



2016 local elections FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions relating to the Hamilton City Council elections

General Information

Q1 <i>When is the next Hamilton City Council election?</i>	A	Election day is Saturday 8 October 2016 and voting closes at midday on that day. The voting period starts on Friday 16 September 2016.
Q2 <i>Who is running the election?</i>	A	The electoral officer has full responsibility for running the election.
Q3 <i>What is the name of the electoral officer?</i>	A	<p>The electoral officer is:</p> <p>(until 1 July 2016) Jude Pani, Democracy Manager Elections Office, Municipal Buildings, Garden Place, Hamilton Phone: 07 838 6699 Email: jude.pani@hcc.govt.nz</p> <p>The deputy electoral officer is:</p> <p>Dale Ofsoske, Independent Election Services Ltd Level 2, 198 Federal Street, Auckland Phone: 0800 922 822 Email: dale.ofsoske@electionservices.co.nz</p>
Q4 <i>What type of electoral system is used?</i>	A	The FPP (first past the post) electoral system is used for the Hamilton City Council and the Waikato Regional Council and the STV (single transferable voting) electoral system is used for the Waikato District Health Board.
Q5 <i>What issues (elections) can we vote for?</i>	A	Electors will be able to vote for the Mayor, Ward Councillors (6 from the East Ward and 6 from the West Ward), Waikato Regional Council Members and Waikato District Health Board Members.
Q6 <i>What is the role of the Mayor and Councillors?</i>	A	<p>The Mayor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• presides at Council meetings;• attends and participates at meetings of committees, briefings and working parties;• reads agenda and other materials before meetings;• provides a leadership role to Councillor activity;• speaks on behalf of the Council;• represents the Council on related organisations, where appointed;• attends to complaints and enquiries from members of the public;• presides at civic ceremonies;• hosts visiting groups, including overseas delegations;• attends and speaks at local functions, sometimes opening them;• declaring a state of civil defence emergency in the district if

the need arises.

Councillors:

- participate in strategic and long-term planning for the whole district;
 - develop policy across a wide range of activities and services;
 - represent the district at functions as required;
 - review and develop bylaws for the district;
 - advocate on a wide range of issues;
 - coordinate and form partnerships with other spheres of government and other agencies;
 - participate in the appointment and performance review of the Chief Executive;
 - act on all these matters within a legislative and regulatory framework, and setting a budget and rates;
 - monitor the performance of the Council organisation.
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Candidates

Q7 *I want to be a candidate in these elections. What do I need to do?*

A You must be a New Zealand citizen and your name must be on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll (anywhere in New Zealand).

You will need to have two electors registered in the area of the election you are standing for to nominate you – e.g. if you stand for the East Ward, the nominators will need to be registered within that ward. (Note the candidate does not need to reside in the area in which he/she is standing, but will need to disclose that fact in his/her candidate profile statement).

The nominators must also be on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll at the address they are listed on the nomination paper (which must be in the area that they are nominating the person for).

Nominations open on Friday 15 July 2016. If you would like a nomination paper and candidate information handbook sent out, please contact the Elections Office closer to this date. Nomination papers will also be available on Council's website (www.hamilton.govt.nz) from 15 July 2016, with the candidate information booklet available in May 2016.

Candidate campaigning can commence any time prior to the election (no time restriction), but any expenditure made, within or outside the three month applicable period before election day, must be accounted for.

Q8 *How much will it cost me to stand?*

A You will need to pay a nomination deposit of \$200 GST inclusive. This deposit applies to each issue (election) you stand for.

Your nomination deposit can be paid by cash, cheque, EPTPOS or electronic bank transfer. However, if you pay the deposit by cheque and if it is dishonoured after nominations close, your nomination will not be accepted.

If you poll greater than 25% of the lowest polling successful candidate (for FPP elections) or more than 25% of the final quota as determined by the last iteration (for STV elections) you will receive your nomination deposit back.

Your nomination must be received by the close of nominations (12 noon on Friday 12 August 2016).

Q9 What qualifications and experience do I need?

A Nothing formal. Elected members come from all walks of life and generally have a will/desire to serve the community.

