In 2014 I was seconded from the Ministry of Social Development to take on the role as a Returning Officer for the Manurewa and Tamaki Makaurau electorates. This was my third secondment to the Electoral Commission and I always looked forward to Election year to take on this role.

After every secondment I considered what I could do better and when each opportunity came around I found myself learning new things and challenging myself. It was definitely a chance to develop my leadership skills, my problem solving skills and my relationship management.

I found each experience to be something that was going to help me further my career and I can safely say it has.

Georgia Tatana, in 2014, Work Search Support, Ministry of Social Development - Work and Income, and Returning Officer, Manurewa and Tamaki Makaurau

In just a few months you are able to speed up your personal development plan because of the opportunity, training and practical experience you receive during an election. I would recommend this to anyone who is looking at developing as a leader or manager.

Erin Temu, in 2014, Corrections Officer, Department of Corrections and Returning Officer, Rodney 2014 and Northland 2015 by-election

Every three years the Electoral Commission recruits more than 18,000 staff to deliver a successful general election.

These temporary field staff are needed to provide services to diverse communities, and applications are welcomed from staff of public sector agencies for secondments to field management positions or for employment as election day staff.

The work is important, exciting and satisfying and provides excellent experience and development opportunities for the right people.

Working with the Electoral Commission on the 2014 election as a Returning Officer for me was a challenging but rewarding experience. This was my third secondment experience, and I enjoyed working in a supportive environment gaining valuable knowledge and skills to add to my experience as a leader and manager.

Even though elections are every three years, many people return because of the family-like vibe you get when you arrive. There are people who have been in elections for decades and also brand new staff, but in my experience they are all welcome. The more experienced staff have a wealth of knowledge and are willing to support the new staff.

The Election is a national event so it helps you develop your ability to stretch your thinking as a manager from small scale to large scale. The Commission has well developed processes and procedures refined over many elections which helps you manage as a Returning Officer.

www.elections.org.nz
THE 2017 ELECTION

The 2017 general election is expected to be held in the second half of the 2017 calendar year. The last possible election day under the law is 18 November 2017.

ROLES AVAILABLE

The table below summarises the roles that are available, their required competencies, the timing of recruitment and the expected time commitment for each role.

Staff who are interested in these opportunities should discuss them with their managers before applying.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Advertising begins</th>
<th>Appointment period</th>
<th>Time commitment (assuming general election in 2nd half of 2017)</th>
<th>Remuneration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Returning Officers (64)</td>
<td>Assist the Chief Electoral Officer to prepare for and conduct the general election within their designated electorate under the direction of a Regional Manager and in accordance with National Standards. Responsibilities include establishing electorate headquarters, voting places, recruiting and managing large numbers of staff, providing services to parties, candidates and voters within their electorate, and managing post-election processes</td>
<td>August 2016</td>
<td>Complete by 30 Nov 2016</td>
<td>Contracted from 1 February 2017 until 31 March 2018. Workload is estimated at 8 weeks intermittent before 12 weeks full time (8 weeks before election day and 4 weeks after). Plus time for identifying voting places – up to two weeks – will vary by electorate</td>
<td>Fixed fee of $33,833 based on $84,042 pa plus an hourly rate of $40.30 for time spent finding voting places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers Operations (70 approx)</td>
<td>Assist the Returning Officer to manage preparations and conduct of general elections including undertaking some statutory functions under delegation from the Returning Officer. The Manager Human Resources will require a relevant Human Resource qualification or experience to the equivalent level</td>
<td>February 2017</td>
<td>Complete by May 2017</td>
<td>12 weeks full time (8 weeks before election day and 4 weeks after) One week training in June/July 2017. Some intermittent duties are likely before the full time period</td>
<td>$57,458 pa or $27.55 per hour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manager Human Resources (64 approx)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trainers (126 approx)</td>
<td>Trainers are responsible for delivering training to advance vote and election day staff. They must be experienced in training delivery with the ability to apply national strategies and material</td>
<td>May 2017</td>
<td>Complete by August 2017</td>
<td>Part-time up to 5 weeks before election day</td>
<td>$49,428 pa or $23.70 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative support &amp; Advance</td>
<td>Administrative Support staff make up the remainder of the staff in electorate headquarters. They undertake many duties including assisting with the distribution of supplies, data entry, advance vote issuing and vote counting</td>
<td>June 2017</td>
<td>Until all roles are filled</td>
<td>On an as required basis before, on and/or after election day</td>
<td>$37,541 pa or $18.00 per hour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voting staff (3,000 approx)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Election Day staff (15,000 approx)</td>
<td>Election Day staff require varying skills and attributes depending on the role. Voting Place Managers require good management skills and the ability to be decisive and directive when needed. Other Election Day staff need good customer service skills and the ability to follow detailed instructions</td>
<td>June 2017</td>
<td>Until all roles are filled</td>
<td>Mandatory training (usually in evenings or on weekends) and election day</td>
<td>Fee paid for training and work on the day. Value dependent on election day role.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECONDMENT TERMS

