

# Register to vote



For the forthcoming referendum on 25 May 2018, the local authority must receive your application by the following dates:

- For the supplement to the Register of Electors: Tuesday 8 May 2018
- For the supplement to the Postal Voters List: Saturday 28 April 2018
- For the supplement to the Special Voters List: Saturday 28 April 2018

## Supplement to Register of Electors

If your name is not on the Register of Electors on 15th February 2018, you may still make an application to be included in a supplement to the Register on form **RF A2**. You can make this application at any time, but in order to be included in the supplement used at an election or referendum, your application must be received by your local authority at least 14 days before polling day (Sundays, public holidays and Good Friday are not counted as days for this purpose). This form must be completed in the presence of a member of An Garda Síochána. You must bring photo identification with you.

## Supplement to the Postal Voters list

Persons attending a course of study at an educational institution in the State on a full-time basis and are living away from their address of registration and are likely to be unable to attend their designated polling station to vote may apply for entry on the postal voter list by completing form **PV2**. In order to be included on this register, the person must already be on the Register of Electors.

You can only register for a postal vote if you fall into one of the following categories:

- You are studying full time at an educational institution in Ireland, which is away from your home address where you are registered
- A member of the Garda Síochána
- A whole-time member of the Defence Forces.
- Of a physical illness or disability
- Unable to vote at your polling station because of your job
- Unable to vote at your polling station because you are in prison as a result of an order of a court.

The latest date for receipt of applications is 22 days (excluding Sundays and public holidays) before polling day for other elections or referenda.

If you are registered as a postal voter, you may vote by post only. You may not vote at a polling station.



### **Changing address**

You can apply for inclusion on the supplement as a result of changing address on form **RFA3**. This will also remove you from the register for your previous address. This form must be completed in the presence of a member of An Garda Síochána. You must bring photo identification with you.

### **Turning 18**

If you turn 18 on or before May 25th 2018 you are eligible for inclusion in the supplement to the Register of Electors and can vote in the upcoming referendum. If you are within this category, you will have to fill out form RFA2. This form must be completed in the presence of a member of An Garda Síochána. You must bring photo identification with you and you should accompany your application with a copy of your birth certificate.

### **Students**

Students living away from home while attending college have the choice of being registered at either their home address or their student residential address. You must be registered at one address only and you must live at that address on 1 September before the register comes into force. If you live away from the address at which you are registered, you will need to contact the registration authority and give them your new address. If you leave your address but you plan to return there within 18 months, you can continue to be registered there, as long you do not register at any other address.

### **The Electoral Register and direct marketing**

Local authorities publish two versions of the Register of Electors: the full register and the edited register.

The Full Register lists everyone who is entitled to vote. Once a Full Register has been published, it can only be used for an electoral or other statutory purpose.

The Edited Register contains the names and addresses of those voters who have indicated that their details can be used for other purposes (for example, for direct marketing use by a commercial company or other organisation).

If you do not want your details to be included in the Edited Register, you should tick the “opt out” box on the registration form. If you want your details to be included in the Edited Register, that is, you are happy that commercial companies and other organisations will contact you with direct marketing, you should leave the “opt out” box blank.

If you do not tick the “opt out” box, it is assumed that you want your details to be included in the Edited Register, if you do not wish your details to appear on the Edited Register tick the “opt out” box.



It is an offence for an organisation/commercial body to contact someone from the full electoral register for direct marketing purposes. This was set down in law under [Section 32](#) of the [Electoral \(Amendment\) Act 2001](#). Find out more about [how to deal with unsolicited direct marketing material in Ireland](#).

### **Special Voters List**

You may also qualify to be on a [Special Voters List](#) for those who live in hospitals, nursing homes or similar institutions and who wish to vote at these locations. Applications for inclusion on the Special Voters List must be made by 25 November and, in the case of a first application, must be accompanied by a medical certificate.

### **Supplement to the Special Voters List**

If you are eligible for the Special Voter list but are not included, you can apply for inclusion in the relevant supplement to the lists by filling out form [SVS1](#).

The latest date for receipt of applications is: Saturday 28th April.

## **Rules for voting in a referendum**

### **Who can vote?**

- You must be an Irish citizen.
- You must be at least 18 years old.
- Your name must be on the Register of Electors.

You will normally be required to vote in person at an official voting centre but you may be eligible for a postal vote if you are:

- An Irish diplomat or his/her spouse posted abroad
- A member of the Garda Síochána
- A whole-time member of the Defence Forces

You may also be eligible for a postal vote if you cannot go to a polling station because:

- Of a physical illness or disability
- You are studying full time at an educational institution in Ireland, which is away from your home address where you are registered
- You are unable to vote at your polling station because of your occupation
- You are unable to vote at your polling station because you are in prison as a result of an order of a court



Applications for inclusion on the Postal Voters List must be received by 25 November each year at the latest.

If you are registered as a postal voter, you may vote by post only. You may not vote at a polling station.

### **Personal identification**

You must bring a valid form of personal identification, such as a passport or driving licence, with you when you go to vote.

### **Facilities for voters with disabilities**

There are a variety of arrangements in place to assist those with certain disabilities in Ireland to exercise their voting rights. You can:

- Vote at an alternative polling station if the local station is inaccessible
- Be helped to vote at the polling station by a companion or the presiding officer
- Vote in a referendum using a ballot paper template if you have a visual impairment
- Vote by post
- Vote at a hospital, nursing home or similar institution if you live there.

At least one of these facilities is available to you if you have a physical illness or disability, a visual impairment or a reading or writing disability.

Following a **High Court ruling** on 30 March 2017, further provision may be made to facilitate people with visual impairments to vote by secret ballot in elections and referendums.

More information on supports available to voters with disabilities can be found [here](#).

### **Who is eligible to vote in the upcoming referendum?**

Only Irish citizens can vote in a referendum.