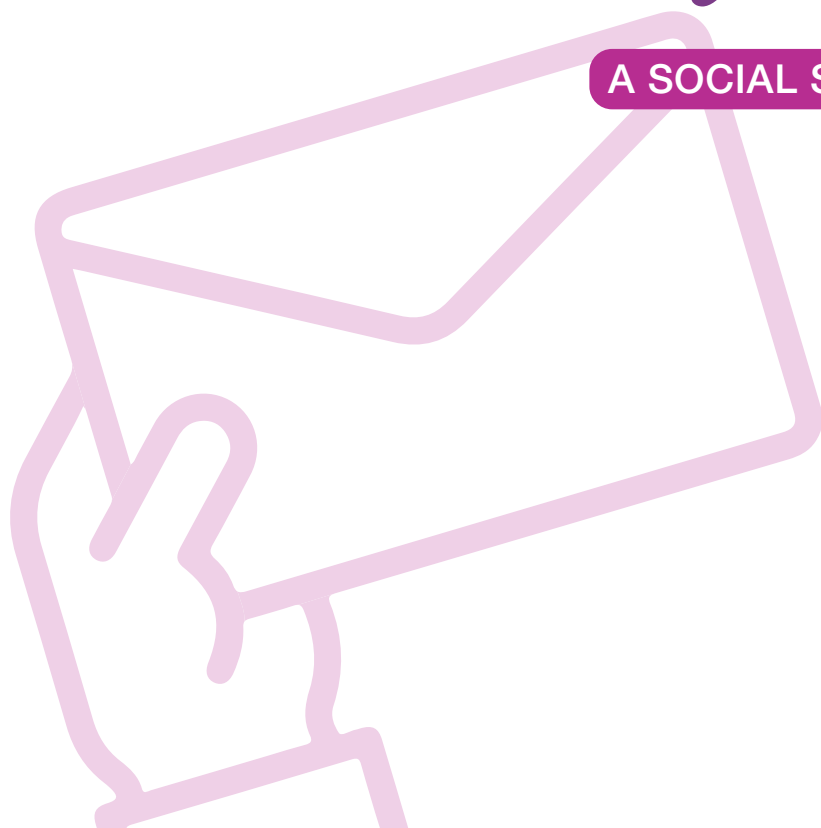


Voting in a federal election *by mail*

A SOCIAL STORY





I will vote in the **federal election**.

A federal election is when we choose who is part of Australia's government.

When I vote, I help to choose who is part of Australia's government.

The Prime Minister will choose the date for the election.



The government makes decisions on our behalf about how to run our country.

It is important for me to have a say about who makes the decisions that affect me.



For me to make the best choice possible I can research the candidates or get advice from someone I trust.

My vote is secret. It's my choice who I vote for, and I don't need to tell anyone how I voted unless I want to.



A **polling place** is a building where you can go to vote.

If I can't vote in a polling place I can still vote.

I can receive my ballot papers through the mail.

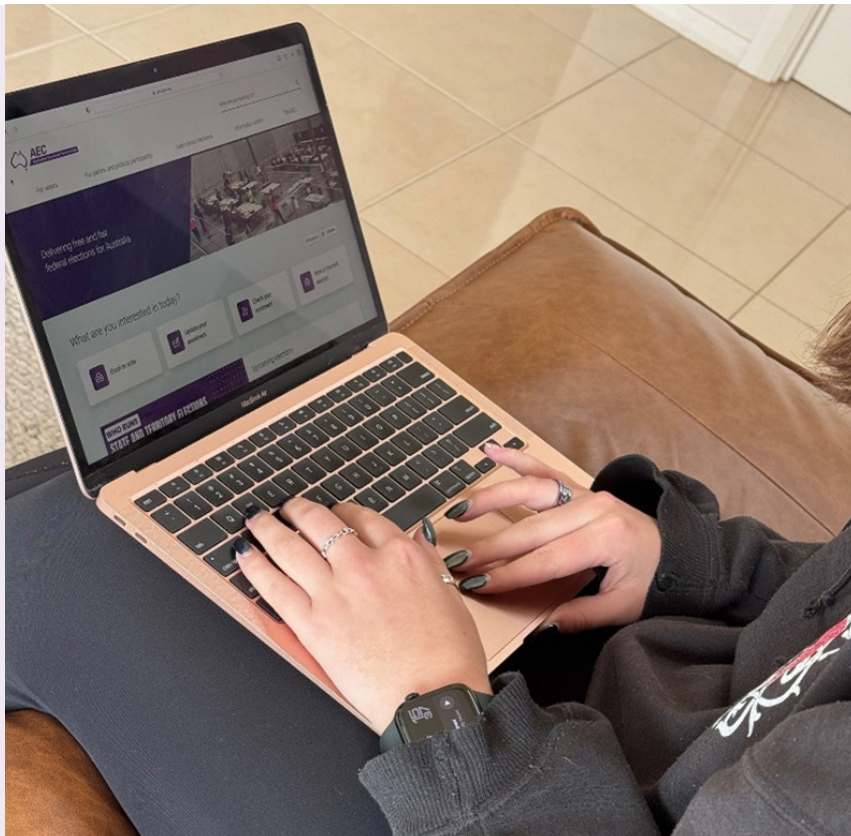
This is called a postal vote.



