

May 2022

# STANDARD RESPONSES

## Secure telephone voting social media queries

*Last updated: 17 May 2022*

Approved by: Cathie Kennedy  
Position: Director, Strategic Election Priorities Branch  
Date: 16 May 2022

## Contents

From 8:00am Saturday 14 May – 6.00pm Wednesday 18 May .....	2
From 6.00pm Wednesday 18 May – 6.00pm Saturday 21 May .....	2

TOPIC/THEME	RESPONSE
<b>From 8:00am Saturday 14 May – 6.00pm Wednesday 18 May</b>	
I'm COVID-positive now. How should I vote?	You can apply for a postal vote until 6pm Wed 18 May. Visit <a href="#">link</a> to find out how.
How do I return my postal vote if I'm in iso?	Can someone in your household help? Visit <a href="#">link</a> for more info about postal voting.
I'm single / isolating away from family. Who can I get to witness my postal vote?	The witness requirement is a key integrity measure for postal voting. For most, including COVID+ postal voters, they'll have easy access to an appropriate witness. For others, they may be able to arrange with family or a friend, with safety measures in place, to complete this requirement swiftly & safely.
What if my postal vote pack doesn't get to me until after election day?	If you test COVID-19 positive after 6pm Tues 17 May, you can vote by phone. Info will be <a href="#">here</a> from 6pm Wed 18 May.
Why should I have to vote if I have COVID-19?	We want to help all eligible people have their say. It's why we have the phone voting service this election.  <u><i>If pushed</i></u> If you have a valid and sufficient reason for not voting and get a notice, you can write back to explain the reason why you couldn't vote.
Why can't close contacts vote by phone?	If you're a close contact without symptoms and don't need to isolate, you can still vote in person at a polling place. If you have symptoms and test positive after 6pm Tues 17 May, visit <a href="#">link</a> for voting info.
Why don't you offer other voting locations, like at testing clinics?	It's not covered in our legislation. There are options if you're COVID-19 positive. Apply for a postal vote until 6pm Wed 18 May, and if you test positive after 6pm Tues 17 May you can vote by phone.
<b>From 6.00pm Wednesday 18 May – 6.00pm Saturday 21 May</b>	
Who's eligible to vote by phone?	People who're COVID-19 positive and will be in iso on Sat 21 May. You must register by 4pm AEST on election day and vote by 6pm.
How do I register?	Go to <a href="#">link</a> and follow the prompts. This is the quickest way to register. You can also call 1800 413 960, but it might be a long wait.
What are the registration opening hours?	<u>Online registration</u> Opens Wed 18 May 6.01pm AEST. Closes Sat 21 May 4.00pm AEST.  <u>Phone registration</u> Thurs 19 May 8.30am to 5.30pm local time. Fri 20 May 8.30am to 5.30pm local time. Sat 21 May 8.00am local time to 4.00pm AEST.

TOPIC/THEME	RESPONSE
What proof do I need that I'm COVID-19 positive?	If PCR – test centre location, date, time, and ref # from your health authority. If RAT – receipt # from health authority you registered your test with, and RAT brand and serial number (if avail).
Where's my RAT serial or reference number?	Depends on the brand. Could be on the front or back of the packet, or next to an image or icon. It's ok if you can't find it – but you'll need the brand and receipt # from the health authority that registered the positive test.
Why isn't the registration form working?	<p>If you're COVID-positive and trying to register to vote online, there might be a delay. Check our website <a href="#">[link]</a> for updates.</p> <p><u><i>If there was a known outage - unresolved</i></u></p> <p>Quick update about the online registration form for phone voting if you're COVID-19 positive. Still working to fix it. Visit <a href="#">[link]</a> for more info.</p> <p><u><i>If there was a known outage - fixed</i></u></p> <p>Thanks for your patience. The form's back up now if you'd like to try again.</p>
Why can't I get through to register by phone?	It's busy, so might take longer for you get through. Thanks for your patience. Keep trying, as queue times can fluctuate.
How do I vote by phone?	You need to register first. Details are at <a href="#">[link]</a> . Once you've registered, go to the link from your SMS or email to view an image of the ballot papers for your electoral division. Have your eight-digit registration number, PIN, and voting preferences ready.
How can I view my ballot papers?	Ballot papers for all electoral divisions are here <a href="#">[link]</a> .
What are the phone voting opening hours?	<p>Thurs 19 May 8.30am to 5.30pm local time.</p> <p>Fri 20 May 8.30am to 6.00pm local time.</p> <p>Sat 21 May 8.00am to 6.00pm local time.</p>
Why is it taking so long to vote by phone?	We know it's frustrating to wait on the phone, especially if you're not feeling well. This is an emergency service, and it's busy, so there could be delays. Our operators also need to follow a process to keep your vote secure, which can take time. Make sure you have your voting preferences ready.
How do I know my vote was recorded?	The operator will read your vote back to you. If you wish, you can have a different operator read your vote back.
How will they be counted?	After voting closes on election day, envelopes will be sorted, reconciled, and packed for secure dispatch to their home division. There, they'll be receipted, opened, and counted on the Wed after election day.

TOPIC/THEME	RESPONSE
What if I'm still in the phone voting queue when polls close?	Phone lines are open until 6pm <b>Sat 21 May / today</b> . If you're registered and in the queue, you'll still be able to vote. This might take longer if the service is busy.
I couldn't get through before voting closed	Phone lines were open until 6pm <b>Sat 21 May / today</b> . If you registered and were in the queue at 6pm you were still able to vote.  <i><u>If pushed</u></i>  If you have a valid and sufficient reason for not voting and get a notice, you can write back to explain the reason why you couldn't vote.
Will I be fined for not voting?	If you have a valid and sufficient reason for not voting and get a notice, you can write back to explain the reason why you couldn't vote.
Why can't I just vote online?	No online voting for federal elections is available, regardless of personal circumstances.
Why isn't phone voting always available?	It's an emergency measure during the pandemic. We do offer phone voting for those who are blind or have low vision, and those in Antarctica.
What about people who speak another language?	Info in 33 languages is <b>here</b> . When calling 1800 413 960 to register or vote, people can ask for an interpreter who speaks their language to join the call.
What do you do with information from when I register?	We don't ask for personal details when you call. You get a registration number, which you quote when you call to vote. This ensures your vote remains secret.
How can I make a complaint?	You can send an email to <a href="mailto:phonevote@aec.gov.au">phonevote@aec.gov.au</a>