

Press Release

Date: Monday 8 March 2021

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How vulnerable people can vote in May 2021 elections

People with health conditions are to receive guidance on how they can vote in the forthcoming elections.

Voters in the Durham County Council area will go to the polls for the county council, Police and Crime Commissioner and parish council elections on Thursday, 6 May. These elections will take place at a time when coronavirus continues to present risks to public health.

Those electors that have previously been identified as clinically extremely vulnerable, and therefore advised to take precautionary shielding measures, will shortly receive a letter informing them of the voting options available and aims to support them making the right decision about how to cast their vote in May.

There are three ways that voters can cast their vote at the May elections – by visiting a polling station, or registering for a postal vote or by proxy vote.

Polling stations will be open on 6 May and will have safety measures in place. Voters will be encouraged to keep themselves and others safe at the polling station by:

- Wearing a face covering
- Bringing their own pen or pencil
- Cleaning their hands when entering and leaving the polling station
- Keeping a safe distance.

Voters should not attend the polling station if they have symptoms of coronavirus, or if they have been asked to self-isolate. There will be provisions in place to apply for an emergency proxy vote if required due to health circumstances.

Voters wishing to vote by post should apply now by completing a postal vote application form. A form can be requested from the electoral services team by calling 03000 261212 or downloaded from www.durham.gov.uk/postalvote

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Communications and Marketing

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Postal application forms must be returned to Electoral Services, Durham County Council, Room 1/104-115, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UL. The deadline for receipt of a completed postal vote application is 5pm on Tuesday 20 April.

Voters who are not able to vote in person can ask someone they trust to cast their vote for them. This is called a proxy vote and the person casting the vote is often referred to as a proxy.

The person can either go to the elector's polling station to cast the vote or can apply to vote for the elector by post. To apply for a proxy vote, contact the electoral services team on 03000 261212. A form can also be downloaded from www.durham.gov.uk/elections

Those wishing to vote at a polling station, by post, or by proxy must first be registered to vote. This can be done online in just five minutes by going to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

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