

## Voting Arrangements

In general, electors vote in person at their local polling station. A polling card will be sent to each such elector, informing them of their number on the register, the date of the poll and the location of the polling station. A Statement for the Information of Voters will be combined with the polling information card.

Postal voting is available to persons on the postal voters list. Eligible categories of persons are members of the Defence Forces, Gardaí, Civil Servants (and their partners) attached to diplomatic missions, persons with a physical illness or physical disability residing at home who are unable to attend in person to vote at a polling station, students registered at their home who are living elsewhere while attending an educational institution in the State, persons who, for reasons of their employment, are unable to vote in person at their polling station on polling day, prisoners and certain election staff employed at the poll outside the constituency where they reside.

Electors with a physical illness or physical disability resident in a hospital, nursing home or similar institution who are included in the special voters list may vote at their hospital, nursing home, etc. Ballot papers are delivered to them by a special presiding officer.

Electors with a physical disability who have difficulty in securing access to the polling station for their locality may apply to the local returning officer to be authorised to vote at a more accessible station in the same constituency. Applications must be made by Friday 19 October 2018. The local returning officer is required to publish a list of all polling stations which are not accessible to wheelchair users. At the polling station on polling day, an elector with a physical disability, visual impairment or reading/writing difficulty may be assisted in voting by the presiding officer or by a companion.

### **New option for visually impaired voters.**

In addition to the traditional options of seeking the help of the Presiding Officer or a companion to mark the ballot paper, visually impaired voters will have the option at the referendum of using a Ballot Paper Template (BPT) to mark their ballot paper without assistance if they wish to do so.

BPTs will be available at each polling station. If a voter with visual impairment indicates to the Presiding Officer that they wish to avail of the BPT in order to mark the ballot paper, they will be handed a ballot paper with the BPT attached to it and given whatever practical assistance they require in order to vote in secret.

The BPT uses raised print and Braille, whichever is most convenient for the voter, to guide them to openings in the template that correspond to their choices of either 'Yes' or 'No' which they can mark on the ballot paper beneath the template. Once the ballot paper has been marked, the voter can detach it from the template, fold it and place it in the ballot box in the usual way.