Q10 Does a criminal record affect a person standing as a Council candidate?

A No, not for the Hamilton City Council elections. For the Waikato District Health Board election, a criminal record may affect your candidacy.

Q11 How long is the term of the elected member?

A Three years.

Q12 Do I need to be resident in the area I am standing for?

A No, but you must be on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll (anywhere in New Zealand) and be a New Zealand citizen. You will however need to disclose whether or not you reside in the area you are standing for in the candidate profile statement.

The two people who nominate you must be on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll within the area you are standing for.

Q13 How many positions can I stand for?

A You can stand for Mayor and a Ward Councillor, but if you are elected to more than one position, you take the highest ranked position.

You can also stand for the Waikato District Health Board, but you cannot stand for more than one district health board in New Zealand.

You cannot stand for both the Hamilton City Council and the Waikato Regional Council.

Q14 How much can I spend on my campaign?

A There is a limit on what you can spend on your campaign and it relates to the population of the area you are standing for.

The maximum amount that can be spent by a candidate cannot exceed the limits set out below:

Local government area population	Expenditure limit
Up to 4,999	\$3,500
5,000 – 9,999	\$7,000
10,000 – 19,999	\$14,000
20,000 – 39,999	\$20,000
40,000 – 59,999	\$30,000

60,000 – 79,999	\$40,000
80,000 – 99,999	\$50,000
100,000 – 149,999	\$55,000
150,000 – 249,999	\$60,000
250,000 – 999,999	\$70,000
1,000,000 or more	\$100,000*

* plus 50 cents for each elector

The populations for each ward (as at June 2015) and respective expenditure limits are:

Ward	Population	Limit
East	82,400	\$50,000
West	74,500	\$40,000

If you stand for more than one position, the amount you can spend is the highest amount for **one** position. You cannot add positions together to allow you to spend more than the limit.

All candidates are required to lodge an electoral donations and expenses return within 55 days after the day on which the successful candidates are declared to be elected.

If a candidate is outside New Zealand on this day, the return must be filed within 76 days after election result day.

If a return is not submitted within the required time period, the non-return will be advised to the New Zealand Police for enforcement.

The return needs to be received before a candidate nomination deposit is refunded if appropriate.

Enrolment

Q15 Where can I view the electoral roll that will be used for this election? **A** The preliminary electoral roll will be available for public inspection for a one-month period from Friday 15 July 2016 to Friday 12 August 2016.

The preliminary electoral roll will be available for inspection at:

- Elections Office, Municipal Building, Garden Place, Hamilton
 - all Council libraries (Central, Chartwell, Dinsdale, Glenview, Hillcrest, St Andrews)
 - Registrar of Electors, 534 Anglesea Street, Hamilton
 - Citizens Advice Bureaux, 55 Victoria Street and 70 Kent Street, Hamilton
 - Kirkiroa Marae, 180 Dey Street, Hamilton
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Q16 How do I enrol to vote in these elections?

A Is this your main place of residence? → **Yes**

Have you lived at your current address for more than one month?
→ **Yes**

Are you on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll at an address in the Hamilton City Council area? → **Yes**

You will automatically appear on the electoral roll that is used for these elections.

or

Is this your main place of residence? → **Yes**

Are you on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll at an address in the Hamilton City Council area? → **No or Don't Know**

You need to complete an enrolment form for this. You can either:

- enrol online at www.elections.org.nz
- ring 0800 36 76 56
- send your name and address to Freetext 3676
- download a form at www.elections.org.nz
- pick a form up at your local New Zealand Post Shop

Is this your main place of residence? → **No**

Are you on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll at an address in another district? → **Yes**

If you own a property in this district and it is not your main residence you may be able to enrol as a non-resident ratepayer elector. (Refer to ratepayer enrolment advice in Q21).

Q17 I am a student and spend my time in different places. Where should I enrol?

A You should enrol where you spend the greater part of your time.

Q18 I am a New Zealand Māori; do I need to enrol on the Māori roll?