To receive a postal vote, I must apply by filling out a postal vote application.

I can do this by filling out an online application at www.aec.gov.au/pva.

Or I can pick up a postal vote application form from an AEC office.



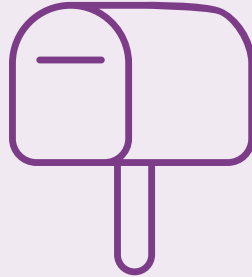
I can apply for a postal vote once the election date is announced.

It is important for me to submit my postal vote application as soon as possible, but it must be submitted no later than 6pm on the Wednesday before voting day.

Email



Mail



In person



I can **email** my application to:
applications@pva.aec.gov.au

I can send it in the **mail**:

Australian Electoral Commission

Reply Paid 9988

[My capital city]

No stamp is needed if posted in Australia.

In person: I can go to **www.aec.gov.au** to find my nearest AEC office.

Please include your street/road and unit number (if applicable).

[illegible]

This address is the same as the one I gave when I enrolled to vote.

VOTING IN A FEDERAL ELECTION **BY MAIL** – A SOCIAL STORY 9

4. POSTAL ADDRESS

This is where your voting papers will be mailed to and can be an address in Australia or overseas.

☐ Same as above

Senate Ballot Paper

You may vote in one of two ways

Either

Above the line

By numbering at least 8 of these boxes in the order of your choice with number 1 as your first choice

Or

Below the line

By numbering at least 25 of these boxes in the order of your choice with number 1 as your first choice

State

Electoral Division of Division Name

Number the boxes from 1 to 8 in the order of your choice

PARTY

SURNAME, Given Names

Remember... number **1** box to make your choice

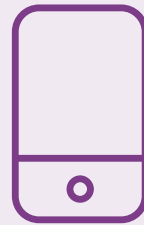
SAMPLE

Postcode

It is important my ballot papers get to me so I need to answer the question, “Where should we send your ballot papers?”

Ballot papers are forms to show who you can vote for.

I will write the address where I would like to receive my ballot papers.



In case the AEC need to contact me with any questions I need to give them:

- My email address (if I have one)
- My mobile phone number
- My home phone number (if I have one)

My mobile phone and home phone number might be the same.

6. SECURITY QUESTION AND ANSWER

Your security question and answer is used to help verify your postal vote. When you receive your postal vote you will be asked to write your answer on the envelope containing your ballot papers.

Select **one** security question and write your answer below.

- ☐ A: In what town/city were you born?
- ☐ B: What company did you first work for?
- ☐ C: What was the last school you attended?
- ☐ D: What was the make/model of your first car?
- ☐ E: What is the middle name of your oldest child?

Answer

?

?

?

?

?

I will need to choose **one** of the five security questions.

This is like a password.

I can decide which security question and write my own answer.

I need to remember my answer.

I can choose to write the answer down somewhere safe if I am worried about forgetting it.



I will need to sign the application and put the date I signed it.

You must **TEAR HERE** to remove your **BALLOT PAPER** from this certificate

POSTAL VOTE CERTIFICATE

TO THE DRO FOR THE DIVISION OF:
FARRER

1 YOUR ENROLLED DETAILS

SURNAME Citizen
GIVEN NAMES Jane

1 Main St
ALBURY NSW 2640

Answer your security question:
Q

sample

Remember: If your current address has changed from that shown above visit aec.gov.au to update your details.
Your postal vote must be received by the AEC by the 13th day after election day.

2 VOTER SIGNATURE

Elector declaration: I declare that before close of poll, I showed the witness this unsigned Postal Vote Certificate and unmarked ballot paper. I signed this certificate and marked the enclosed ballot paper with the witness present but unable to see my vote.

