

Media Release

The Hon Shaun Leane MLC
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Suburban Development
Minister for Veterans



Thursday, 1 October 2020

RECORD NUMBER OF VICTORIAN WOMEN STAND FOR COUNCIL

A record number of women have nominated as candidates in Victoria's local government elections, with ballots to be posted to millions of voters around the state next week.

A century on from the election of Victoria's first woman councillor, Mary Rogers in Richmond City Council, the rise of female representation in local government continues.

Minister for Local Government Shaun Leane today announced that 2,186 Victorians had nominated for election to their local council and an estimated 851, or 39 per cent, of nominees were women. At the 2016 elections some 34 per cent of candidates were female, and 38 per cent were ultimately elected.

The record number of female candidates is a sign that Victoria is making progress towards the 50 per cent representation target set by Victoria's gender equality strategy, *Safe and Strong*.

The elections will be conducted exclusively by postal vote and will be the largest ever undertaken in Victoria with more than 4.5 million voters enrolled.

Ballot packs will be posted between Tuesday 6 October and Thursday 8 October, each containing a ballot paper, statements and photographs supplied by candidates, voting instructions and a reply-paid envelope. Votes must be posted by 6:00pm on Friday, 23 October.

The Victorian Government has encouraged a diverse range of candidates to consider standing for election through initiatives such as the *It's Our Time* campaign for women.

The *It's Our Time* campaign will continue to offer advice and support for women standing for council, including two recently published webinars with prominent Victorian female leaders. Visit itsourtime.com.au for more information.

This year marks the first election where all candidates have completed a mandatory Local Government Candidate Training Course through Local Government Victoria. The online course about councillor roles and responsibilities introduced through the new Local Government Act was completed by more than 3,000 people.

With campaigns now in full swing, candidates must continue to comply with coronavirus restrictions. Safe campaigning guidelines are available at localgovernment.vic.gov.au/council-elections-2020/elections-2020.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Local Government Shaun Leane

"We know the value that women bring to leadership and it's fantastic to see so many women standing for council."

"Local councils should truly represent their communities and I'm pleased to see so many people putting their hands up to serve."

"I wish all candidates the best of luck over the rest of the campaign and urge all Victorians to vote and have a say in who represents their local community."

Media contact: Stephanie Hobbs 0429 275 437 | stephanie.hobbs@minstaff.vic.gov.au