

Writ Day

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New Zealand Parliament, 2014

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The Governor-General Sir Jerry Mateparae signing official documents. Photo: Government House

Today the Governor-General issued **the writ**, which is the formal direction to the Electoral Commission to hold the 2014 general election. It officially sets the date for the election to be held, the closing date for candidate nominations and the latest date for the return of the writ with the final election results. It is issued within seven days of the dissolution of the previous Parliament.


Following this election, the writ must be returned by 9 October 2014, which is 50 days after it was issued. However if there is a judicial recount it may be delayed.

The writ is returned to the Clerk of the House and lists the name of every successful constituency candidate, as determined by the Electoral Commission based on the election results. The successful candidates are considered to be members of Parliament from the day after the return of the writ. A separate declaration is forwarded to the Clerk showing the names of the candidates elected from party lists. **The returned writ and declaration together certify that the elected representatives have the right to be members of Parliament.**

Writ day also marks the beginning of the 'election period'. This is the only time that party-political election advertising can be broadcast. The Electoral Commission allocates broadcasting time to parties, and public money to pay for it, based on factors such as the results of the previous election. Parties cannot exceed these allocations of broadcasting time and money. The election period ends at midnight on the day before election day.

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General election key dates (<http://www.elections.org.nz/events/2014-general-election/voting-2014-all-you-need-know/general-election-key-dates>)

 **Electoral Commission press release** (<http://www.elections.org.nz/news-media/governor-general-gives-direction-conduct-election-and-call-nominations>)