The precise terms of a secondment will be agreed between the Electoral Commission, the secondee, and the secondee’s manager on a case by case basis. All parties will need to be flexible and keep the overall interests of government in mind throughout the period. However, electoral duties will need to take priority as required.

In general terms, the agency will continue to pay the secondee the salary for their permanent role and pay any higher duties allowance owed to the secondee. The agency will accrue leave as normal. The Electoral Commission will pay to the agency any higher duties allowance and the backfill costs up to the value of the secondee’s prorated salary.  

The diagrams below illustrate how secondments would work for the positions of Returning Officer and Manager Operations. Returning Officers are paid a fixed fee, which is paid in fortnightly instalments over the employment period. The level of the instalments is increased in the second half of the year. Manager Operations are paid an hourly rate and are expected to work full time for 12 weeks from the time the election day is announced.

Split between backfill and higher duties allowance for Returning Officers

Split between backfill and higher duties allowance for Manager Operations

1. If a secondee’s usual salary is higher than the salary for the Electoral Commission position, the secondee will stay on their usual salary. The Commission will pay the backfill costs of the secondee’s business unit up to the prorated cost of their usual salary.
RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Positions will be publicly advertised. All applicants must complete an application and appointments will be made on merit. If the preferred applicant for a field management position is currently employed in the public sector, a secondment will be offered.

Staff employed as election day staff are engaged on a separate employment agreement and would be paid the standard fee for the position.

The 2014 General Election was the second time I was seconded to the Electoral Commission. I enjoyed the Manager Operations role in the 2011 election in the Christchurch East electorate so much that I wanted to come back and do it again. The 2011 election was a real challenge following the Christchurch earthquakes as Christchurch East was severely affected by them. The Christchurch East Returning Officer in 2014 was new to elections so my operations experience from 2011 was gratefully received. We had a great management team, in fact, the whole team worked really effectively and we learnt a lot and had fun along the way. The work complements my job with Statistics New Zealand where I’m working for the field operation on the 2018 Census.

Fran Williams in 2014, HR Consultant, Child, Youth and Family and Human Resource Manager, Wellington Central electorate

The secondment opportunity to work as HR Manager in the 2014 elections was simply fantastic, both personally and professionally. Working on elections is challenging – it is a fast paced environment demanding dedication, well-honed organisation skills and real energy, but the satisfaction to be gained from meeting the many challenges is huge.

The highlight for me was the pleasure of recruiting, training and building the effective teams needed to manage the various phases of the electoral process, and then enjoying their successes. The election workers were amazing, and for me that was what elections was all about - teams of committed people, all pulling together towards the same goal. The support and guidance from the Electoral Commission, and electorate colleagues up and down the country is also superb. There is a real sense of camaraderie as you work together through the full electoral processes. I thoroughly enjoyed the secondment and returned to my home organisation energised, and having broadened my HR skills. It is a valuable experience to present on your CV.

Graeme Wilson, in 2014, Statistical Analyst, Field Infrastructure and Manager Operations, Christchurch East electorate

For more information contact the Electoral Commission on

04 495 0030

or by email: recruitment@elections.govt.nz