

Voter ID and the Voter Authority Certificate

What You Need to Know

Voter Identification (Voter ID) and what it is

The Elections Act 2022 introduced the requirement for voters in Great Britain to show photo identification in order to vote in polling stations at elections. **Voters who do not show an acceptable form of photo identification will not be able to vote.**

There are many forms of existing photo identification which will be accepted – details of these are listed below. However, because some voters will not have one of these existing accepted forms of identification, voters can apply for a new form of photo identification which can be used for the sole purpose of voting in person, Voter ID known as a Voter Authority Certificate.

The reason Voter ID is being introduced

In April 2022, the Elections Act 2022 was passed by the UK Parliament.

Voter ID is designed to prevent 'personation', the crime of pretending to be someone else when you vote. The Government stated that while reported cases of 'personation' are low, Voter ID is being introduced to protect voters from the possibility of having their vote stolen.

Elections that will require to show a photo ID

From May 2023, voters will need to show photo ID before voting in local council elections (including by-elections) and in any parliamentary by-elections.

From 5 October 2023, voters will need photo ID at UK parliamentary general elections.

Please note, there are currently no planned elections in Croydon for 2023

If you go to your polling station without an accepted form of photo ID

A voter without an accepted form of photo ID will not be able to vote. If the voter will be able to return before the close of poll with accepted photo ID they will still be able to vote.






Forms of identification that you can use to vote

Many voters will already have a form of photo ID that is acceptable. They can use any of the following:

Which forms of ID can I use to vote?

You will only need to show one form of photo ID, but it needs to be the original version and not a photocopy.

You can use any of the following accepted forms of photo ID to be able to vote at a polling station.

 International travel Passport	 Local travel Certain concessionary travel cards
 Driving and parking <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Driving licence (including provisional licence)• Blue badge	 Other government-issued documents <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Biometric immigration document• Defence Identity Card• National identity card
 Proof of age Identity card with PASS mark (Proof of Age Standards Scheme)	

- Voters only need to show one form of photo ID to vote, but it must be the original version and not a photocopy.
- People will be able to use expired photo ID if they are still recognisable from the photo.
- You need to be registered to vote before you apply for a Voter Authority Certificate. When you register to vote, you'll be asked whether you have photo ID or if you want to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate.
- For more information on which forms of photo ID will be accepted, visit www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id or call their helpline on 0800 328 0280.

If you already have an acceptable form of photo ID

If you already have an acceptable form of photo ID, take it with you when you go to vote – you will not be able to vote if you do not have acceptable photo ID.

If you already have an acceptable form of photo ID you do **NOT** need to apply for the new Voter Authority Certificate.

If you do not have an accepted form of photo ID

If you don't already have an accepted form of photo ID, or you're not sure whether your photo ID still looks like you, you can apply for a free voter ID document, known as a Voter Authority Certificate.

The deadline for making an application will be 6 working days before an election. Voter Authority Certificates are permanent documents and do not need to be applied for before every election, however the photograph does need to be an accurate representation.

The information included on the Voter Authority Certificate

The free ID will show a voter's full name and photograph, the issuing local council, an appropriate identifier (reference including numbers and letters allocated by the council), the date of issue and a recommended renewal date

Apply for a Voter Authority Certificate

You can apply for free voter ID online at www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate

Or

by completing and returning a paper application form. Forms can be downloaded from www.croydon.gov.uk/elections or can be sent out on request.

Or

Electoral Services staff can also assist you to make an application in person at the Town Hall during normal office hours – please contact Electoral Services in advance to arrange an appointment to ensure someone is available to help you. This can include taking a photograph of you.

Electoral Services can be contacted at electoral.services@croydon.gov.uk / 0300 3730595)

The information you need to give when you apply for a Voter Authority Certificate

When applying for a Voter Authority Certificate, you will need to provide your

- **Name**
- **Date of birth**
- **Address**
- **National Insurance number**

If you don't know your National Insurance number, or don't have one, you can still apply. The Electoral Services Team will contact you to request alternative proof of your identity, they will advise you at that time which documents are acceptable. If you don't have other acceptable forms of identification you can have your application supported by someone you know. This is called an attestation. Electoral Services will be able to tell you who can attest an application, what information it needs to contain, and how and when it should be submitted.

You will also need to submit a photograph with your application. The requirements for the photograph are similar to the requirements for a passport photo details and are listed below.

Photograph requirements for the Voter Authority Certificate application

Photo style

The photo must be of the applicant:

- Facing forward and looking straight at the camera
- A close up of their head and shoulders, without any head covering, unless they wear one for religious beliefs or medical reasons. The face must not be covered for any reason
- Without any other person visible
- With a plain facial expression and with their eyes open and clearly visible (e.g. without sunglasses and not obscured with hair for example). Please note this does not apply where the applicant is unable to provide a photograph which complies with either or both of those requirements due to any disability

Photo quality

The photo of the applicant must:

- Be a true likeness
- Be in colour
- Be taken against a plain, light background
- Be in sharp focus and clear
- Be free from 'redeye', shadows which obscure the face, or reflection
- Not be damaged

Photo size

Where the applicant applies online, the photograph they provide must be:

- At least 750 pixels in height and 600 pixels in width
- Contained in an electronic file which is no more than 20MB in size

Where the applicant applies using a paper form the photograph must be:

- At least 45 millimetres in height and 35 millimetres in width
- No larger than 297 millimetres in height or 210 millimetres in width

Impact of voting by post or proxy

Voters will not need to show photo ID in order to apply by post or proxy. Although the appointed proxy will need to show their photo ID at the polling station.

Voters who vote by post do not need to acceptable photo ID. The Elections Act 2022 will introduce changes to the application process for postal voting later in 2023, and more information we will publicise the details of these changes when they are introduced.

Find out more about Voter ID

If you have any questions or would like to find out more, go to www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id or call their helpline on 0800 328 0280.

Contacting Electoral Services

You can contact Electoral Services about Voter ID, the Voter Authority Certificate or any other electoral matter.

Email: electoral.services@croydon.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 3730595

Web: www.croydon.gov.uk

Croydon Electoral Services

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