A Not necessarily. If you are enrolling for the first time you can decide whether you want to go on the Parliamentary Māori Electoral Roll or the Parliamentary General Electoral Roll by signing the appropriate panel on the parliamentary elector enrolment form.

However, if you have already made that choice you will have to wait until the next Māori Option period to change, which occurs following the next census, likely in 2018/19. The last Māori Option period was 25 March to 24 July 2013.

Q19 How do I know whether I am enrolled?

A The Electoral Commission will be undertaking a roll update campaign at the end of June 2016 for the Parliamentary Electoral Roll which forms the basis of the electoral roll for the Hamilton City Council elections.

If you do not receive a letter in the post during late June/early July 2016 the chances are you are not enrolled or your details are incorrect. You will then need to complete a Parliamentary Electoral

Roll enrolment form.

You can check to see if you are enrolled at www.elections.org.nz or by phoning 0800 36 76 56.

Q20 I turn 18 on election day. Can I vote?

A Yes, but you need to make sure you have enrolled which you can do provisionally from the age of 17 and it automatically changes when you turn 18.

You will also need to apply for a special vote during the voting period (Friday 16 September 2016 to 12 noon, Saturday 8 October 2016).

For special vote availability, see Q37.

Q21 We own a business in the Hamilton City Council area and pay rates, but we don't live in the Hamilton City Council area – do we get a say in the Hamilton City Council elections?

A Yes, subject to being eligible as a non-resident ratepayer elector and becoming enrolled.

A non-resident ratepayer enrolment form is available:

- online (www.elections.org.nz);
- or by phoning 0800 922 822.

The non-resident ratepayer enrolment form should be returned to the Elections Office by 12 August 2016 and absolutely no later than 7 October 2016 in order to vote.

If it is after Friday 12 August 2016, a special voting document will need to be requested and will be issued on 16 September 2016, the start of the voting period.

Q22 I own a property in the Hamilton City Council area but it is not my fulltime residence. How do I get on the Ratepayer Electoral Roll?

A Is your name on the rates notice? → **Yes**

You may be eligible to be on the ratepayer electoral roll. Contact the Elections Office on 0800 922 822 and request a ratepayer enrolment form. This should be returned to the Elections Office by 12 August 2016 and absolutely no later than 7 October 2016 in order to vote. If it is after Friday 12 August 2016, a special voting document will need to be requested and will be issued on 16 September 2016, the start of the voting period.

If it is easier you can call at a special voting venue during the voting period (Friday 16 September 2016 to 12 noon Saturday 8 October 2016) and complete the ratepayer enrolment form and have your special vote at the same time.

For special vote availability, see Q37.

In no case does this allow you to have two votes at an election.

Is your name on the rates notice? → **No**

A You may not be eligible to be on the ratepayer electoral roll. Contact the Elections Office on 0800 922 822.

Voting

Q23 <i>Is it a postal vote and will I be sent my voting documents in the mail?</i>	A All local authority elections will be conducted by postal vote. Voting documents will be delivered by NZ Post between Friday 16 September 2016 and Wednesday 21 September 2016.
Q24 <i>I got my voting document but my partner didn't receive theirs.</i>	<p>A Is it before Wednesday 21 September 2016 and I believe I am correctly registered on electoral roll? → Yes</p> <p>Please wait until the mail has been delivered on Wednesday 21 September 2016. If your voting document is not received then please call the Elections Office on 0800 922 822.</p> <p>Is it after Wednesday 21 September 2016 and I believe I am correctly registered on electoral roll? → Yes</p> <p>You will need to apply for a special vote. Please call the Elections Office on 0800 922 822. For special vote availability, see Q38.</p> <p>Is it after Wednesday 21 September 2016 and I believe I am not correctly registered on electoral roll? → No</p> <p>You will need to complete a Parliamentary Electoral Roll enrolment form. These are available at any New Zealand Post Shop, or you can enrol online at www.elections.org.nz or ring 0800 36 76 56 or send your name and address to Freetext 3676.</p> <p>You will also need to contact the Elections Office on 0800 922 822.</p>
Q25 <i>I didn't get my voting document so I called and got a special vote. Now I have two voting documents. Which one should I use?</i>	A Use the original one and destroy the special vote.
Q26 <i>I received a voting document for a member of my family (e.g. child, parent) and have Power of Attorney for that person. Can I vote for that person?</i>	A No – Power of Attorney does not apply to voting for that person.
Q27 <i>I received a voting document for a member of my family (e.g. child, parent) who does not live here. What should I do with the voting document?</i>	<p>A If they are overseas, you could fast post them to the person or destroy them if that is not practicable.</p> <p>If they are for an elderly parent who is incapable of voting please destroy them by ripping/cutting them up. You cannot vote on their behalf unless instructed by them.</p>
Q28 <i>I received a voting document that does not belong to me and I don't know this person or where this person has</i>	A Write GNA (Gone No Address) on the envelope and put it back in the mail.