Your signature (or mark)

VOTER must sign and date before close of poll for your vote to be counted
DATE SIGNED 5/3/26

Note: Your personal information on this certificate is used for electoral purposes and may be provided to Commonwealth agencies and other bodies in accordance with Commonwealth law. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence.

Need help? Scan this QR code

3 WITNESS SIGNATURE

Witness declaration: I sign as a witness and declare that, before close of poll, the elector showed me the unsigned Postal Vote Certificate and unmarked ballot paper and in my presence, signed the certificate.

Signature of witness (and date signed)
 DATE SIGNED 5/3/26

Category of witness (e.g. elector)
 ELECTOR

A witness can be any elector who appears on the Commonwealth of Australia electoral roll, unless they are a candidate standing for election. For a list of those eligible, or if you can't find a witness, visit aec.gov.au/postal

Before posting, please check:

- ☒ You **TORE** off the **green** ballot paper to complete
- ☒ You **SIGNED** this certificate in front of your **WITNESS**
- ☒ You followed the instructions on the ballot paper
- ☒ Your **WITNESS** signed and dated the witness box
- ☒ You re-folded this certificate to enclose your ballot paper securely

Insert this folded edge first into the AEC Return envelope

EF040 - 0326

When it is time to vote, the AEC will send me my ballot papers.

I will get 2 ballot papers – a white one and a green one, along with a white envelope.

Attached to the green ballot paper I will have a blue certificate.

You must **TEAR HERE** to remove your **BALLOT PAPER** from this certificate

POSTAL VOTE CERTIFICATE

TO THE DRO FOR THE DIVISION OF:
FARRER


FARR001561M



AEC
Australian Electoral Commission

1 YOUR ENROLLED DETAILS

SURNAME Banana
GIVEN NAMES Fresh
29A Barcom Ave
DARLINGHURST NSW

Answer your security question:
Q Not Applicable

A  Not Applicable

Remember: if your current address has changed from that shown above visit aec.gov.au to update your details.
Your **postal vote** must be received by the AEC by the 13th day after election day.

2 VOTER SIGNATURE

Elector declaration: I declare that before close of poll, I showed the witness this unsigned Postal Vote Certificate and unmarked ballot paper. I signed this certificate and marked the enclosed ballot paper with the witness present but unable to see my vote.

Your signature (or mark)

VOTER must sign and date before close of poll for your vote to be counted

 DATE SIGNED / /

Note: Your personal information on this certificate is used for electoral purposes and may be provided to Commonwealth agencies and other bodies in accordance with Commonwealth law. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence.

3 WITNESS SIGNATURE

Witness declaration: I sign as a witness and declare that, before close of poll, the elector showed me the unsigned Postal Vote Certificate and unmarked ballot paper and in my presence, signed the certificate.

Signature of witness (and date signed)

WITNESS must sign and date before close of poll for this vote to be counted

 DATE SIGNED / /

Category of witness (e.g. elector)

 **A witness can be any elector** who appears on the Commonwealth of Australia electoral roll, unless they are a candidate standing for election. For a list of those eligible, or if you can't find a witness, visit aec.gov.au/postal

Before posting, please check:

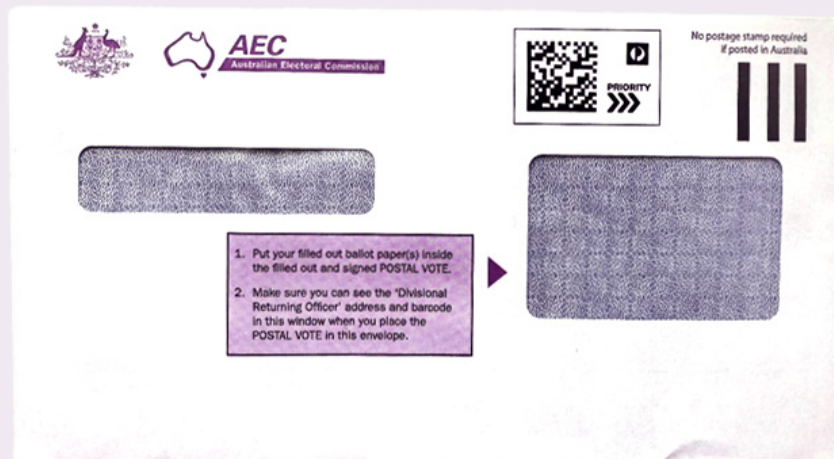
- ☒ You **TORE** off the **green** ballot paper to complete
- ☒ You **SIGNED** this certificate in front of your **WITNESS**
- ☒ You **followed** the instructions on the **ballot paper**
- ☒ Your **WITNESS** signed and dated the **witness box**
- ☒ You **re-folded** this certificate to enclose your **ballot paper** **securely**

Insert this folded edge first into the AEC Return envelope

EP048 - 0326

The blue certificate explains who I am.

