

How to apply

All you have to do is fill in an application form. Just give us your details and tell us how long you want your postal vote to last.

You can arrange a postal vote for:

- a **single election**,
 - a **set period** (like a year or two if you are a student or regularly working away from home),
- or
- **permanently** (a ballot paper will automatically be sent to you whenever there is an election until you tell us otherwise).

Q. When do I need to apply?

A. You can apply now, you don't have to wait until an election takes place. However, the last time to apply is 5.00pm, on the 11th working day before election day.

Q. What happens when you get my application?

A. We check you are on the register and that your form is filled in correctly. Your name is added to the postal voters list, and we write to tell you this. If there is a problem we will get in touch with you.

Q. Why do I need to give my date of birth and signature to get a postal vote?

A. This is for voting security. When you vote you will also give your date of birth and signature on a Postal Voting Statement. We compare these to your original application to make sure it is you who is voting. Giving this information will not affect the secrecy of your vote.

If you cannot sign because of a disability you can contact Electoral Services to get an exemption

Q. When will you send me my ballot paper?

A. We will send out ballot papers as soon as the candidates are nominated and ballot papers have been printed. Usually, the first batch will be sent about 1½ to 2 weeks before election day.

Q. Can you send my ballot paper overseas?

A. We can, but we cannot guarantee you will have enough time to receive it and post it back to us. We recommend you appoint a 'proxy' in the UK to vote for you. Please contact Electoral Services for more advice.

Q. What happens if I don't get, or lose, my postal vote?

A. If your ballot paper has not arrived by four days before election day, or you lose or spoil it, please contact Electoral Services. You must do this before 5.00pm on election day. We can arrange a replacement, but we will need proof of your identity.

Q. Do I have to pay the postage for my postal vote?

A. No, there is a pre-paid envelope if you are posting back in the UK. If you are posting from overseas you have to use your own stamps.

Q. When does my postal vote have to reach you?

A. Before polling stations close on election day (at 10.00pm). Postal votes that reach us after this time are not counted, even if they are postmarked before election day. If you think you don't have time to post back to us, your postal vote can be handed in at the Electoral Services office or any polling station in your electoral area.

Q. Can I apply for a proxy vote?

A. Yes, but please contact Electoral Services for the proper form. However, you will need to give us a reason, and you may need a supporter such as your doctor or employer.

Helpline 020 8753 4466

(including Typetalk) Monday to Friday 8.00am to 8.00pm

If you find it difficult to read this form

we can send you a large print version.

Please ring the helpline.

How to contact us

Write or visit: Electoral Services,
Hammersmith Town Hall, King Street,
London W6 9JU

Fax: 020 8753 2007 or 020 8753 2229

Email: electoral.services@lbhf.gov.uk