

2021 NORTHERN TERRITORY LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS



- *Your voice. Your community.* -

SO YOU WANT TO BE ON COUNCIL?

Information for candidates in Northern
Territory Local Government elections



Local Government Association
of the Northern Territory





- NT councils -
PART
- of your -
EVERY
DAY.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For further information about the content of this guide or local government, please contact your local council or the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory below:

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL ELECTIONS

- 2021 -



ENROL



NOMINATE



VOTE

WHY BECOME A COUNCILLOR



Charlie King



BECOMING AN ELECTED MEMBER OF YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO INFLUENCE THE FUTURE OF YOUR COMMUNITY.



You should consider nominating for council in the upcoming local government elections if:

- You are passionate about your community;
- You are someone who likes to get things done;
- You are a good listener;
- You are willing to learn and participate;
- You want a rewarding challenge.



If the above applies to you, then why not nominate for a position on Council?



Remember, councillors are people just like you who have decided to make a difference in their community.



WHY LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS MATTER

Every four years, residents decide through an election who will represent them on their local council.



Of the three layers of government (Federal, Territory and Local), Local Government is the one closest to the people. It is often referred to as the 'grass roots' level of government.

Local Government councils have a far greater impact on communities than most people appreciate.



Councils collect property rates and receive grants from the Federal and Territory government. They spend these funds on services, programs and infrastructure that address local community priorities. This includes managing local roads, waste, recreation facilities, public cemeteries, animals and libraries.



Some councils provide additional services on behalf of Territory or Commonwealth government agencies. This includes youth, nutrition, safety, and aged and disability services. Local councils are also major employers.



A council consists of a group of councillors headed by a President or Mayor. Councillors work together to make decisions such as:

- How funds should be spent wisely;
- Which services and projects should be given priority; and
- What policies are needed to ensure the community's objectives are met.



Your role as a councillor will typically involve:



Providing leadership within your community.



Taking part in discussions and decision making at council and committee meetings.



Reading council agendas and business papers to prepare for meetings.



Reviewing strategic plans, policies and budget information.



Discussing and advising community members on a range of issues or concerns.



Representing council on other bodies and meetings.



Visiting council facilities and liaising with the CEO on the progress of council projects.



Participating in civic events such as citizenship ceremonies and awards.

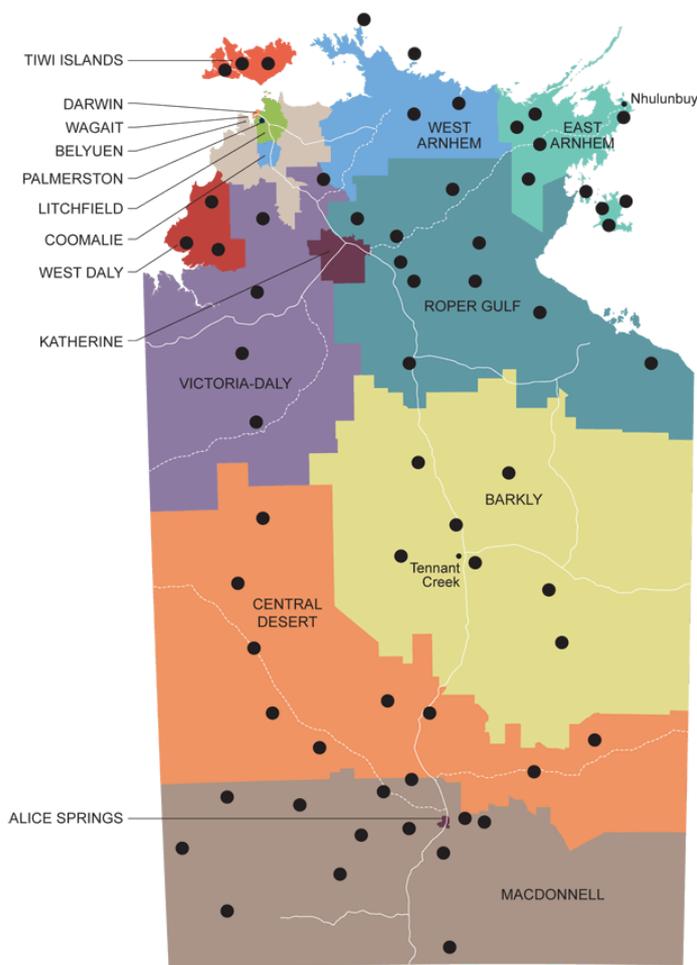
ABOUT LOCAL GOVERNMENT

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

In the NT, there are 17 Local Government councils. Each represents the interests of a defined geographic area. Councils vary in size, population, and environment.

The 17 councils include 98% of the Territory's population and cover 90% of the land area.

The Local Government Association of the Northern Territory is the peak body that represents the interests of local government councils in the Northern Territory.



DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?

There are no special qualifications or experience required to be on council. You just need to be passionate about your local community, willing to work as part of a team and keen to learn.

