

## **ELECTING MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

In NSW, State Government elections are held on the fourth Saturday in March every four years. At State elections, the people of NSW elect Members of Parliament to represent them in the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council. After the election the political party, or coalition of parties, that has the majority of Members elected to the Legislative Assembly, becomes the Government.

### **Why vote in a state election?**

Australia is a representative democracy where people elect representatives to speak in parliament and make decisions on their behalf. Voting for a person who represents your views allows you to have a say in the laws passed, and decisions made, in parliament.

Voting at elections is compulsory in all Australian elections. Compulsory voting was introduced in 1924 and first used in the 1925 elections. Voting is by secret ballot. South Australia and Victoria were the first places to use the secret ballot in 1856. NSW introduced the secret ballot in 1858.

### **What areas is the State Government responsible for?**

Most of the government functions closest to our daily lives are the responsibility of state governments. These include:

Health	Education	Local Government	Industrial Relations
Transport	Roads	Natural Resources	Sport and Recreation
Police	Conservation	Community Services	Agriculture / Fisheries
Planning	Public Works	Emergency Services	Water/Gas/Electricity
Environment	Consumer Affairs		

### **Who has the right to vote in NSW?**

People in NSW have the right to vote if they:

- 1 are eighteen years of age or more;
- 1 have lived in Australia and are Australian citizens or British subjects who enrolled before Australia Day 1984.

Even if they fulfill these requirements, they may be disqualified from voting if they:

- 1 are of unsound mind;
- 1 are in jail, having been convicted of a crime for which the punishment is a sentence of more than 12 months in jail;
- 1 have been found guilty of treason and have not been pardoned.

