



Municipal elections of 2021 – Postal voting instructions

These instructions explain what you should do if you wish to vote by post in the municipal elections of 2021.

How to vote by post?

1. Vote well in advance

You can vote by post once the candidate numbers have been confirmed, on 14 May 2021 at the earliest. Don't wait too long! Your postal vote must arrive at the central municipal election board of your voting municipality by 19.00 on Friday 11 June 2021. Please note that if your vote does not arrive in time, it will not be counted.

2. Find out your voting municipality and your candidate's number

In municipal elections, each municipality has its own candidates. You can only vote for a candidate standing for election in your own voting municipality. If you wish to vote by post, you must find out the municipality in which you are entitled to vote. Your voting municipality is mentioned in the polling card that will be sent to you around 40 days before election day.

Information about the candidates in all municipalities and their candidate numbers is available at www.electionsfinland.fi and on the websites of the political parties and Finnish media outlets, for example.

3. Maintain election secrecy

You must have two witnesses aged 18 or older present when you cast your postal vote.

Fill in **the ballot** so that no one sees what you write on it. Write the number of your candidate inside the circle. Do not write anything else on the ballot. Insert the ballot into the turquoise **postal ballot envelope** and seal it carefully.

4. Fill in the covering letter

Next, write your full name, Finnish personal identity code or date of birth, address, and the date and place of voting on the postal vote covering letter and sign the affirmation on the letter.

After that, both witnesses must sign the affirmation, which states that you have voted in such a way that election secrecy has been preserved and electoral freedom respected. Both witnesses must also write their names in capital letters, dates of birth and addresses on the covering letter.

5. Place the documents in the covering envelope

Address the postal vote covering letter to the central municipal election board of the municipality in which you have the right to vote according to the voting register (your voting municipality). Fill in the name and address of the central municipal election board in the appropriate spot on the covering letter form. Place the postal ballot envelope and the postal vote covering letter that you have filled in and signed in the yellow **postal vote covering envelope** so that the address of the recipient (central municipal election board) appears in the envelope window. Do not put anything else in the envelope.

6. Send the covering envelope to the central municipal election board

You must send the covering envelope from abroad to Finland at your own expense. You are responsible for ensuring that the envelope arrives at the right central municipal election board by 19.00 on the Friday preceding election day, in other words on 11 June 2021. To ensure this, you must put a sufficient number of stamps on the envelope and deliver it to the postal service to be transported to Finland well enough in advance. If you like, you can also send the envelope as a registered letter or through an international courier service.

Other useful information

Postal voting with the help of an assistant

If you are unable to mark the ballot yourself, you can have a person of your choice assist you in marking the ballot and filling in the covering letter. However, a person standing as a candidate in the elections or the spouse, children, siblings or parents of a candidate may not act as an assistant in postal voting, nor may either of the witnesses. The name and address of the assistant must be written on the postal vote covering letter. The assistant shall conscientiously mark the ballot in accordance with the voter's instructions and

keep secret any information they receive in connection with voting. Under no circumstances may the assistant make a recommendation as to which candidate the voter should vote for.

Who can act as a witness?

Two witnesses must be present when you cast a postal vote. They must be adults, but they do not need to be Finnish citizens or speak Finnish or Swedish. However, the witness cannot be your spouse or child, nor can they be a candidate in the elections or their spouse, child, sibling or parent.

Which central municipal election board do I send my vote to?

Before voting by post, you must find out the municipality in which you are entitled to vote, in other words your voting municipality, and the address of the central municipal election board of that municipality.

Your voting municipality is mentioned in the polling card sent to you. If necessary, you can call the Elections helpline or the Digital and Population Data Services Agency to ask about your voting municipality. You can find the addresses of the central municipal election boards on the Electionsfinland.fi website at www.vaalit.fi/kuntien-keskusvaalilautakunnat (the page available only in Finnish and Swedish). The address of the central municipal election board of your voting municipality is also indicated on your polling card.

If you like, you can insert your polling card in the covering envelope together with the covering letter and the ballot envelope so that the address of the central municipal election board appears in the window of the covering envelope. This way you can be sure that the letter is addressed to the right central municipal election board.

What happens when your postal vote arrives?

When your postal vote arrives at the central municipal election board, the board will first check that you are entitled to vote in the municipality in question. If some necessary information is missing from the covering letter, if it does not appear on the letter that it has been sent from abroad, or if you are not entitled to vote in the municipality, the vote will be discarded. After checking that everything is in order, the central municipal election board will separate the ballot envelope and the covering letter from each other. The ballot inside the ballot envelope will be counted later together with advance votes.

More information

Elections helpline +358 800 9 4770

Information about elections, candidate numbers and voting: electionsfinland.fi

Information about postal voting: vaalit.fi/en/postal-voting

An example of how to fill in the covering letter and video instructions on postal voting are available at vaalit.fi/kirjeaanestys (in Finnish) and at vaalit.fi/sv/brevrostning (in Swedish).