Decisions are made by the council as a team. This does not mean that you will agree on everything. It does mean that you will be expected to work well with the other councillors. You need to be prepared to engage in respectful debate on issues and build effective, working relationships.

You should also be a good listener. A big part of being a councillor is listening to the broad range of voices in the community and bringing their concerns and ideas back to the Council.

Councillors are leaders in their community. However, you do not need to have leadership experience when you start on council. All newly elected councillors receive training in leadership skills and how councils operate. There are ongoing professional development opportunities as well. These will help you grow into your new role as an elected council member.

Under the new *Local Government Act 2019*, all council members must complete a training course on the responsibilities of being a council member.

All councils operate under a Code of Conduct as defined in the *Local Government Act 2019*. This ensures a safe and respectful council work environment.

DIVERSITY

Local Councils are most effective when they reflect the diversity of their communities.

Diversity comes in many forms including backgrounds, experiences, culture, age and gender.

We need more minority representation on our councils as well as more young people (20-35 years) and females.

At the last Local Government elections (2017), females made up only 35 percent of nominations for councillor positions.

Less than 2 percent of nominations for councillor were in the 18-24 age group. Only 10 percent of nominations were in the 25-34 age range.

ELIGIBILITY

ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES

As a councillor, you do not receive a salary. Councillors do however, receive allowances. The level of allowance is currently set by the Minister's Guideline and varies from council to council. For more information about council allowances, visit: <https://bit.ly/3qMgBcx>

In addition, individual councils have their own policies regarding allowances and expenses incurred due to council duties.

Expenses may include travel and childcare or care of dependents to enable you to attend council or committee meetings and functions.

Check the policies that apply to your council.

NOMINATION PROCESS

Nominations open: Friday 16 July 2021

Nominations close: Thursday 5 August 2021 at 12:00 noon

The NTEC sets the rules for the nomination process.

To nominate for Council, you will need to provide:

- A completed nomination form;
- A photo that meets the guidelines; and
- The name of at least one person from the local government council area who supports your nomination.

For details about the nomination form, nominators and required photograph please visit: <https://bit.ly/2TA15XI>



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Anyone can stand for election as a council member if they are:

- ✓ AN AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN
- ✓ AGED 18 YEARS OLD OR ABOVE
- ✓ ENROLLED AS AN ELECTOR WITHIN THE COUNCIL'S AREA

Section 47 of the Local Government Act lists the reasons why a person is disqualified from nominating. This includes but is not limited to the following...

- are an employee of that Council; or
- hold a judicial office (other than justice of the peace); or
- are bankrupt; or
- do not live in the council area; or
- are indebted to the council for rates or surcharge; or
- have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment (which has not expired) of one year or more; or
- are certified mentally unfit.

For details about eligibility, visit: <https://bit.ly/3uviqLv>

WHAT ARE MY CHANCES?

People are surprised when they learn how good their chances are of getting elected.

In the 2017 Local Government elections, on average, there were less than 2 nominees per council position.

Remember, before you can start running your campaign to get elected, you must complete the nomination process.

CAMPAIGNING

CAMPAIGNS

Your campaign lets voters know that you are running in the election and the reasons why.

You do not need to spend a lot of money to make a good campaign.

Here are a few tips for planning your campaign:

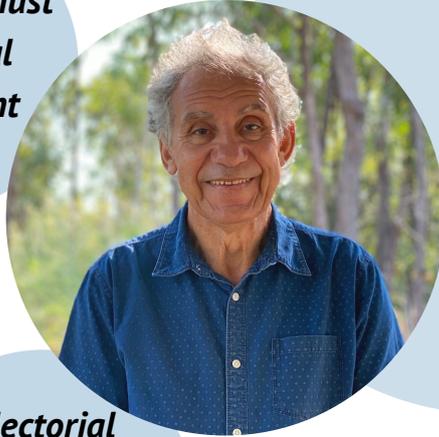
- Identify the 3 key messages that will be the focus of your campaign.
- Tell your story. Who are you?
- Start planning your campaign well before voting (e.g. postal) commences.
- Participate in any 'Meet the candidates' events hosted by your council.
- Keep your campaign messages positive.
- Create a separate social media account for your campaign (e.g. Instagram, Facebook, Twitter).
- Consider posters, information sheets and letterbox drops to get your message out.
- If you are putting up signs, make certain you have the permission of the property/business owner. Check if any council guidelines or by-laws apply regarding signs.
- Make yourself aware of the preferential voting systems.

Make sure you are familiar with the NTEC rules regarding advertisements and campaign activities near voting centres. Visit: <https://bit.ly/3daj0J2>

More tips and information on how to conduct an effective campaign can be found via: www.lgant.asn.au/elections/



Councillors must know Local Government laws



“Citizens expect good performance from governments”

Electoral regulations govern council elections

Ask questions, be willing to learn and understand. You don't need to know all the answers.

“Having a high level of self-awareness will help make you more effective when working with others on council.”

“Have the people around you to support your campaign.”



“Be confident, not arrogant. Be open minded and curious of other perspectives, not single minded.”

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