

Voter registration campaigning: is it regulated? | Electoral Commission Search  
Voter registration campaigning: is it regulated? You are in the section Home  
First published: 1 March 2021 Last updated: 3 March 2021 Voter registration  
campaigning: is it regulated? Ahead of elections, lots of individuals and  
organisations run campaigns to encourage people to register to vote or how to use  
their vote in the election. Each year these campaigns make a really important  
contribution to getting as many of eligible people as possible on the electoral  
registers, supporting the work done by local authorities, political parties and by  
us. While most of these campaigns will not be regulated, in some cases there may be  
rules that apply, including on how much you can spend on your activities. This will  
depend on the types of activities you are carrying out and what other people may  
think when they look at your campaign. We want to make sure you have the right  
information to ensure you stay within the rules. This page provides an overview of  
the rules and when they might apply to your voter registration campaign. Content What  
are the political finance rules? The rules around political finance are an essential  
part of our election laws and are designed to support public confidence in the  
integrity of the poll. This includes providing transparency about who is spending  
money to influence the way that people vote, and what they are spending that money  
on. An important part of the rules relates to 'non-party campaigners'. What is a non-  
party campaigner? 'Non-party campaigners' is the term used for individuals and  
organisations that campaign around elections but do not stand as political parties or  
candidates. This might include anything from companies or charities to other less  
formal groups of people or even individuals. There are specific rules on how much  
these campaigners can spend on regulated activities around an election, and above  
certain amounts of spending they need to formally register with us. Whether a  
campaign is regulated will depend on the facts in each individual case. To decide if  
an activity is regulated we apply two tests: The Purpose test: Is someone likely to  
think the activity is influencing voters to vote in a particular way? What is the  
content, tone, timing, and is there a call to action? The Public test: Is the  
activity aimed at the general public? What do I need to consider about my own  
campaign? Encouraging people to vote or register to vote are not regulated activities  
because they alone will not meet the purpose test – a reasonable person is unlikely  
to view these activities as influencing voters to vote in a particular way. However,  
in cases where your activities go beyond a simple voter registration or voter  
awareness campaign, you will need to consider where these additional activities meet  
the non-party campaigner tests. The intention or aim of the activity is not  
important, instead it is important to consider what a reasonable person would think  
when they look at the campaign. This is assessed through the purpose and public tests  
as mentioned above. Whether a campaign is regulated will depend on the facts in each  
individual case. You should read Non-party campaigners: Where to start to help you  
decide whether your campaign falls within the rules. You can also contact us for  
advice on your campaign. If your campaign does fall within the rules, this doesn't  
mean that you cannot do what you were planning, just that there may be a limit to  
what you can spend, and you may have to report information about what you did after  
the election. These rules are an important part of the transparency that exists in  
our elections, and exist to ensure people can be confident about how they are run.  
Further useful information for your voter registration campaign You should make sure  
you and your campaigners follow the Code of Conduct for campaigners in Great Britain  
. This Code sets out what is, and is not, considered acceptable behaviour in the  
community and at polling stations. If you are running a voter registration campaign,

take a look at our democratic engagement resources which you can use and share with voters in your community. People can register online or download application forms from GOV.UK . about who can register You can also help voters with information about postal and proxy voting. Find information and download our absent voting application forms If completed registration or absent vote applications are given to you or your campaigners these should be sent on unaltered to the Electoral Registration Officer within two working days of receipt. These applications must be received by the Electoral Registration Officer by the relevant statutory deadline. There are separate deadlines for registering to vote and registering to vote by post or by proxy. View these deadlines and find the contact details for electoral registration teams .