stored within the hired space or a locked room, special arrangements will be made for ballot papers and netbooks.

Please ensure you arrive at your polling place on the first day at least an hour before polling commences to ensure the venue is set up correctly and you can train your staff. All normal opening processes, such as the processes for sealing the ballot box, still occur for the opening of a pre-poll centre.

Voter flow across the pre-poll period

The flow of voters at a pre-poll centre differs from the busy morning to quieter afternoon cycle of a polling place on polling day. In general, voter numbers at a pre-poll centre increases over time. A two-day pre-poll period may be consistently busy, compared to a week long period — as illustrated below.

Expect that the busiest times of the day will be the beginning, lunchtimes, and towards the end of the day.



The first day of the pre-poll period

Pre-poll polling places and mobile polling teams are provided with two special vinyl ballot boxes: the grey one is to be the ballot box, the blue one is for storing important election material overnight. Each ballot box contains two seals:

- The zip seal: is sealed on the first morning of the polling period and secures the ballot papers within the grey ballot box
- The top seal: is open during polling to enable voters to place their ballot paper in the grey ballot box and which is sealed each evening

First morning of the pre-poll period

On your first morning:

- Record the opening time on Sheet 1.
- Before the first ballot paper is issued, have the first voter witness the sealing of the zip seal on the grey ballot box used for voting and record the seal details on Sheet 1.
- Enter the opening ballot paper balance in rows 1-3 of Sheet 3A (for each division)
- Enter the total number of ballot papers in row 1 of Sheet 3

Material balancing at the end of the day

When the time for polling on the first day concludes you need to undertake the following management and reconciliation tasks:

- In front of a witness (may be one of your staff),
 - secure the TOP seal of the ballot box
 - record the seal number in Sheet 1 and
 - have you and the witness sign Sheet 1
- Record the closing time for the day on Sheet 1
- Count the unused ballot papers for each division
- Count the sealed spoilt and discarded envelopes for the day for each division
- Count the declaration votes issued for the day for each division
- Check the number of electors marked off the netbooks
- Count the votes issued on the VI Vote machine (if providing this service)
- Enter the relevant figures for the day into Sheet 3A for each division.

Once you have finished your reconciliation:

- Place the netbooks, unused ballot papers and sealed Spoilt & Discarded envelopes in the blue storage ballot box
- Seal the zip seal and
- Record the seal number against the correct date on Sheet 1A

Ensure you plan for pack-up and overnight security of materials each day. If the security of the material cannot be guaranteed at the polling place location, or nearby (e.g. a police station), ensure that you take the materials home with you and store them securely.

Issuing a pre-poll vote

A person entitled to vote at a pre-poll polling place should either:

- expect to be unable to attend an ordinary polling place on polling day, or
- be a silent elector.

When an elector requests a ballot paper:

- Hand the elector a yellow declaration form and ask them to complete
- Check that the form has been correctly completed
- Check the elector is on the roll (using the yellow declaration form to verbally confirm the electors name, enrolled address and whether they have voted before in this election)
- Mark the elector on the netbook - check that the form has been correctly completed
- Issue them with a ballot paper for the correct division
- Store the declaration in the provided A5 folder

If the netbook does not provide the elector's address details, then have them complete the silent elector envelope (instead of the yellow pre-poll form) and process the vote as a declaration vote.

Remember that declaration votes received at a pre-poll centre are placed into the same ballot box as ordinary pre-poll votes. If the ballot box is close to full, contact your RO.

To clarify –

- A declaration vote is a ballot paper that is placed inside the declaration envelope
- A voter's declaration is a statement of eligibility to vote at pre-poll

Tasmanian Electoral Commission
PRE-POLL
VOTER'S DECLARATION
to be made by an elector voting at a pre-poll polling place

Family name: _____ Given names in full: _____

Enrolled address: _____

Current permanent address (if different from enrolled address): _____

Declaration

1. I am unable to attend a polling place on polling day.
2. I have not voted previously in this election.

Signature of elector: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Warning: It is a serious offence to give false or misleading information.

100%
02/19

Not completed by issuing officer
Electoral Division: _____

Managing the polling place

It is important to maintain professionalism at all times. The pre-poll period can involve fluctuations in attendance, and some periods may be very quiet. It is important for the Pre-Poll Manager and staff to be ready at all times for when electors arrive. Be aware of patterns during the polling period which may help you determine staff breaks. Larger pre-polls may have staff rostered for the middle of the day to cover staff lunch breaks.

Rules for canvassing are the same across ordinary, pre-poll and mobile polling places.

As pre-poll staff are paid on an hourly rate, make sure all staff keep their timesheet up to date before they finish work each day.

Similarly to an ordinary polling place on polling day, if there are a number of people already lined up waiting to vote at the time of the poll closing for a particular day, you can place a Polling Officer at the end of the line after which no one may join the queue to vote.

After the first day of the pre-poll period

Every other morning of the pre-poll period

On your second and later mornings:

- Record the opening time on Sheet 1.
- Have a person confirm with you the number of the top seal on the ballot box is the same as recorded as sealing the top on the previous day
- Break the TOP seal on the ballot box (Do not break the zip seal).
- Enter the opening ballot paper balance in rows 1-3 of Sheet 3A (for each division) for the new date

End of pre-poll period

Sometime during the final afternoon complete the staff evaluations and discuss the evaluation with each person individually.

Under the Electoral Act, **no votes can be counted** until after the close of the poll at 6pm on polling day. As a Pre-Poll Manager you must seal the ballot box as is, which will be opened in the RO's office after the close of the poll.

Once pre-poll voting has concluded and the last elector has voted:

- Record the time that you closed pre-poll voting
- Seal the top seal on the grey ballot box and record the final seal number in Sheet 1
- Enter the final elector figures for each netbook in Sheet 2
- Complete the final day's figures and totals in Sheet 3A for each division, and
- Complete Sheet 3 items as outlined in Checklist G.

In your final pack up:

- Make sure all staff have entered all their work times and have **signed** the timesheet.
- Pack up the voting screens
- Make sure you seal all election material in the provided packing bags and labels. (Full process provided in Checklist H.)

All important election material should be sealed in the blue storage ballot box for returning to the RO. Your RO will organise these details with you at training.

Level 3, 169 Main Road
Moonah Tasmania 7009

Phone 1800 801 701
Email ballot.box@tec.tas.gov.au
Web www.tec.tas.gov.au