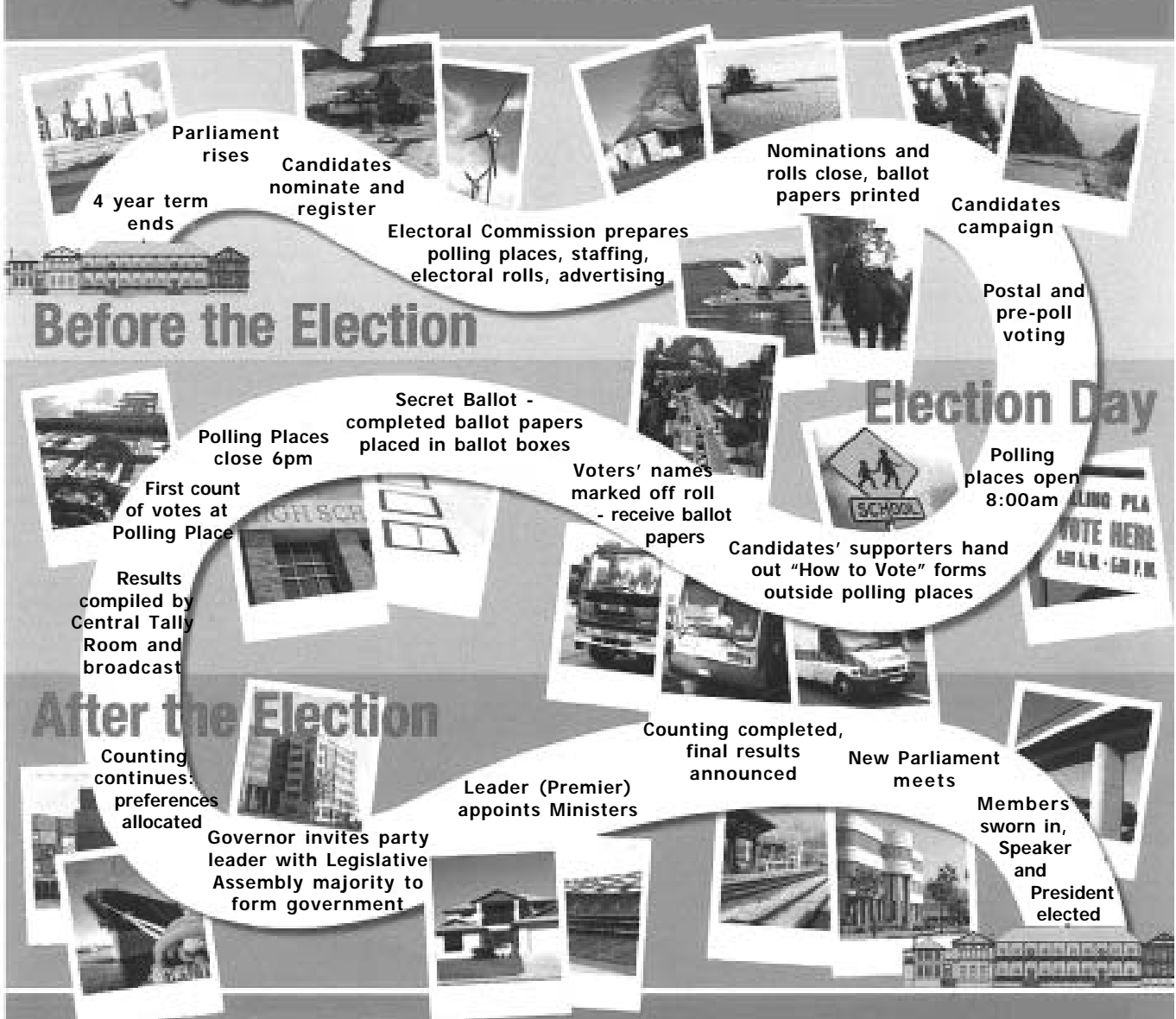
### **How do you enrol to vote?**

You must fill out an enrolment form. Forms and prepaid envelopes are available from any Post Office or **Australian Electoral Commission** office or Web Site [www.aec.gov.au](http://www.aec.gov.au). Each time you change your address, or if you change your name, you must fill in a new enrolment form. For any other information about NSW elections contact the **NSW Electoral Commission** on **1300 135 736** or [www.elections.nsw.gov.au](http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au)



# ELECTING MEMBERS of the PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES

## Along the Election Path



New South Wales and Local Government Elections are conducted by the **NSW Electoral Commission**. See their website [www.elections.nsw.gov.au](http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au) for information on current elections and elections generally.

Federal Elections and voter registration are conducted by the **Australian Electoral Commission**. See their website [www.aec.gov.au](http://www.aec.gov.au) for information. The AEC has many free resources for teachers and students.

**Remember:** Registering as a voter and voting are compulsory in Australia. Australian citizens aged 18 and over can vote and can register as a voter from age 17.

# VOTING IN NSW STATE ELECTIONS

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (The LOWER HOUSE)

**electoral**  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTION  
Electoral District of  
BEACHVILLE

Place the number "1" in the square opposite the name of the candidate for whom you desire to give your first preference vote.  
You may, if you wish, vote for additional candidates by placing consecutive numbers beginning with the number "2" in the squares opposite the names of those additional candidates in the order of your preferences for them.

CANDIDATES

4	WILSON, Jane ABC PARTY
1	HOOPER, ALLEN
3	WILTON, Scott INDEPENDENT
2	PARISH, Robyn XYZ PARTY

*This is a valid vote (shows preferences for all candidates).*

1 93 electorates, each with about 48,000 voters and each electing ONE Member of Parliament

1 Elections are held every four years (fourth Saturday in March)

1 **Optional Preferential Voting** is used.

Vote "1" for your first choice - this is sufficient. However, if you wish, you can also make further choices: "2" for your second choice, "3" for third and so on.

1 To win, a candidate requires a majority (50% +1) of the total vote. If this is not reached after all the No "1" votes have been counted, then the lowest scoring candidate is eliminated and their votes transferred to the No "2" choice on each ballot paper. If there is still no candidate with a majority, the next lowest is eliminated and their votes redistributed, and so on until someone gets a majority.

*These are also valid votes (preferences shown for one or more candidates).*

BALLOT PAPER  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTION  
Electoral District of  
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CANDIDATES

1	WILSON, Jane ABC PARTY
2	HOOPER, ALLEN
3	WILTON, Scott INDEPENDENT
1	PARISH, Robyn XYZ PARTY

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CANDIDATES

2	HOOPER, ALLEN
1	PARISH, Robyn XYZ PARTY

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTION  
Electoral District of  
BEACHVILLE

Place the number "1" in the square opposite the name of the candidate for whom you desire to give your first preference vote.  
You may, if you wish, vote for additional candidates by placing consecutive numbers beginning with the number "2" in the squares opposite the names of those additional candidates in the order of your preferences for them.

CANDIDATES

1	WILSON, Jane ABC PARTY
2	HOOPER, ALLEN
3	PARISH, Robyn XYZ PARTY

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (The UPPER HOUSE)

1 42 Members, each elected for eight years and each representing the whole state (not a particular electorate)

1 At each election (every four years), half (21) stand for re-election or retire, while the other half (21) remain in office until the next election

1 **Optional Preferential Proportional Voting** is used, and you can **either** vote above the line (for groups, or parties), **or** below the line (for individual candidates).

**Above the Line:** Vote "1" for your first choice - this is sufficient. However, if you wish, you can also make further choices: "2" for your second choice, "3" for third and so on.

**Below the Line:** Vote "1", "2", "3", etc for at least 15 candidates. You can vote for more or all of them.

Since all candidates and parties (groups) across NSW must appear on the same ballot paper, the ballot papers are usually very large.

1 To win, a candidate needs to get a "quota", which is a certain proportion of the total votes across the whole state - about 4.7%. Since there are more than 4,000,000 voters, this is about 182,000 votes. A complex system is used to transfer "surplus votes" to other candidates until all 21 places are filled.

*This is a valid Above the Line vote (shows preferences for AT LEAST ONE candidate).*

You may vote in one of two ways:

**EITHER** →

**OR** →

*This is a valid Below the Line vote (shows preferences for AT LEAST 15 candidates)*

# NSW Electorates (from 2004) - 93 Legislative Assembly Seats

## METROPOLITAN AREA (SYDNEY):



## NON-METROPOLITAN AREA:

