

Voter ID: Your guide

Information for anonymous voters about the voter ID requirement

In the UK you are legally required to show photo identification (ID) when voting at a polling station at some elections.

If you are registered to vote anonymously, or plan to register anonymously, you'll need to apply for an Anonymous Elector's Document and bring this with you to the polling station. You will not need to bring an additional form of photo ID. Your name will not appear on the Anonymous Electors Document.

The information in this booklet will explain how to apply for an Anonymous Elector's Document, what to expect when you go to your polling station, and other ways to vote. You do not need to show ID when voting by post or by proxy.

Anonymous voter registration

The deadline to register to vote anonymously in a particular election is **6 working days** before the date of that election.

If you want to vote you need to be registered. If you feel that your name and address being on the electoral register could put your safety, or the safety of someone in your household, at risk you may be able to apply to register to vote anonymously.

This means you will still be able to vote, but your name and address will not be on the electoral register.

Once your application has been approved, you will be registered as an anonymous voter for 12 months. You will need to reapply each year.

Your local Electoral Registration Officer will contact you to tell you what information you need to provide so your registration can continue for a further 12 months.

To find out more about registering to vote anonymously, contact your local Electoral Registration Officer. You can find their contact details by visiting electoralcommission.org.uk/voter. You can also call our helpline on 0800 328 0280.

This table shows who can register to vote in England, Scotland and Wales:

I am a...	I live in England	I live in Scotland	I live in Wales
British, Irish or qualifying Commonwealth citizen living in UK	YES (from 16 years old)	YES (from 14 years old)	YES (from 14 years old)
EU citizen living in UK	YES (from 16 years old)	YES (from 14 years old)	YES (from 14 years old)
Qualifying foreign citizen (someone living in Scotland or Wales with permission to enter or stay in the UK, or who does not need such permission)	NO	YES (from 14 years old)	YES (from 14 years old)

Even though you can register to vote from the age of 14 in Scotland and Wales, you can't vote in UK Parliament general elections, by-elections or recall petitions or Police and Crime Commissioner elections (which take place in England and Wales only), until you are 18 years old.

If you are unsure whether you are eligible to register to vote, or which elections you can vote in, contact your local Electoral Registration Officer. To find their contact details, or get more information:

- Visit electoralcommission.org.uk/voter, or
- Call our helpline on **0800 328 0280**

Applying for an Anonymous Elector's Document

If you are an anonymous voter and you want to vote at a polling station in a particular election, you will need to apply for an Anonymous Elector's Document by 5pm, six working days before the date of that election.

You should apply as soon as possible in case your local Electoral Registration Officer needs to check any details with you.

If you are already registered as an anonymous voter, or you are registering to vote anonymously ahead of the elections,

you will be invited to apply for an Anonymous Elector's Document by your local Electoral Registration Officer.

You can also download an application form at electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID or contact your local Electoral Registration Officer to request one. You can find their details by entering your postcode at electoralcommission.org.uk/voter.

What information do I need to give when I apply for an Anonymous Elector's Document?

When applying for an Anonymous Elector's Document, you will need to provide your:

- Name
- Address
- Date of birth
- National Insurance number

If you don't know your National Insurance number, or don't have one, you can still apply. Your local Electoral Registration Officer will contact you to request alternative proof of your identity. This could include a passport, driving licence, birth certificate, bank statement and utility bill. Your

local Electoral Registration Officer will contact you to arrange this.

If you don't have any other accepted proof of identity, you can ask someone who knows you to verify your identity by providing an attestation to support your application. Your local Electoral Registration Officer can provide more information on who can provide an attestation. Find their contact details by entering your postcode at electoralcommission.org.uk/voter.

You will also need to submit a photo with your application. The requirements for the photo are similar to the requirements for a passport photo. If you need help taking your photo, your local Electoral Registration Officer may be able to help you. They may provide an area at their office to take photos of applicants. Additional support may be available, however this will vary between areas so you should contact your local Electoral Registration Officer to find out what support they can provide.

Find out more about the requirements at electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID or call our helpline on 0800 328 0280.

What does an Anonymous Elector's Document look like?

An Anonymous Elector's Document has the words 'Elector's Document' written on the top, and does not refer to your status as being registered to vote anonymously.

An Anonymous Elector's Document includes:

- the date of issue
- your photo
- your electoral number (this is the number which will appear on the electoral register instead of your name and address)
- an appropriate identifier (which is a combination of 20 letters and numbers generated by the software used by Electoral Registration Officers).

The Anonymous Elector's Document does not have your name or address on it.

If you are registered to vote anonymously, you need to bring your Anonymous Elector's Document and your poll card when you go to the polling station. You do not need to bring any additional form of photo ID with you.

Which elections require you to show an Anonymous Elector's Document?

Voters in England, Scotland and Wales now need to show photo ID when voting in person at some elections. This requirement was proposed by the UK Government, who stated it was intended to “ensure that elections are better protected from the potential for voter fraud”, and became law when UK Parliament passed the Elections Act 2022.