gone.

Q29 *What is that barcode that I can see through the return envelope or on the front of the voting document?*

A It is a legal requirement to scan the barcode to mark the electoral roll that you have returned your vote so we can ensure that we do not receive two votes from the same person.

Q30 *How do you ensure the secrecy of my vote?*

A Returned envelopes containing a voting document cannot be opened until there is a JP present. The JP is required to sign off that the processes used by the electoral officer met the legal requirements.

Note that the voter's name is not shown on the voting document.

When the envelope is opened the only thing the electoral office is looking for is that the vote for each election is valid.

This means that for FPP elections we are making sure that the voter's intention is clear and the voter has not ticked or marked more than the number of candidates than there are vacancies.

For STV elections we make sure that no preference numbers are used more than once or omitted, (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 3, 4, 5), and that there is always a number 1 marked against a candidate's name. It should be like this: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, etc., in numerical order up to as many preferences as the voter wishes to vote for.

Q31 *Do I have to vote? I don't know any of these candidates.*

A No you don't have to vote, but we do encourage you to vote and exercise your democratic right.

You don't have to vote for all candidates or for all elections. But your vote is important because the people elected will be responsible for making decisions about what happens in your community for the next three years.

To help you get to know about the candidates:

- there may be candidate meetings being held if you wish to go and hear what policies the different candidates are advocating for;
 - there is a candidate profile booklet that comes with the voting document in which there is a photo and a statement from each candidate. This information will also be available on the Council's website (www.hamilton.govt.nz) after nominations close (expected 19 August 2016);
 - candidates may have their own website page, social media page(s), advertise in local newspapers or send out information to letterboxes in your area;
 - local newspapers are likely to cover information about the election.
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Q32 *Do I have to post my voting document back?*

A You can post it but make sure you have it in the mail by Wednesday 5 October 2016 to make sure it gets back to us in time (by 12 noon Saturday 8 October 2016).

However, you can also hand deliver your voting document to a ballot box during the voting period (Friday 16 September 2016 to 12 noon Saturday 8 October 2016).

For ballot box locations see Q37.

Q33 I have lost my return envelope.

A You can use an envelope of your own and put the return address and Freepost number on it. (You will not need to put a stamp on the envelope if you write the Freepost number on the envelope).

Freepost number 4170
The Elections Office
Hamilton City Council
PO Box 5135
Wellesley Street
Auckland 1141

Q34 I am on the Unpublished Parliamentary Roll and I want a special vote please.

A You will need to call the Elections Office on 0800 922 822 for a special vote to be sent.

Q35 I didn't receive my voting document; how do I obtain a special vote?

A Are you on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll for the address you want to vote for?
→ **Yes**

You will need to apply for a special vote. Please call the Elections Office on 0800 922 822 or visit one of the special voting venues listed in Q37.

Are you on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll for the address you want to vote for?

→ **No/Don't Know**

If you are not enrolled or not enrolled correctly on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll, you will need to complete an enrolment form for this. You can pick one up at any New Zealand Post Shop, or you can enrol online at www.elections.org.nz or ring 0800 36 76 56 or send your name and address to Freetext 3676. This form needs to be with the Registrar of Electors before close of business Friday 7 October 2016.

You will also need to contact the Elections Office on 0800 922 822 for a special vote.

For special vote availability, see Q37.

