



## Information for Justices of the Peace

This guide is for Justices of the Peace who are appointed by a Returning Officer at the 2020 general election and referendums.

New Zealand has a robust and trustworthy electoral system. Justices of the Peace (JPs) play an important role in maintaining its integrity.

## Roles and responsibilities

JPs are appointed to act as independent observers of the voting process. If a JP observes anything that is of concern to them, they should not intervene, but should report the matter to the Advance Voting Team Manager or Returning Officer as soon as possible.

JPs accompany voting teams in rest homes and are required to be present at the official count. Due to COVID-19 teams will not be visiting hospitals. Family, friends or an electoral official will be able to provide takeaway voting papers for voters in hospital.

## During the voting period

A JP may be asked to accompany a voting team when they visit rest homes to issue advance votes.

JPs must follow the instructions of the Advance Voting Team Manager and any requirements of the facility, including all hygiene requirements such as sanitising hands.

If required by the facility or if requested, the Team Manager will have PPE supplies for the issuing team and the JP.

The JP is not a member of the issuing team and is not permitted to issue votes or handle EasyVote cards. Their role is to:

- observe the process
- ensure voter secrecy and that rights of privacy and protection from undue influence are maintained.

JPs accompanying voting teams in this observer role should not assist voters unless a voter asks them to. A JP should spend no longer than 15 minutes helping any one person.

JPs must not blog or otherwise communicate via social media about what is happening during voting.

The Advance Voting Team Manager will provide a briefing before the start of vote issuing explaining the processes such as requirements to sign in/sign out of the rest home, health and safety, hygiene and physical distancing requirements.

## During the official count

A JP must be present throughout the official count of election and referendum votes at the electorate headquarters to:

1. Observe the progress of the count.
2. Initial the preliminary results worksheet and any amendment made for each voting place.
3. Sign certificates of results for each voting place as each count is completed.
4. Certify the progress of the count at the end of each day by signing the official notification certificates of the results for the electorate and referendums.

The Returning Officer or their delegate will provide an induction, explaining the requirement to sign in/sign out of headquarters every day, health and safety, hygiene and physical distancing requirements and security.



## Appointment of Justices of the Peace

Returning Officers will contact their local Justices Association to obtain names of JPs who are available during the election period and willing to carry out the role.

JPs will be invited by the Returning Officer to assist with the election process. They will also receive a fee for their services.

A person who has been appointed to serve as a JP at the general election and referendums cannot be employed to work as an electoral official at the same election.

Although they are not employees and are carrying out their role as independent observer, a fee of \$23.54 per hour will be paid to JPs in recognition of the valuable service they provide.

JPs accompanying vote issuing teams or at the official count will be given a timesheet to complete.



### For more information:

- Visit [vote.nz](https://www.vote.nz) and [elections.nz](https://www.elections.nz)
- Call **0800 36 76 56**