

Free voter ID applications open You are in the section Home Posted: 16 January 2023 Free voter ID applications open Applications open today for a new form of free ID that can be used at elections. Ahead of a new voter ID requirement, the UK Government has opened the online portal for the ID, known as the Voter Authority Certificate, and local authorities will begin processing applications. Applications can be submitted through the online portal, at [voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk/](https://voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk/). Paper application forms are also available from local authorities. Applicants must be registered to vote, and will need to provide their date of birth, National Insurance number and a photograph with their application. Local elections are taking place across England on 4 May, and those intending to vote at a polling station will need to show photo ID to receive a ballot paper. The deadline to apply for a certificate before the May elections will be 5pm on Tuesday 25 April. Those that have an accepted form of ID do not need to apply for a certificate. Accepted forms of ID at polling stations include a UK, European Economic Area (EEA) or Commonwealth passport; a UK or EEA drivers' licence; and some concessionary travel passes, such as an older person's bus pass or an Oyster 60+ card. Voters will be able to use expired ID if they are still recognisable from the photo. Ailsa Irvine, Director of Electoral Administration at the Electoral Commission, said: "The availability of free ID is important to maintaining the accessibility of elections. We are calling on all voters to check whether they have an accepted form of ID, and if not, to apply for the certificate. "We know from research that the vast majority of people already have the ID they need. Those voters only need to remember to bring it with them on polling day. However, anyone who doesn't currently have photo ID can now apply for free voter ID." Earlier this month the Commission launched its public awareness campaign urging voters across England to make sure they are ready for the new voter ID requirement. More information can be found on its website, at [www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id](https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id). The Commission is working with local authorities and civil society organisations to support those less likely to have an accepted form of ID, so that they are aware of the free ID and apply in time. It has created a wide range of resources, including guides for staff and volunteers, posters, leaflets, and social media content. Ends Spokespeople are available for interview on the Commission's public awareness campaign. For more information contact Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, out of office hours 07789 920 414, or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) Notes to Editors The requirement to show photo ID at the polling station is a new requirement, introduced by the UK Government's Elections Act which was passed last year. From May, voters will need to show photo ID before voting in local council elections in England, parliamentary by-elections, and police and crime commissioner elections in England and Wales. From October 2023, photo ID will be needed at UK parliamentary general elections. It will not be a requirement at local elections in Scotland or Wales, or elections to the Scottish Parliament or Senedd. The requirement already exists in Northern Ireland. To apply for a Voter Authority Certificate, voters will need to provide a photo, their full name, date of birth, the address at which they are registered to vote and their National Insurance number. The UK Government's Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities is responsible for the new voter ID policy and for the free voter ID online application system. Enquiries relating to the application system or the policy itself should be directed to the Department. The Electoral Commission is responsible for ensuring voters are aware of the new voter ID requirement, and for supporting local authorities with the process. We are available

to answer questions related to the public awareness campaign. Returning Officers and their teams are responsible for implementing the voter ID policy at the local level. From 4 May 2023, voters in England will need to show photo ID to vote at polling stations in some elections. This will apply to: Local elections Police and Crime Commissioner elections UK parliamentary by-elections Recall petitions From October 2023 it will also apply to UK General elections. Related content Register to vote All you need to register to vote is 5 minutes and your National Insurance number. Our Commissioners Donations and loans Find out about donations and loans to a political party, individual or other organisation Our Executive Team Meet our Executive Team, and find out more about them