It has my name, my address and the security question I chose.



I will also get a white envelope to put my ballot papers and blue certificate in when I have finished voting.



Before I vote I must ask someone to witness my blank ballot papers.

A witness might be someone I know, such as a family member, a friend or a support person.

My witness must be on the electoral roll which means they are able to vote.



My witness needs to make sure I fill out my own ballot papers.

Before I fill them out, I will show my witness the blank ballot papers and the blue certificate.



The blue certificate explains who I am and will include:

- My name
- My address
- The security question I gave the AEC in my application

I will answer the security question. I need to make sure that this is the same answer I gave on my application.

I may have written this answer down and kept it in a safe place.

After that I will sign my name.

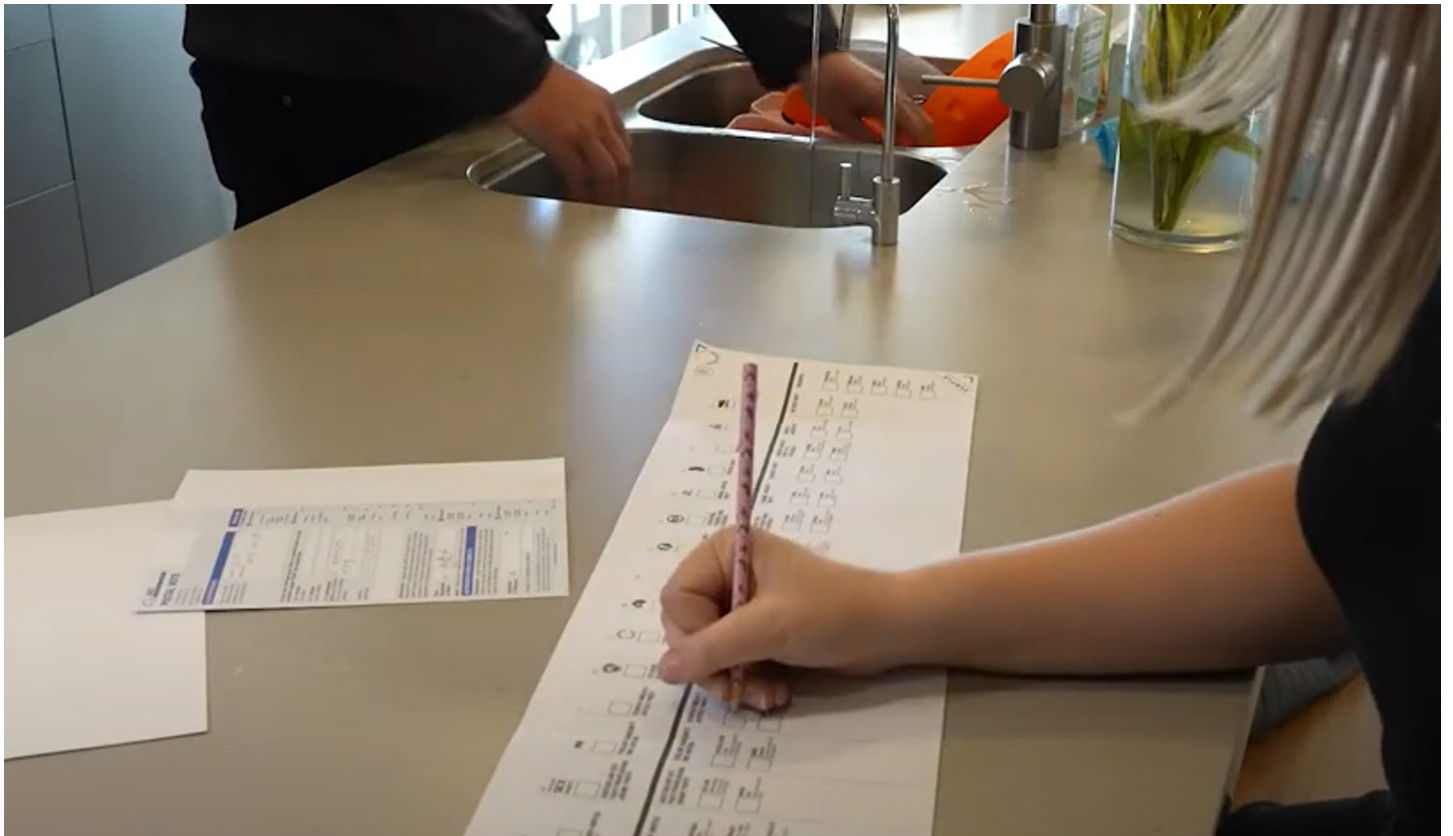


If I am not sure of what to do, I can ask my witness to help me fill in my blue certificate.



When I have finished filling out the blue certificate, my witness will need to sign it and write the date.

My witness and I must both sign the blue certificate by 6pm on voting day.



Now I am ready to vote.

I will fill out my ballot papers in the presence of my witness, but I also need to remember my vote is secret.

This means I need to fill out my ballot papers in a way that my witness cannot see who I am voting for.



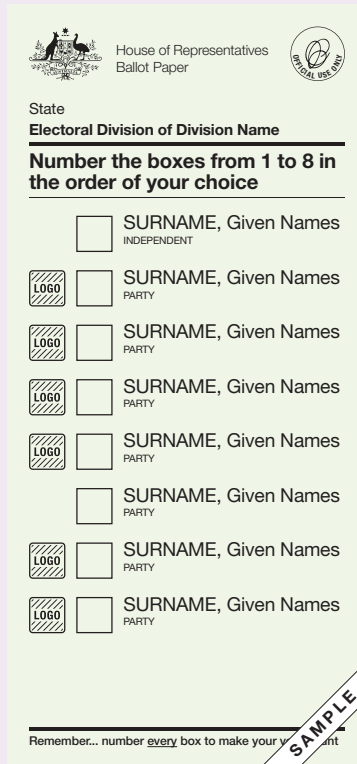
House of Representatives
(Lower House)



Senate
(Upper House)

I will need to fill out **two** ballot papers:

- A green ballot paper for the House of Representatives (also known as the Lower House).
- A white ballot paper for the Senate (also known as the Upper House).



House of Representatives
Ballot Paper

State _____
Electoral Division of Division Name _____

Number the boxes from 1 to 8 in the order of your choice

☐	SURNAME, Given Names INDEPENDENT
 ☐	SURNAME, Given Names PARTY
 ☐	SURNAME, Given Names PARTY
 ☐	SURNAME, Given Names PARTY
 ☐	SURNAME, Given Names PARTY
☐	SURNAME, Given Names PARTY
 ☐	SURNAME, Given Names PARTY
