

# Guidance for providing assistance to voters



## Who can provide assistance to voters?

A voter can ask any person to assist them. This person could be a friend, relative, scrutineer or a staff member at a facility where they are voting.

If a voter does not have someone that can assist them, a polling official can provide assistance.

If a polling official is providing assistance and a scrutineer is at the polling place, the scrutineer must be able to hear the assistance being provided. This includes watching a polling official complete ballot papers on behalf of the voter.

## How can I provide assistance?

When assisting someone, you can:

- read materials
- fill out forms under the direction of the person you are helping
- explain the process
- translate information as closely as possible
- provide factual information that may assist the voter without bias
- fill out the ballot paper based on the voter's instructions whilst they are present
- return forms or postal votes to the AEC on behalf of the voter.

## Assisting with postal voting

A voter may choose someone (such as a friend or family member) to help them complete the ballot paper and the postal vote certificate.

Voters must sign the envelope or make a mark as a signature. No one, including a power of attorney, can sign for a voter.

## Assisting in another language

If you provide assistance in a language other than English, you are required to translate the information as closely as possible to prevent misinterpretation.

There are resources available to support culturally and linguistically diverse voters. These include a flip book with simple instructions on how to complete ballot papers in 34 languages and sample ballot papers.

There are 19 dedicated language-specific phone numbers, and another general line to access an interpreter for other languages (refer list below). These services can be used by any voter requiring assistance in a language other than English.

## What can't I do when providing assistance?

- You cannot make a voting decision on someone's behalf.
- You cannot influence their decision when providing information or completing ballot papers with them.
- You cannot sign for a voter, even if you have power of attorney.
- You cannot take away a voter's ballot papers and postal voting envelope and fill it out for them.

### Influencing a vote is an offence

A person who is an owner or a staff member of a hospital or a nursing home **must not intentionally influence the vote of an elector**. Legal penalties may apply to anyone found guilty of this offence.

## Assistance if you have a hearing or speech impairment

Voters who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment can contact the AEC through the National Relay Service:

- **TTY users** phone 13 36 77 and ask for 13 23 26
- **Speak and Listen** users phone 1300 555 727 and quote 13 23 26
- **Internet relay** users connect to the NRS then ask for 13 23 26

## Telephone Interpreter Services

Voters who required information in a language other than English can contact the AEC's telephone interpreter service on the numbers listed below.

**Arabic** 1300 720 132

**Burmese** 1300 290 617

**Chinese Simplified:** • **Cantonese** 1300 720 135 • **Mandarin** 1300 720 142

**Chinese Traditional:** • **Cantonese** 1300 720 135 • **Mandarin** 1300 720 142

**Croatian** 1300 720 136

**Dari** 1300 290 618

**Farsi (Persian)** 1300 290 619

**Greek** 1300 720 137

**Italian** 1300 720 138

**Khmer** 1300 720 134

**Korean** 1300 720 468

**Macedonian** 1300 720 139

**Polish** 1300 720 143

**Portuguese** 1300 720 145

**Russian** 1300 720 146

**Serbian** 1300 720 147

**Spanish** 1300 720 148

**Turkish** 1300 720 149

**Vietnamese** 1300 720 152

Voters who require assistance in other languages not serviced by a dedicated line can call **1300 720 153**.