Q36 I spoiled my voting documents / I have made a mistake on my documents. What can I do?

A If you can amend it so that your voting intention is clear, then do so.

If necessary, we can issue you with a special voting document (phone the Elections Office on 0800 922 822), but this will take time and require you to complete a declaration.

Q37 Where can I have a special vote?

A Special votes can be obtained from:

- Elections Office, Municipal Building, Garden Place, Hamilton
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all Council libraries (Central, Chartwell, Dinsdale, Glenview, Hillcrest, St Andrews) • the Anglesea Street Council entrance drive through voting drop off on the last day • or by phoning 0800 922 822.
Q38	<i>I am going away and will not be here when the voting documents are posted out.</i>	A You will need to contact the Elections Office on 0800 922 822 for a special vote.
Q39	<i>Do I have to vote for all the candidates for any issue? If I don't vote for all the candidates or all the issues on my voting document, will all my votes be informal?</i>	<p>A Under FPP you can vote for as many candidates as you want to but not more than the number of positions available on the voting document. So if you are electing six Councillors then you can vote for up to six candidates. Remember, for FPP you tick the candidates you want to elect.</p> <p>With STV you can vote for all or as many candidates as you wish but these must be in order of your preference and no number can be repeated. Remember for STV, you rank the candidates you want to elect from number 1 onwards.</p> <p>You can decide not to vote for one or more of the different elections on your voting document. This does not invalidate votes for other elections on your voting document.</p>
40	<i>Why can't I vote for a certain candidate who is standing for a different ward, or other issue?</i>	A You can only vote for the elections relevant to the area in which you live. You cannot vote for a candidate who is standing in another ward because you are not an elector of that other ward.
Q41	<i>My partner's paper and mine are different and there are more/less things to vote for. Why is the list of candidates different?</i>	A You will need to call the Elections Office on 0800 922 822.
Q42	<i>I have received two voting documents.</i>	A You will need to call the Elections Office on 0800 922 822.
Q43	<i>Do all the staff working on the election know who I voted for?</i>	A No, your vote remains secret under the required separate roll scrutiny and vote counting procedures and your name does not appear on the voting document.
Q44	<i>Can I help someone fill out their voting document?</i>	<p>A Under the Local Electoral Act 2001, you cannot interfere or influence any person as to how they can vote.</p> <p>If authorised by a voter who is physically impaired, visually impaired or for whom English is a second language, a person can assist them to vote as directed by the voter.</p>
Q45	<i>What happens to all the voting documents after the elections?</i>	A They are delivered to the Hamilton District Court and kept for 21 days so that the Court can access them should there be any application for a recount or petition for inquiry.

After 21 days, the Court is responsible for destroying them.

Q46 Do I get a vote for the district health board? **A** Yes, if you are a resident elector. Ratepayer electors cannot vote for the district health board election.

Q47 What is FPP and how do I vote in an FPP election? **A** FPP stands for first past the post voting system and is used for the Hamilton City Council and the Waikato Regional Council elections.

The candidate or candidates that gets the most votes wins.

You should mark those you want to vote for with a tick in the circle. Do not vote for more than the number of candidates shown in the instructions.

Q48 What is STV and how do I vote in an STV election? **A** STV is used only for the Waikato District Health Board election only.

STV stands for single transferable voting and is a preferential system of voting where you can rank as few or as many candidates as you like. It is a single vote which can be transferred between candidates to ensure the vote contributes to the election of at least one candidate and is not wasted. If a popular candidate does not need all the votes he or she receives, a proportion is transferred to the voter's next preference. On the other hand, if a candidate is not popular and receives few votes, those votes are transferred to a voter's next preference.

For more information about STV, go to www.stv.govt.nz. To exercise a STV vote, start by writing the number 1 in the box next to the candidate you **most** want to be elected. Write the number 2 next to your **second most** preferred candidate and so on 3, 4, 5 etc.

You can write as many preferences or as few as you like up to however many candidates are standing for that election.

You must write the number 1 for your vote to be counted. Do not write the same number more than once, e.g., 1, 2, 3, 3, 4, 5, and do not miss a number from your preferences, e.g., 1, 2, 4, 5, 6.

