

Northumberland County Council
Elections Office FAQs

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Who can register to Vote?

You can register to vote if you are 16 years old or over and a British citizen or an Irish, qualifying Commonwealth or European Union citizen who is resident in the UK.

If you are 16 or 17, you can apply to be added to the register in advance, however you cannot vote until you are 18.

If you are a citizen of one of the below EU countries and resident in the UK, you are eligible to register to vote in UK elections.

Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria
Croatia	Cyprus	Czech Republic
Denmark	Estonia	Finland
France	Germany	Greece
Hungary	Ireland	Italy
Latvia	Lithuania	Luxembourg
Malta	Netherlands	Poland
Portugal	Romania	Slovakia
Slovenia	Spain	Sweden

To qualify, Commonwealth citizens must be resident in the UK and either have leave to remain in the UK or not require such leave. The definition of a 'Commonwealth citizen' includes citizens of British crown dependencies and British overseas territories.

Students

You can register at your home address and your term-time address, but this doesn't mean you're necessarily entitled to two votes.

[To find out further information about student voting please click here.](#)

Overseas Electors

If you are an overseas elector you can vote in UK Parliamentary elections only.

[To find out further information about voting from overseas please click here.](#)

Service Voters

You can register as a service voter if you are:

- A member of the Armed Forces
- The spouse or civil partner of someone in the Armed Forces

[To find out further information about being a service voter please click here.](#)

No Fixed Abode

You can still register to vote even if you do not have a fixed address. This may be because you are:

- A patient in a mental health hospital
- Homeless
- A merchant seaman
- Part of the gypsy or travelling community

[To find out further information about having no fixed abode please click here.](#)

Anonymous Registration

If you think your name and address being on the electoral register could affect your safety, or the safety of someone in your household, you can register to vote anonymously.

[To download an application form to vote anonymously please click here.](#)

Registering to Vote

How do I check if I'm registered?

Please contact the elections office to check if you are registered.

How to Register

The fastest and easiest way to register is online, following the below steps.

1. Click on [Register to Vote](#)
2. Fill in your name, address, date of birth and a few other details. You will also need your national insurance number, which can be found on your national insurance card, or on official paperwork, such as payslips and letters about benefits or tax credits.
3. Look out for a confirmation to say you're registered

You can also contact the elections office, to register over the phone/email you'll need the same details as above. If you'd prefer not to give your details out this way, we can send a registration form (ITR) out to your address.

What do I do if I've changed address?

If you have changed address you will need to register to vote at your new address. You can do this by clicking the link above.

How do I remove someone from the electoral register at my address?

To remove a person from your address you should contact the elections office.

Postal Voting

A postal vote application allows an elector to apply to vote by post for a particular election/ referendum, for a set period of time or for all future polls. Electors can also apply to have their postal vote pack sent to addresses in the UK or abroad.

Voting by post is an easy and convenient way of voting if an elector is unable to make the polling station on the day of an election. Whilst an elector has a postal vote in place, they are not permitted to vote at a polling station.

Postal vote application

[Click here to apply for a Postal Vote](#)

When we get your application, we record on the electoral register that you want to vote by post. You will not be allowed to vote at a polling station while you have a postal vote.

What information do I need to provide on a Postal vote application?

- First and Surname
- Address, where you are registered to vote
- How long do you want a postal vote.
- Address for ballot paper (only required if different to address where you are registered to vote).
- Your date of birth and declaration.
- Date of application

To view an postal vote application please [click here](#)

How do Postal Votes work?

You will receive a ballot paper, a postal vote statement which you have to fill in, an envelope to put the ballot paper in, and a postage-paid return envelope (not valid overseas).

Return your completed ballot paper and your postal vote statement to Northumberland County Council.

It is your responsibility to post it back in time to reach us before the close of poll on election day.

If you leave it too late to post it, you can take it on election day (before the close of poll) to the polling station in the area where you normally vote and hand it to the presiding officer.

I've received a postal vote application, but I want to vote in person.

If you have changed your mind about voting by post, or you have received a postal vote form in error, just discard the application and you can continue to vote at a polling station.

I'm unable to provide a signature

Postal vote waivers are sent to electors who are unable to sign in a consistent manner.