 ☐	SURNAME, Given Names PARTY

Remember... number every box to make your vote count

SAMPLE

The green ballot paper has a list of all the candidates I can vote for. These are the candidates who want to be part of the House of Representatives.

If the candidate belongs to a political party, it will be written under their name.

House of Representatives
Ballot Paper

State of Victoria

Electoral Division of Division Name

Number the boxes from 1 to 8 in the order of your choice

2	SURNAME, Given Names INDEPENDENT
3	SURNAME, Given Names PARTY
7	SURNAME, Given Names PARTY
8	SURNAME, Given Names PARTY
1	SURNAME, Given Names PARTY
5	SURNAME, Given Names PARTY
6	SURNAME, Given Names PARTY
4	SURNAME, Given Names PARTY

Remember... number every box to make your vote count

SAMPLE

On the green ballot paper, I need to write 1 in the box next to my favourite candidate, then 2 in the box for my second favourite.

There are instructions on the ballot paper telling me how many numbers to write.

I need to keep writing numbers in the order I choose until all the boxes are filled.



**You may
vote in one of
two ways**

Either

Above the line

By numbering at least **6**
of these boxes in the order
of your choice (with number
1 as your first choice).

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	

Or

Below the line

By numbering at least **12**
of these boxes in the order
of your choice (with number
1 as your first choice).

PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY		UNGROUPED
☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names	☐ SURNAME Given Names INDEPENDENT
☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names	☐ SURNAME Given Names INDEPENDENT
☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY		☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names	
	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY					☐ SURNAME Given Names	

SAMPLE

The white ballot paper is for the Senate, and it has a list of all the candidates I can vote for.



**You may
vote in one of
two ways**

Either

Above the line

By numbering at least **6**
of these boxes in the order
of your choice (with number
1 as your first choice).

