

Māori Ward – Ngā Tai o Tokerau

Fact Sheet

Elections 2022 |



The option of having Māori wards was developed by Parliament as a way to enhance the role of Māori in local government. The principal advantage of establishing Māori wards is to provide a direct Māori voice on Council.

Council adopted Māori wards on 4 May 2021 for at least the 2022 and 2025 elections. As part of the representation review Council agreed to establish one district-wide Māori ward for the 2022 elections.

What is a Māori ward?

Similar to the Māori Parliamentary seats, Māori wards establish areas (seats) where only those on the Māori electoral roll vote for Māori ward candidates.

They are similar to a general, urban or rural ward and are reflective of the community in that ward. Like Māori wards, those in a general, urban or rural ward vote for a candidate standing in that general ward.

How are Māori wards established?

The Local Electoral Act 2001 (LEA) provides the mechanism for councils to establish Māori wards. To take effect, councils must first resolve to establish Māori wards. Council resolved to establish Māori wards on 4 May 2021 for the 2022 and 2025 elections. There will be one district wide Māori ward in place for at least the 2022 elections called Ngā Tai o Tokerau from which 4 Māori ward councillors will be elected.

Who can stand for election in a Māori ward?

To be eligible to stand for election, a candidate must be:

- A New Zealand citizen (by birth or citizenship ceremony); and
- Enrolled as a Parliamentary elector, and
- Nominated by two electors whose names appear on the electoral roll within ward that a candidate is standing (i.e on the Māori roll in the Far North).
- As such you do not have to be Māori to stand in a Māori ward.

As Māori, can I stand in a general seat?

Yes, you can. Just like you don't have to be Māori to stand in a Māori ward. You will be voted in by electors on the general electoral roll for that ward.

Those on the Māori electoral roll would vote on candidates standing in a Māori ward and those on the general electoral roll would vote on candidates standing in a general ward.

How can I find out if I am enrolled – and on which roll (Māori or General)?

The Electoral Commission is responsible for electoral rolls under Vote.nz. Please visit their website at www.vote.nz or call them on 0800 36 76 56.

I am Māori, currently on the general electoral roll but I want to move to the Māori electoral roll so I can vote for councillors in the Māori ward – can I do this before the next local body elections?

No – the next available opportunity to change rolls will be in 2024. This is determined by Central Government (the Electoral Commission) under the Māori Electoral Option, which is usually held every five years (the last one was in 2018).

Who can I vote for if I am on the Māori roll?

If you are on the Māori roll you will be able to vote for:

- the Mayor
- candidates for the Ngā Tai o Tokerau Ward (Māori ward)
- community board candidates in your subdivision.

Do any other Northland councils have Māori wards?

Yes, all four councils in the Far North adopted Māori wards for the 2022 and 2025 elections.

There is a lot of useful information regarding the 2022 elections on our website – including a video explaining the new Māori ward, a cheeky look at how STV works and lots more.

We update it regularly, so check us out at www.fndc.govt.nz/Your-council/Local-Elections-2022