The information required on a postal vote waiver is the same as a postal vote application, apart from the elector does not need to declare their application with a signature and their application is to be signed by a person assisting/supporting this application.

Proxy Voting

A proxy vote application allows an elector to apply for a person to vote on their behalf at their polling station, if the person is registered to vote and it's for a type of election, they're allowed to vote in.

A person can act as a proxy for any number of close relatives. As close relative is defined as their spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild.

Proxy vote application

[To apply for a proxy vote click here](#)

What information do I need to provide on a proxy vote application?

- First and Surname
- Address, where you are registered to vote
- About your proxy (the person you have chosen to vote on your behalf).
 - Full name
 - Family relationship (if any)
 - Full address
- At which election(s) and referendum(s) do you want a proxy vote.
- Why do you want a proxy vote?
- Your date of birth and declaration.
- Date of application

How do I appoint someone to be my proxy?

You must ask a friend/family member who is over 18 years of age and is prepared to vote for you.

Emergency proxy votes

In certain circumstances, where you have an emergency that means you can't vote in person, you can apply for an emergency proxy. This must be something that you were not aware of before the normal proxy vote deadline.

You can apply for an emergency proxy vote if you are unable to vote in person until 5pm on the day of poll.

Reasons for applying for a proxy vote;

- For work reasons - the application has to be certified by your employer (or delegated employee); if self-employed by someone who knows you but is not related to you.
- For medical emergencies - the application has to be certified by a registered medical practitioner/a registered nurse, a Christian Science practitioner/the manager, warden or matron of the residential home in which the applicant lives

Letters and Forms

Invitation to Register (ITR)

Invitation to register applications (ITRs) are sent to individuals to register at their home address.

What information do I need to provide on an ITR?

- Name and Address.
- Nationality.
- If you've moved house in the last 12 months.
- Date of birth.
- National Insurance number

To view an ITR please [click here](#).

Why do I need to provide my National Insurance number/ date of birth?

We use this information to verify your identity so that you can be added to the electoral register.

Where do I find my national insurance number?

You may be able to find this on a payslip, or on official letters about taxes, pensions or benefits

What happens to my completed application?

Your completed application is processed by the election's office, and your details are verified by the Department of Working Pension.

How do I know if my application has been verified successfully?

You will receive a Confirmation letter.

How do I know if my application has failed verification?

You will receive a Documentary Evidence letter, or a Query Letter.

I'm not the occupier, I'm the landlord of the address. What do I need to do with this application?

Contact the Elections Office and we can amend the system.

I have received an Invitation to Register application, at my holiday home address. What do I need to do with this application?

If you've received an ITR at your holiday home address, and are already registered at your primary address, contact the Elections Office to update the system, you can then discard the form(s) you have received.

I do not want to appear on the electoral register.

If we have invited you to register to vote, either by post, or by email it is important that you respond. If you don't, we will send you reminders and someone may visit your home.

Documentary Evidence letter/form

Evidence request letters are sent to pending electors who have applied to be added onto the electoral register who's details have either: -

Failed DWP check, or

They are unable to provide both or either their National Insurance number or date of birth and has provided a reason to why they were unable to provide this information.

To complete their registration, they are required to provide evidence.

What evidence do I need to provide?

Type 1 (Provide ONE of these)

- Passport
- Biometric residence permit
- EEA Identity Card
- UK Photo Driving Licence
- Northern Ireland Electoral Identity Card

Type 2 (Provide THREE of these, if you can only provide one of these, also provide TWO from Type 3)

- UK Paper driving licence
- Non UK photo driving licence
- Birth certificate
- Marriage/Civil partnership certificate
- Adoption certificate
- Firearms licence
- Police bail sheet.

Type 3 (Provide FOUR of these)

- Mortgage Statement, no more than 12 months old
- Bank/Building society statement, no more than 3 months old
- Bank/Building society account opening statement, no more than 3 months old
- Credit card statement, no more than 3 months old
- Financial statement, no more than 12 months old
- Council tax statement, no more than 12 months old
- Utility bill, no more than 3 months old
- P45 or P60 statement, no more than 12 months old

- Benefit statement, no more than 12 months old
- Entitlement document from central/local government, no more than 3 months old.

