Local council elections 2024

Availability of results guide

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Available reports

Counts for multi-councillor wards or unsubdivided councils, including the Melbourne City Council councillor election, use the Proportional Representation system of counting. The VEC conducts all Proportional Representation counts by computer.

Counts in single-councillor wards and the Melbourne City Council leadership team election use the Preferential system of counting. The VEC conducts some Preferential counts by computer, such as when there are a large number of candidates or ballot papers to be counted.

During computer counts, certain reports are made available to scrutineers throughout data entry and to candidates and other interested parties following the calculation of the result.

The reports that are available during data entry are:

- *First preference votes counted*

- *Ballot paper details.*

The reports that are available following the calculation of the result are:

- *First preference votes counted*

- distribution report

- *Ballot paper details.*

Reports available during data entry

First preference votes counted report

The *First preference votes counted* report details progressive first preference results for each candidate.

The report (see Example A) will be generated and displayed on each day of data entry at the intervals shown below.

Daily data entry duration	Generation frequency
Less than 1 hour	Generated at end of data entry only
1 to 3 hours	Generated at 1.5 hours and at end of data entry
Longer than 3 hours	Generated at 1.5 hours, and then every 3 hours of data entry (at a minimum) and at end of data entry

Ballot paper details report

The *Ballot paper details* report (see Example B) shows the preferences recorded for each ballot paper for a defined batch range. During the count, the report is used to undertake quality assurance procedures and to audit a batch on request when required.

Batch audits will be conducted regularly throughout the computer count by election officials. Randomly selected batches from each data entry operator will be checked for accuracy against the *Ballot paper details* reports.

Scrutineers are also able to query the data entry of a specific ballot paper or batch. To do this, scrutineers must take note of the batch number and ballot paper number (shown on the data entry operator's screen) and advise the computer count team leader that they wish to have the batch/ballot paper checked. Scrutineers can see the batch number and ballot paper number in the VEC's computer count application. For each query:

- the computer count team leader will review the relevant ballot papers with the scrutineer by comparing them to a report that shows how the preferences were entered into the computer count application

- if any errors are found, the team leader will correct these. If a scrutineer does not agree with what has been data entered for a specific ballot paper, they can request that the team leader sets the ballot paper aside for formality checking by the election manager.

A copy of this report is available on request at the end of each day of data entry. Requests should be lodged with the election manager by 5 pm and the report will be supplied to requesting scrutineers via email from VEC head office.

Reports available after calculation

First preference votes counted report

Following the calculation of results, a final version of this report will be printed and made available to candidates and any other interested parties present at the calculation.

Final first preference results will also be available from the VEC website.

Distribution report

A distribution report will also be made available to candidates and other interested parties following the calculation and published on the VEC website. The report will detail all distributions of preferences.

There are two types of distribution reports in local council elections:

- the *Distribution of preference votes* report (Example C) is generated once the final results have been calculated for single-councillor elections and the Melbourne City Council leadership team election

- the *Proportional representation distribution* report (Example D) is generated once the final results have been calculated for multi-councillor elections, including multi-councillor wards, unsubdivided councils and the Melbourne City Council councillor election.

Ballot paper details report

Following the declaration of results, the VEC will also make available upon request a copy of the *Ballot paper details* report containing the preferences for all formal ballot papers entered into the computer count application for the requested ward or unsubdivided council. Requests should be submitted to the election manager.

A copy of the report will be available within two business days of the declaration of results and will be emailed to the requestor by VEC head office. After this time, the records from the count are sealed and the data will no longer be available for release.

Example reports

Example A: *First preference votes counted* report

Date: 29/10/2024
Time: 14:56
Example City Council 2024
Example Ward
First Preference Vote Count - Computer Count
Batch Range: 1 to 5

Candidate Name	Votes
CANDIDATE, Aa	12
CANDIDATE, Bb	5
CANDIDATE, Cc	3
CANDIDATE, Dd	0
CANDIDATE, Ee	0
Total	20

Example B: *Ballot paper details* report

Column one of this comma delimited text file (.csv file) displays the ballot paper number (maximum number of ballot papers in a batch is 50). Preferences are displayed in the subsequent columns against candidates in ballot paper order. If the candidate did not receive a preference, the column will be blank.