Election Results

Q49 When will we know the results of the election? **A** Progress results will be announced as soon as practicable after 12 noon on Saturday 8 October 2016 (expected around 2pm).

Preliminary results will be announced late on Saturday night once all votes received at the Elections Office (up until 12 noon) have been delivered to the vote processing centre in Auckland and processed.

The official results will be announced when special votes have been checked, expected to be Thursday 13 October 2016.

Q50 How will I find out?

Candidates

A Will be advised as soon as practicable after the progress results and

preliminary results are known. This will be by email.

Voters

- A** Progress and preliminary results will be released to the media and placed on Council's website (www.hamilton.govt.nz) as soon as practicable after noon on Saturday 8 October 2016.

Q51 *What do I need to do if I want to challenge the results of the election?*

- A** Under legislation a candidate can challenge the declaration of results through either a judicial recount or a judicial inquiry. A candidate will have to provide reasons for the challenge and a deposit of \$750 with the application to the Hamilton District Court.

A candidate may wish to call the Elections Office on 0800 922 822 to discuss this.

Members

Q52 *When do elected members take up their roles?*

- A** Elected members take up office the day after the official result has been declared by public notice. However, members cannot act until they have sworn the oath of office which is usually at the first meeting of the Council or community board. This first meeting is usually held as soon as practicable after the final election results are known.

District health board members take up office 58 days after election day (Monday 5 December 2016).

Q53 *Who are elected members responsible to?*

- A** Ultimately the elected members final responsibility is to the local community. The Minister of Local Government and the Auditor-General do have a role in ensuring that Council follows the law.

All district health board members are accountable to the Minister of Health.

Q54 *Do elected members get paid and if so how much?*

- A** This is set by the Remuneration Authority and from 1 July 2016 is as follows:

Mayor – \$156,412
Deputy Mayor – \$91,573
Committee Chairperson – \$84,529
Deputy Committee Chairperson – \$77,485
Councillor – \$70,441

Some expenses are also reimbursed.

District health board members are paid on the basis of the Cabinet Fees framework.

Q55 *Would being an elected member take up much time?*

- A** Being an elected member is a busy job that often involves meetings, events and speaking with community members outside of normal

business hours. Flexibility and the ability to prioritise and manage time effectively are essential. This includes balancing a high volume of reading, paperwork and emails with a schedule of meetings and public commitments.

As a consequence, the Mayor and Councillors are considered fulltime jobs.

Q56 How many elected members are there?

- A** Elections are being held for:
- Mayor
 - Councillors – 12 (elected from 2 wards)
 - Waikato Regional Council Members – 4 from the Hamilton Constituency and 1 from the Nga Hau e Wha Māori Constituency
 - Waikato District Health Board Members – 7.

Complaints

Q57 I have a complaint about electoral signage.

- A** Council's Guide to Election Signs is located on the Hamilton City Council's website and Section 12 of the Candidate Booklet <http://www.hamilton.govt.nz/our-council/elections2016/Pages/2016%20HCC%20Candidate%20Booklet.pdf>

The signs don't have the required authorisation on them.

- A** You will need to call the Council's customer service team on telephone 07 838 6699 or email to: customerservice@hcc.govt.nz.

The signs have been pulled over or damaged.

- A** You will need to call the Council's customer service team on telephone 07 838 6699 or email to: customerservice@hcc.govt.nz.

The signs are bigger than they should be.

- A** You will need to call the Council's customer service team on telephone 07 838 6699 or email to: customerservice@hcc.govt.nz.

What locations can signs be erected?

- A** Council's Guide to Election Signs is located on the Hamilton City Council's website and Section 12 of the Candidate Booklet <http://www.hamilton.govt.nz/our-council/elections2016/Pages/2016%20HCC%20Candidate%20Booklet.pdf>

When can they be erected and when must they be pulled down?

- A** Election signs can only be displayed during the period commencing three months prior to election day and must be removed before midnight on the day before election day – i.e. from Friday 8 July 2016 until Midnight Friday 7 October 2016.
-