How do I provide the evidence?

A clear photocopy of the relevant document(s) can be posted/emailed to the election's office, alternatively you may arrange an appointment with a member of the elections team at County Hall to present them.

What do I do if I don't have the required evidence?

If you don't have enough of the required evidence, the elections office can provide an attestation letter.

Do I have to send original documents?

No, copies or pictures are acceptable as long as they are clear and legible.

I don't want to post/email copies of my documents and information

If you don't feel comfortable posting or emailing your information, you can bring documents to County Hall. You'll need to book an appointment with the elections office to review and copy your documents.

Query letter

Query letters are sent to pending electors who have provided an incomplete application e.g. where a National Insurance number hasn't been provided.

To complete their registration, they need to provide the missing information.

What do I do if I don't know/don't have a national insurance number?

Please complete the necessary section on the form and return. The elections office will then provide you with a Documentary Evidence form to complete, so your identity can be verified that way.

Where do I find my National Insurance number?

You may be able to find this on a payslip, or on official letters about taxes, pensions or benefits.

Why do I need to provide my National Insurance number/ date of birth?

We use this information to verify your identity so that you can be added to the electoral register.

Attestation letter

An attestation letter is sent to pending electors who are unable to provide enough evidence to support the application.

As part of the attestation process a person of good standing in the community is to support the pending elector's application.

What information do I need to provide on change of name application?

- Section 1. Applicant name and address (Your name and address)
- Section 2. Your supporter details

Forename and surname

Address

Date of birth

Electoral number (this can be provided by the elections office)

Occupation

- Section 3. Supporters declaration

[Click here to view an attestation letter.](#)

Who can I ask to complete the form?

Please ask a person of good standing in the community - who is not your spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild - to complete the form in support of your application.

Change of name letter/application

Change of names letters are sent to electors who are requesting to change their name.

What information do I need to provide on change of name application?

- Section 1. Your current full name.
First and Surname
- Section 2. Your previous full name.
First and surname
Date you changed your name
- Section 3. Your address.
- Section 4. Contact details, this is optional.
- Section 5. Declaration.
Signature and today date (application date)

As part of this application you are to provide supporting evidence, which can be any of the following:-

- Marriage or civil partnership certificate
- Overseas marriage or civil partnership certificate
- Amended birth certificate
- Deed poll

Original documents aren't required, a photocopy or photograph is acceptable as long as it is clear and legible. If they do not have any of these, other documents may be acceptable as proof of the name change, the electoral services department can provide further information.

Why have I been sent this?

A request to change your name has been received by the elections department.

Do I have to send original documents?

No, photocopies or photographs of documents are acceptable as long as they are clear and legible

I don't feel comfortable posting my documents.

If you don't feel comfortable posting your information, you can email it to the elections department. If you'd prefer to, you can bring documents to County Hall. You'll need to book an appointment with the elections office to review and copy your documents.

Review letter

Review letters are sent to electors who the elections office believe are no longer residing at the address they are registered to vote from.

The review letter will state the reason to why this letter has been sent.

I have received a review letter to my old address/I have received a letter for someone who no longer lives here, what do I need to do?

There is no further action you need to take. The entry on the electoral roll will be removed within 14 days of the date on the letter.

I received a review letter, I still live at this address, why am I being removed?

Contact the Elections office, who can amend this for you.

Rejection disallowed letter

Rejection letters are sent when a pending electors application has been unsuccessful, the reason for the rejection will be stated on the letter.

No information is required to be provided on this letter, however if they believe that they should be registered at that address they can contact the elections office to discuss.

Acknowledgement of absent vote

These letters are sent to confirm an absent vote, they include the type of absent vote and the details of their absent vote, e.g

- Type of Vote – Postal, Proxy etc
- When the Vote is for – Local Government, Parliamentary
- How long the absent vote lasts – For a particular election, until further notice
- Where ballot papers will be sent to/Name of Proxy

The information on the confirmation is incorrect, how do I update this?

Contact the elections office who will be able to amend/update these details.

Confirmation of registration acknowledgement

These letters are sent out to confirm a successful application, they include the date that the elector will be added to the register from. No additional information is required from this letter.