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	

Or

Below the line

By numbering at least **12**
of these boxes in the order
of your choice (with number
1 as your first choice).

PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	UNGROUPED
SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names INDEPENDENT
SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names INDEPENDENT
SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names INDEPENDENT
	SURNAME Given Names PARTY					SURNAME Given Names PARTY	
	SURNAME Given Names PARTY					SURNAME Given Names PARTY	

SAMPLE

There is a list of groups above the black line.

Most of the groups are political parties.

A political party is a group of people who:

- share some of the same ideas
- work together on a plan for how government should run our country.

There is a list of candidates below the black line.

Senate Ballot Paper
State – Election of 6 Senators

You may vote in one of two ways
Either
Above the line
By numbering at least 6 of these boxes in the order of your choice (with number 1 as your first choice).

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1000 PARTY	1000 PARTY	1000 PARTY	1000 PARTY	1000 PARTY	1000 PARTY	
5	2	1		3	6	4

Or
Below the line
By numbering at least 12 of these boxes in the order of your choice (with number 1 as your first choice).

PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	UNGROUPED
SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names INDEPENDENT

Senate Ballot Paper
State – Election of 6 Senators

You may vote in one of two ways
Either
Above the line
By numbering at least 6 of these boxes in the order of your choice (with number 1 as your first choice).

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1000 PARTY	1000 PARTY	1000 PARTY	1000 PARTY	1000 PARTY	1000 PARTY	
1	5	3	2	6	10	4

Or
Below the line
By numbering at least 12 of these boxes in the order of your choice (with number 1 as your first choice).

PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	UNGROUPED
SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names PARTY	SURNAME Given Names INDEPENDENT
8	5	3	2	6	10	4	7

SAMPLE

There are two ways I can vote for the Senate.
I get to choose.

I can vote **above the line** and vote for political parties.

OR

I can vote **below the line** and vote for candidates.

I should read and follow the instructions on the ballot paper carefully to make sure my vote counts.



You may
vote in one of
two ways

Either

Above the line

By numbering at least 6
of these boxes in the order
of your choice (with number
1 as your first choice).

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
		 			 	
5	2	1		3	6	4
PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	

Write numbers 1–6

1 = my favourite

To vote above the line, I must number the boxes **above** the black line in the order I choose.

I will write a number 1 in the box for my favourite group, then 2 in the box for my second favourite.

I need to keep going until I have written numbers **1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6**.

I must keep numbering boxes above the line until I have filled at least 6 boxes.

I can finish at 6 or keep going and put numbers in as many boxes above the line as I like.

When I have finished numbering the boxes above the line, I have finished filling in my Senate ballot paper.

Or		PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	PARTY	UNGROUPED
Below the line By numbering at least 12 of these boxes in the order of your choice (with number 1 as your first choice).		☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names INDEPENDENT
		1 ☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	8 ☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	3 ☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	6 ☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	10 ☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	4 ☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	7 ☐ SURNAME Given Names INDEPENDENT
		☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	5 ☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	2 ☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	9 ☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	11 ☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names INDEPENDENT
		☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	12 ☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names PARTY	☐ SURNAME Given Names INDEPENDENT

SAMPLE

Write numbers 1–12

1 = my favourite

To vote below the line, I must number the boxes **below** the black line in the order I choose.

I will write 1 in the box next to my favourite candidate, then 2 in the box for my second favourite. I need to keep going until I have written numbers **1 to 12**.

I must number boxes below the line until I have filled in at least 12 boxes.

I can finish at 12 or I can keep going and put numbers in as many boxes below the line as I like.

When I have finished numbering the boxes below the line, I have finished filling in my Senate ballot paper.



When I have filled out my ballot papers, I need to make sure they are in the white envelope correctly, ready to be mailed back to the AEC.

I can do this by:

- Folding the blue certificate in half.
- Folding my ballot papers.
- Putting my ballot papers inside the folded blue certificate.

There are instructions to help me do this, but I can also ask someone I trust to help me if I am not sure.



I will put the folded blue certificate with the ballot papers in the white return envelope and seal it.



I must complete my postal vote on or before election day.

It is important that I get my ballot papers back to the AEC as soon as possible.

I must make sure my postal vote has arrived at the AEC no later than 13 days after the election.



I need to take the white return envelope with my ballot papers sealed inside to an Australia Post mailbox. I don't need to use a stamp.

I can ask someone I trust to help me with this.



When my white return envelope has been put in the mailbox, I have finished voting.

