

Date Printed: 04/23/2009

JTS Box Number: IFES_72
Tab Number: 7
Document Title: Local Government Elections
Document Date: n.d.
Document Country: South Africa
Document Language: English
IFES ID: CE01754



* 6 6 B E E 0 F 9 - D B 0 9 - 4 8 C F - B 1 7 D - 0 F 5 8 F F F 9 0 2 1 A *

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS



**WHAT EVERY VOTER
SHOULD KNOW**

1. VOTER REGISTRATION

Why are we having another election?

In April 1994, South Africans elected our first democratic, non-racial government. We voted for a Government of National Unity, to run the country and for Provincial Assemblies to run the nine new provinces.

In October 1995, we will have a LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION, to vote for people and parties to run the villages, towns and cities where we live.

Why do we need local government?

National and provincial government are making decisions and policies on the changes needed to improve the lives of South Africans now that apartheid has ended. They have created plans, like the RDP, to achieve these changes and are raising money to pay for some of them.

If we are really to benefit from any of these policies and plans, we need hard-working, dedicated and reliable people to put them into practice **LOCALLY**. This means we must choose councillors for **NEW** local authorities, to provide us with basic services like electricity and water.

Under apartheid, local authorities or municipalities provided for people according to race. Only a few people enjoyed all the services they needed for a good life - hot running water, lights and telephones, clean streets, a pleasant environment and reliable transport. The vast majority of South Africans were denied even their most basic needs.

For many people, nothing has changed. If things are going to change, we must change them **LOCALLY** - in our homes, our streets, our neighbourhoods. To do that, we must vote again in October.



In the new South Africa, all our people must have the chance of a decent quality of life.

Why should I vote?

There are two main reasons why South Africans should vote in the Local Government Elections.

1. To get the basic services we need for an acceptable standard of living
2. To have a say in the way our neighbourhood is run

We must choose councillors who will share out resources fairly, in the interests of all the people in their area.



Services

Your local authority, whether you stay on a farm, in a village, an informal settlement, a town or a city, is responsible for providing the services you need. These services include:

- **water**
- **electricity**
- **basic health care**
- **refuse collection**
- **transport**
- **libraries**
- **parks and recreation**
- **fire protection**
- **sanitation and environmental protection**

Having a say

When we vote in October, we will be electing people from our own areas to represent us in local affairs. We must choose people who:

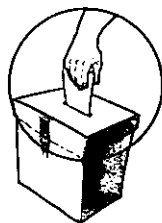
- **are clear about our needs;**
- **understand our problems;**
- **are committed to improving living conditions.**

These people must listen to our views on how they should share out resources and which problems they should tackle first.

Our representatives will be accountable to us. That means they must carry out their promises and commitments. They must be prepared to explain their decisions and their actions to us.

If the people we elect don't act in our interests, we can protest and demand that they carry out their duties better.

**This is our chance to
make democracy work
on our own doorstep**



Who can vote?

South African citizens and permanent residents who are aged 18 or older on election day have the right to vote.

Prisoners will have the right to vote **except** those who have been convicted of committing or attempting to commit murder, violent robbery or rape, and who will be in prison on election day.

What do I need in order to vote?

If you wish to exercise your right to vote, you must **register** as a voter.

1. Collect an **ER1 voter registration form**.

This form is available from your nearest local authority office or magistrate's court.

2. Complete the form, giving your **name**, **address** and **ID number**. If you are a

property owner, give the names and ID numbers of all voters at your address, including 17-year-olds* who will be **18 or over on 31 October 1995**.

3. Return the form to the office it came from as soon as possible and no later than **3 May**.

The image shows a sample of the ER1 voter registration form. The form is titled 'FORMER SOUTH AFRICAN CITIZEN CLAIM TO BE REGISTERED AS A VOTER'. It contains several sections with tables for data entry, including sections for 'PERSONAL DETAILS', 'PROPERTY INFORMATION', and 'VOTER INFORMATION'. There are checkboxes and fields for names, addresses, and ID numbers. The form is tilted slightly to the right.

Why must I register?

You must register so that the local authority can make an official list of everyone in the area who is entitled to vote.

This list is a public record, called the **voters' roll**. Each name on the voters' roll will have a unique serial number. When you go to vote, that number will be checked. This is to make sure you are eligible to vote, you do not vote twice in the same area, and no one can vote in your place.

*The ER1 form includes a declaration of age. You may amend this for 17-year-olds.

What's the problem?

You don't have an ID

Apply to Home Affairs straight away. It may take a long time to issue your ID book but Home Affairs will give you a piece of paper with an ID number on, to show that you have applied. You can use this to register but you must have your ID book when you go to vote.

If you applied for an ID a long time ago and have not received it, ask at the office where you originally applied, as soon as possible.

You don't have a street address

You can still register to vote. On the registration form, describe the place where you stay as clearly as possible.

For example, if you stay in an informal settlement with no road or house number, write the name of the settlement and name of the nearest road, and any other landmark that will help the local authority identify which area you will vote in.

You stay at the place where you work

Your employer must include your details on his or her registration form.

You live in a traditional authority area

You should still register to vote. Although it is not yet known what kind of local government will run traditional authority areas, all parties have agreed that everyone should register before the 3 May deadline.

Registration forms are available from municipal offices, magistrates' courts and libraries. The Durban Metropolitan area offices include:

City Hall, West Street, Durban

Municipal Offices, 60 Kings Road, Pinetown

Municipal Offices, Isundu Drive, Amanzimtoti

Municipal Offices, Lagoon Drive, Umhlanga Rocks

This leaflet is available in English and Zulu. It is one of the Local Government Voter Education resources published by Y Press. For copies, or more information, contact Y Press at 801 Berea Centre, 249 Berea Road, Durban 4001, tel. 031 216084.