

Citizens Initiated Referendum

Media Kit

June 2009

Should a smack
as part of
good parental
correction be a
criminal offence
in New Zealand?

Voting in the Citizens
Initiated Referendum
31 July to
21 August 2009



ELECTIONS

**Chief Electoral Office
Ministry of Justice**

**Electoral Enrolment Centre
15 June 2009**

**2009 Citizens Initiated Referendum
“Should a smack as part of good parental correction be a
criminal offence in New Zealand?”**

Enclosed is background information on the Citizens Initiated Referendum:

- **Timeline**
- **Enrolment statistics**
- **Referendum advertising rules**
- **Previous referendum dates and turnout**
- **Questions and answers**
- **Sample voting paper**
- **Information brochure and household flier**

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www.elections.org.nz

www.electionresults.govt.nz

The elections Freephone number is 0800 36 76 56.

2009 Citizens Initiated Referendum Timeline

Monday 15 June 2009	<p>Campaign starts to ensure people are correctly enrolled to vote in the referendum.</p> <p>Check enrolment details at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the elections website www.elections.org.nz • or at a local PostShop. <p>Enrolment forms are available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • from the elections website www.elections.org.nz • by Freetexting name and address to 3676 • from any PostShop • or by calling Freephone 0800 ENROL NOW (0800 36 76 56).
Friday 10 July	Last chance to update enrolment details to get voting papers sent out correctly.
Thursday 30 July	Last chance to enrol to vote.
Friday 31 July	Voting opens in the Citizens Initiated Referendum on the question "should a smack as part of good parental correction be a criminal offence in New Zealand?".
Thursday 7 August	All voting papers sent to enrolled electors by this date.
Thursday 20 August	<p>Voting papers posted in New Zealand by this date will reach the Returning Officer in time.</p> <p>Voting papers sent from overseas need to be postmarked no later than Thursday 20 August.</p>
7pm Friday 21 August	Voting closes.
8.30pm [target] Friday 21 August	<p>Target time for preliminary result to be announced.</p> <p>www.electionresults.govt.nz</p> <p>www.elections.org.nz</p>
Tuesday 25 August Noon	Last point for voting papers to be received for inclusion in the count (they must be postmarked no later than 21 August if from New Zealand and no later than 20 August if from overseas).
Tuesday 25 August 5pm [target]	<p>Official result announced.</p> <p>www.electionresults.govt.nz</p> <p>www.elections.org.nz</p>

Enrolment Statistics

Description	Number
Total number of people enrolled	2,984,236 (As at 2008 General Election 2,990,759 people enrolled)
Estimated number of people not enrolled	193,564
Percent of population enrolled	93.9% (As at 2008 General Election 95.3% of estimated eligible voting age population enrolled)
Number removed from the electoral roll since 2008 General Election because they have shifted house and not updated their details	25,965
18-24 year olds enrolled	325,369 enrolled (77.7% of estimated eligible 18-24 year old voting age population) 93,231 not enrolled
Number on the Māori roll	228,733
Number of people who declare themselves to be of Māori descent on the general roll	175,348
Number of people enrolled with overseas mailing addresses	60,132

Advertising Rules

There is a \$50,000 spending limit on advertising promoting or opposing a petition.

There is a \$50,000 spending limit on advertising promoting or opposing either of the answers in a referendum. The time period for this is 26 August 2008 until 21 August 2009.

Advertising relating to a petition or referendum must include an authorisation statement setting out the name and address of the person at whose direction it is published.

There are no rules in electoral or referendum legislation about what can or can't be said about the referendum.

Other Referenda

Date of referendum	Turnout (total votes cast as % of enrolled electors)	Question	Result (% of valid votes)
27 Nov 1999*	84.8	'Should the size of the House of Representatives be reduced from 120 members to 99 members?'	Yes 81.5 No 18.5
27 Nov 1999*	84.8	'Should there be a reform of our justice system placing greater emphasis on the needs of victims, providing restitution and compensation for them and imposing minimum sentences and hard labour for all serious violent offences?'	Yes 91.8 No 8.2
5-26 Sep 1997#	80.3	<i>Compulsory Retirement Savings Scheme</i> (Compulsory Retirement Savings Scheme Referendum Act 1997) Do you support the proposed Compulsory Retirement Savings Scheme?	Yes 8.2 No 91.8
2 Dec 1995+	27.0	'Should the number of professional firefighters employed full time in the New Zealand Fire Service be reduced below the number employed on 1 January 1995?'	Yes 12.2 No 87.8
6 Nov 1993*	85.2	<i>Voting system</i> (Electoral Referendum Act 1993) I vote for the present First-Past-The-Post system as provided in the Electoral Act 1956. I vote for the proposed Mixed Member Proportional system as provided in the Electoral Act 1993	FPP 46.1 MMP 53.9
19 Sep 1992+	55.2	<i>Voting system</i> (Electoral Referendum Act 1991) <u>Part A</u> I vote to retain the present First-Past-The-Post system. I vote for a change to the voting system. <u>Part B</u> I vote for the Supplementary Member system (SM) I vote for the Single Transferable Vote system (STV) I vote for the Mixed Member Proportional system (MMP) I vote for the Preferential Voting system (PV)	<u>Part A</u> Retain 15.3 Change 84.7 <u>Part B</u> SM 5.6 STV 17.4 MMP 70.5 PV 6.6
27 Oct 1990*	85.2	<i>Term of Parliament</i> (Term Poll Act 1990) I vote for 3 years as the term of Parliament as at present. I vote for 4 years as the term of Parliament.	3 years 69.3 4 years 30.7

Government Initiated Referendum conducted by postal vote

* Held on day of General Election

+ Voting in person at a referendum polling place/ballot box

Questions and Answers

1. What is a Citizens Initiated Referendum?

A Citizens Initiated Referendum gives everyone who is enrolled the opportunity to vote on a specific question. Under the Citizens Initiated Referendum Act 1993 a referendum is held when at least 10% of the people enrolled to vote sign a petition calling for one. The results of citizens initiated referenda indicate the views held by voters on specific questions and are not binding on the Government.