This means that voters in England, Scotland and Wales who are registered to vote anonymously need to show an Anonymous Elector's Document when voting at a polling station at the following elections:

	Anonymous Elector's Document required
England	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UK Parliament general elections (from October 2023)• UK Parliament by-elections and recall petitions• Local council elections and by-elections• Police and Crime Commissioner elections
Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UK Parliament general elections (from

	<p>October 2023)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK Parliament by-elections and recall petitions
Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK Parliament general elections (from October 2023) • UK Parliament by-elections and recall petitions • Police and Crime Commissioner elections

An Anonymous Elector's Document is not required in Scottish Parliament and Senedd elections, or council elections and by-elections in Scotland and Wales.

What will happen at the polling station?

You will need to bring both your poll card and your Anonymous Elector's Document when you go to vote.

When you arrive, you will be greeted by a member of staff. They will:

1. Ask to see your poll card.
2. Find your elector number on the register

3. Check your Anonymous Elector's Document

4. Give you your ballot paper.

Staff at the polling station are there to help, and all staff will receive training on how to check photo ID, including Anonymous Elector's Documents, sensitively.

Councils are responsible for ensuring that elections are well run and that voters feel comfortable casting their vote. As part of their planning, they will have thought about what arrangements are necessary to help make polling stations safe places.

Privacy

A private area will be available so you can choose to have your Anonymous Elector's Document viewed in private. This may be a separate room, or an area separated by a privacy screen.

You can request that a female member of staff checks your Anonymous Elector's Document. This request will be granted if possible.

If you wear a face covering such as a veil, there should be a mirror available to allow you to replace it immediately once your Anonymous Elector's Document has been checked.

If you wear a face covering for medical reasons and would prefer not to remove it indoors, polling station staff may be able to check your photo ID outside. If you have any concerns you can contact your local council.

Support at the polling station

Assistive equipment

All voters have the right to vote independently and in secret. Some assistive equipment will be available at the polling station to help people to do so.

Contact your local council to find out what assistive equipment will be available and request any additional equipment you feel you need. The council will decide whether or not the requested equipment can be provided.

You can find contact details for your local council by calling our helpline on 0800 328 0280 or by entering your postcode at electoralcommission.org.uk/voter.

Other forms of support

The Presiding Officer can help you cast your vote if you would find this helpful. Polling staff are there to help, and

you should ask a member of staff if you have any questions or need assistance.

If you are disabled or feel you cannot vote at a polling station without assistance, you can bring someone with you to help. Anyone over the age of 18 can accompany a disabled person voting in:

- a UK Parliament general election, by-election or recall petition,
- Council elections in England, and
- Police and Crime Commissioner elections in England and Wales.

Anyone over the age of 16 can accompany a disabled person voting in:

- Scottish Parliament elections
- Senedd elections, and
- Council elections in Scotland and Wales.

The companion will not need to show photo ID.

If a companion will be supporting you in the polling booth, you should inform the polling staff when you arrive. Your companion will be allowed to enter the polling booth to help you vote.

What should I do if I experience issues at the polling station?

If you experience any issues when you go to vote or want to give feedback about your experience, you should contact your local council.

To find their contact details visit electoralcommission.org.uk/voter or call our helpline on 0800 328 0280.

Are there other ways to vote?

If you've registered to vote but would prefer not to vote in person there are other options.

Voting by post

You don't need to provide photo ID to vote by post.

The deadline to apply to vote by post at a particular election is 5pm, 11 working days before the date of that election.

You will receive your ballot paper in the post. Complete and return your ballot paper, ensuring you leave enough time for it to arrive at your local council by **10pm on the day of the election**. If you can't post your postal vote pack in time, you

can take it your polling station or polling place, or to your local council office on polling day.

Voting by proxy (allowing someone you trust to vote on your behalf)

The deadline to apply to vote by proxy in a particular election is **5pm, 6 working days before the date of that election.**

The person you choose to vote on your behalf will need to go to your polling station, or polling place, to vote and will need to show their proxy poll card and their own photo ID to be able to cast your vote. They will not need to show your ID when voting on your behalf.

If an emergency occurs after the deadline to apply for a proxy vote, meaning you cannot go to the polling station or polling place in person, you can apply for an emergency proxy up to 5pm on the day of the election.

For more information or to get a postal or proxy application form, visit electoralcommission.org.uk/voter or call our helpline on **0800 328 0280**.

How can I find out more?

If you have any questions or would like to obtain this information in an accessible format, go to

electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID,

call our helpline on 0800 328 0280

This booklet has been produced by the Electoral Commission.

The Electoral Commission is the independent body which oversees elections and regulated political finance in the UK. We work to promote public confidence in the democratic process and ensure its integrity.

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Am I registered to vote?		The deadline to register to vote in an election is 6 working days before that election.
Have I applied for an Anonymous Elector's Document?		The deadline to apply for an Anonymous Elector's Document for an election is 5pm, 6 working days before that election.
Have I got my Anonymous Elector's Document ready to take with me to the polling station on election day?		
Have I voted?		

Visit electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID or call our helpline on 0800 328 0280 for more information on:

- Which elections you will need to show photo ID at
- How to register to vote anonymously
- How to apply for an Anonymous Elector's Document
- What to expect at the polling station