

Scottish Parliamentary Election 2021 – register now to vote in May

People living in Scotland must register by midnight on 19 April to register to take part in the vote on Thursday 6 May.

The deadline to apply for a postal vote is 5.00pm on 6 April, and for a proxy vote the deadline is 5.00pm on 27 April.

Additional hygiene and distancing measures will be in place on polling day for voter and staff safety. If voters do not want to go to a polling place to vote they have the option of voting by post.

Anyone can apply for a postal vote and this should be done as soon as possible. People are encouraged to think about [how they are going to vote](#).

Edinburgh residents will join voters across the country to elect MSPs to represent them at Holyrood on Thursday, 6 May. While most people who registered to vote in the last UK Parliamentary General Election will still be eligible to take part in the Scottish Parliament Election in May, first time voters or anyone who has since moved house will need to make sure [they are registered](#).

On polling day there will be additional hygiene and distancing measures at polling places to keep voters and staff safe. These include a fresh pencil for each voter, protective screens for polling staff, one-way systems in some venues and limits to the number of voters in polling places at any time. If voters do not want to go to a polling place to vote they have the option of voting by post. Anyone can apply for a postal vote and this should be done as soon as possible.

Andrew Kerr, Chief Executive of the City of Edinburgh Council and Returning Officer for the Edinburgh constituencies and the Lothian Region, said: "We have experienced a real enthusiasm for taking part in the democratic process in this city over recent years and we want this to continue for the forthcoming Scottish Parliament Election.

"We're encouraging people to think now about the way they vote and make sure they're registered in plenty of time. Polling places will be safe places to vote but you may want to consider using a postal vote. More postal votes would help us reduce the impact of social distancing measures and any hesitancy among voters who don't want to attend polling stations or risk queuing. We would also suggest you apply now to make sure the application can be processed in plenty of time.

"Anyone unsure about how to register, where to vote or how to vote by post can find more information on the Council website."

People aged 16 and over and foreign citizens can register to vote in this election. Voters have a range of options for casting their ballot – in person, by post or by appointing someone they trust to vote in their place, known as a proxy vote. For those who choose to vote in person, polling stations will be following all public health guidance on 6 May.

The deadline to register to vote is midnight Monday 19 April,

to apply for a postal vote the deadline is 5.00pm on Tuesday 6 April, and for a proxy vote the deadline is 5pm on Tuesday 27 April.

Find out more about voter registration and the election, including the safety measures the council is taking to ensure polling stations are safe and covid secure, on the [Council's website](#).