Date: 29/10/2024
Time: 15:40

Example City Council 2024
Example Ward

Ballot Paper Details - Report
Total formal batches included in report: 4
Total informal batches included in report: 0

Batch No. 1

Ballot Paper Preferences Recorded Against Candidates in Ballot Paper Order

1	1	2	4	3	5
2	1	2	4	3	5
3	1	2	4	3	5
4	1	2	4	3	5
5	1	2	4	3	5
6	1	2	4	3	5
7	1	2	4	5	3
8	1	2	4	5	3
9	1	2	4	5	3
10	1	2	4	5	3

Batch No. 2

Ballot Paper Preferences Recorded Against Candidates in Ballot Paper Order

1	1	2	4	5	3
2	1	2	4	5	3
3	3	1	2	4	5
4	5	1	2	4	3
5	5	1	2	3	4
6	4	1	2	3	5
7	4	1	2	3	5
8	2	3	1	4	5
9	5	4	1	3	2
10	5	4	1	3	2

Batch No. 3

Ballot Paper Preferences Recorded Against Candidates in Ballot Paper Order

1	5	4	1	3	2
2	5	4	1	3	2
3	5	4	1	3	2
4	3	4	5	1	2
5	3	4	5	1	2
6	3	4	5	1	2
7	3	4	5	1	2
8	3	4	5	1	2
9	3	4	5	1	2
10	3	4	5	1	2

Batch No. 4

Ballot Paper Preferences Recorded Against Candidates in Ballot Paper Order

1	3	4	5	1	2
2	3	4	5	1	2
3	3	4	5	1	2
4	3	4	5	2	1
5	3	4	5	2	1
6	3	4	5	2	1
7	3	4	5	2	1
8	3	4	5	2	1
9	3	4	5	2	1
10	3	4	5	2	1

Example C: *Distribution of preference votes* report

Distribution of Preference Votes

Print Date/Time: 29/10/2024 12:32:28PM

Example City Council 2024
Example Ward

Total Valid first preference votes polled for all candidates: 9672
Number of votes required to constitute an absolute majority on first count: 4837
Number of informal votes: 194

Candidates Names (in ballot paper order)	CANDIDATE, Aa	CANDIDATE, Bb	CANDIDATE, Cc	TOTAL
Total first preference votes recorded for each candidate	4028	2393	3251	9672
Transfer of 2393 ballot papers of CANDIDATE, Bb (1st excluded candidate)	1447		946	2393
FINAL TOTAL	5475		4197	9672

Name of Elected Candidate: CANDIDATE, Aa

Example D: *Proportional representation distribution* report

Distribution Report

Print Date/Time: 29/10/2024 12:46:50PM

Example City Council 2024

Example Ward

Election of 2 Councillors

Formal Ballot Papers included in count: 2129

Informal Ballot Papers: 48

Total Ballot Papers: 2177

Quota: 710

Count No.	Count Details	Transfer Value		CANDIDATE, Aa	CANDIDATE, Bb	CANDIDATE, Cc	CANDIDATE, Dd	Gain/Loss	Exhausted	TOTAL	Candidates elected at this count
						Candidates					
1	1st Preferences	1		800	648	312	369		0	2129	CANDIDATE, Aa
2	Surplus of CANDIDATE, Aa, 800 ballot papers distributed	0.1125	BPs	-800	486	205	109		0		
			Value	-90	54	23	12	1	0		
			PTotal	710	702	335	381	1	0	2129	
3	Exclusion of CANDIDATE, Cc, 312 ballot papers from count 1	1	BPs	0	212	-312	100		0		
			Value	0	212	-312	100	0	0		
			PTotal	710	914	23	481	1	0	2129	CANDIDATE, Bb

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