2. Why is it happening now?

Under the Citizens Initiated Referenda Act 1993, a referendum must be held within 12 months of the successful petition being presented to the House of Representatives.

Voting

3. How do people take part?

To vote, people must be enrolled no later than Thursday 30 July. Voting papers will be sent in the mail to those enrolled. Voting papers should be received by Friday 7 August 2009.

4. How do I vote?

Once you get your voting paper:

- Tick your answer to the question on the voting paper
- Tear off the voting paper from the personalised letter sent to you in the mail
- Insert it into the orange Freepost addressed envelope provided and
- Post it in a New Zealand Post mailbox. You should send it no later than Thursday 20 August to ensure it gets to the Returning Officer in time to count.

(If you are overseas your voting paper will need to be postmarked no later than Thursday 20 August and be back with the Returning Officer by noon on Tuesday 25 August to count.)

If you make a mistake, destroy, lose or don't receive your voting paper call Freephone 0800 36 76 56 or go to www.elections.org.nz for help.

5. What if I don't get a voting pack?

You may not be correctly enrolled to vote. Go to www.elections.org.nz or call Freephone 0800 36 76 56 to check or update your enrolment details or to get a replacement voting paper.

6. What if I make a mistake, destroy or lose my voting paper?

There is a process for issuing replacement voting papers. Go to www.elections.org.nz or Freephone 0800 36 76 56 to explain the circumstances

around your need for a replacement voting paper. If you are issued with a replacement voting paper, the old one will be cancelled.

7. If I live or am overseas can I take part?

Yes. If your enrolment details include an overseas postal address, your voting paper will be posted directly to you.

If you don't have an overseas postal address on the electoral roll, your voting paper will be sent to your New Zealand postal address. You will need to make arrangements to have it forwarded to you overseas. You can arrange a temporary redirection of your mail with New Zealand Post or online at www.nzpost.co.nz/redirections.

If you are unable to make arrangements to have your original voting paper forwarded to you, from 31 July you can apply for a replacement voting paper to be posted to your temporary postal address. To apply for a replacement voting paper visit www.elections.org.nz or from overseas phone +64 4 913 1346.

8. I have a disability, what are my options for voting?

Your voting paper will be sent to your postal address. You can ask any person including a friend or family member to help you to read the voting paper or to mark your voting paper if you need help to do so. However, it must be done under your direction. No one, not even a person with a power of attorney, can cast another person's vote for them.

9. Why are there barcodes on the voting paper?

The barcode enables voters' names to be marked off the electoral roll when their voting papers are returned - while at the same time protecting the secrecy of the ballot. This is required by law to identify any cases of dual voting.

When the voting paper is returned, the barcode is scanned to mark off the voter's name on the electoral roll. The voter's tick is recorded, but not counted, in a separate database from the electoral roll to preserve the secrecy of the ballot. The votes are not counted until after the voting period has closed at 7.00pm on Friday 21 August.

Enrolment

10. How do I enrol?

Enrolling is quick and easy. Enrolment forms are available from the elections website www.elections.org.nz, by Freetexting your name and address to 3676, from any PostShop or by calling Freephone 0800 ENROL NOW (0800 36 76 56).

People can update their details by filling in a new enrolment form or going online to www.elections.org.nz.

11. Who can enrol and vote?

You are qualified to enrol if:

- you are 18 years or older, and
- are a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident, and
- have lived in New Zealand for more than one year continuously at some time in your life.

12. When must I be enrolled by?

To receive your voting paper for the referendum you must be enrolled by 30 July 2009.

If you are already enrolled, and need to update your address details you must do this by Friday 10 July. If you don't update your details by 10 July you will not get your voting paper sent to your new address in the mail (unless you have redirected your mail to your new address).

13. How do I know if I am enrolled?

You can check your details on the electoral roll available at your local PostShop or check online at www.elections.org.nz.

14. I've changed address. What should I do?

You need to update your enrolment details by filling in an enrolment form.

Enrolment forms are available from the elections website www.elections.org.nz, by Freetexting your name and address to 3676, from any PostShop or by calling Freephone 0800 ENROL NOW (0800 36 76 56).

People can also update their details online at www.elections.org.nz.

Result

15. When will the result be known?

The preliminary result will be announced after 7.00pm on Friday 21 August. The target time for the release of the preliminary result is 8.30pm

The official result will be announced on Tuesday 25 August. The target time for the release of the final result is 5.00pm

16. What happens to the referendum result?

The results of citizens initiated referenda indicate the views held by voters on specific questions and are not binding on a government.