

Media Release

The Hon Adem Somyurek MLC
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Small Business



Friday, 15 May 2020

OCTOBER LOCAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS IN THE MAIL

The Andrews Labor Government is ensuring Victorian communities can have their say on their local government representatives with council elections to go ahead on Saturday, 24 October 2020.

Minister for Local Government Adem Somyurek today announced that safe and secure postal votes will be used for the elections.

This will be the first time postal voting has been used across all Victorian councils, following changes introduced to the *Local Government Act 2020* that requires a state-wide and uniform approach to voting.

The Chief Health Officer has advised that it is safe for the postal election to proceed this year.

To support the Labor Government's goal of gender equality on Councils by 2025 an additional \$50,000 is being invested to encourage women to run for council at the 2020 election. This is in addition to \$87,000 already invested to increase overall diversity amongst councillors at the 2020 elections.

The Minister has also sought advice to inform Ministerial guidelines to ensure councils provide more flexibility to support and encourage more women and carers to serve as councillors.

To ensure the election is safe, and in an acknowledgement of physical distancing requirements, longer candidate statements will be allowed in the Victorian Electoral Commission Voter Information packs and guidance will be available on suitable and safe campaigning methods.

The 2020 council elections are expected to be Victoria's biggest election ever, with over 4.5 million voters enrolled and over 2000 candidates expected to contest.

The Victorian Electoral Commission is responsible for conducting all council elections and will outline the relevant matters for candidates and voters.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Local Government Adem Somyurek

"Victorians have the right to a democratic say on who represents them at all levels of government."

"By making every vote a postal vote, we're ensuring this vital democratic process is conducted in a safe manner that also allows for the participation of more voters."

"We're supporting more women to run for local government and be successful in the 2020 elections as we take another step towards the goal of gender equality by 2025."