

Polling Day

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Polling day is always on a Saturday and must be at least 33 days after the issue of the writs. For the 2001 federal election, polling day was Saturday 10 November 2001.

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Polling Places



see related statistics

General Information

☐ [Polling Places](#)

At the 2001 federal election, there were 7,703 polling places operating on polling day. They were set up mainly in schools or community halls with the DRO in each division having selected the premises as part of their election preparations.

As far as practicable, and given the limited notice of an election, DROs select available buildings which have wheelchair access. All polling places were advertised in major newspapers on the Friday before polling day and the places with full wheelchair access and access with assistance were identified. A list of polling places for the 2001 federal election was also published on the AEC website.

Polling places were open between the hours of 8am and 6pm.

Most polling places depending on size, were staffed by the following people:

- an Officer in Charge (OIC)
- a Second in Charge (2IC) at large polling places
- an Inquiry officer
- a declaration vote issuing officer
- ordinary vote issuing officers
- a ballot box guard, and
- a queue controller

The doors to the polling places shut at 6pm sharp. Electors inside at closing time were able to complete their vote but no one else was able to enter to vote.

The majority of electors cast an ordinary vote in the 2001 federal election. In addition, interstate polling places were available at a number of locations for electors not in their home State or Territory to cast their vote on polling day.

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How-to-Vote Cards

Walking towards the entrance of a polling place, electors are usually offered how-to-vote cards by political party workers and representatives of other candidates. Electors are not required to accept these cards and by law these workers must remain six metres away from the entrance of the polling place.

The how-to-vote cards show how particular candidates would like electors to fill in their ballot papers and electors are able to take a card in to vote with them. Electors may choose to ignore the cards if they wish.

Issuing of Ballot Papers

Each elector was asked the following three questions by a polling official before they were issued with their ballot papers:

1. What is your full name?
2. What is your address?
3. Have you voted before in this election?

The official then placed a mark next to the elector's name on the Certified List, initialled the ballot papers and handed them to the elector.

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Each elector was issued with one green ballot paper for the House of Representatives and one white ballot paper for the Senate.

Each elector then went alone to a voting screen to mark their ballot papers in privacy. Under the Act the AEC must provide separate voting compartments to ensure the secrecy of the vote. Each voting compartment is provided with a pencil but electors may use their own pen if they wish.

The elector then folds their completed ballot papers and places each ballot paper into a ballot box.

The polling place in Australia that issued the most votes in 2001 was in Wodonga in the division of Indi (Victoria). It issued 7,746 votes on polling day.

Declaration votes

In addition to issuing ordinary votes, a declaration officer at each polling place issues absent and provisional votes during the day. Electors casting these types of votes are required to fill in a declaration envelope that they put their completed ballot papers into before they are put into the ballot box.

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Scrutineers During Polling

Candidates are not permitted to take part in the actual conduct of an election. However, they may appoint scrutineers as personal representatives to observe both the voting and the counting of votes at every polling place.



Polling officials sorting out ballot papers after the close of polls. Scrutineers observe in the background.