



AUSTRALIAN MARRIAGE LAW POSTAL SURVEY

INFORMATION FOR CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is surveying Australians on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll who are eligible to vote as at 24 August 2017, to get their views about whether the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry.

This is a voluntary survey. However the ABS would like every eligible Australian to have an opportunity to participate and have their say. While it is expected that most people in Australia will be able to participate using the postal service, the ABS will implement a number of additional strategies for people who may not be able to complete a postal survey.

Persons who are from culturally and linguistically diverse communities may complete the survey independently through the postal service, by requesting the assistance of someone they trust or through the support of Translating and Interpreting Services. These options are described further below.

1. Completing the form

Survey forms will be delivered to Australian nominated addresses by 25 September. The package containing the survey form will include a reply paid envelope and instructions on how to complete the form. Completed forms need to be received by the ABS by the 7 November deadline, allowing a reasonable period for completing and posting back the paper form.

2. Authorising a trusted person to respond on their behalf

If a person cannot complete their survey form independently, they can authorise another person they trust to assist them with their survey, or to complete the survey form on their behalf.

Where someone completes a survey on someone else's behalf, the ABS expects that the eligible Australian would:

- Specifically authorise that trusted person to open their postal survey envelope; and
- Communicate their survey response to that trusted person so this can be accurately marked on the survey form.

The trusted person would then seal the form in the reply paid envelope and post it back to the ABS.

A person cannot self-declare themselves to be a trusted person for someone else. It is illegal to open someone else's mail without their permission, and there are potential penalties for providing false or misleading information to the ABS.

3. Translating and Interpreting Services

A person can also respond to the survey through assistance from someone who speaks their language. There are instructions on the reverse side of the letter sent with the survey form in 15 languages on how to contact the Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS National). This can be arranged by calling TIS National on 131 450 (within Australia) or +613 9268 8332 (outside Australia). Further information will be made available on this option when the survey commences.

4. Lost or spoilt forms

Lost or spoilt survey forms can be replaced. Requests must be made by the eligible Australian themselves or a legally authorised person (i.e. a person with power of attorney, authorised carer for person with severe disability etc.).

All responses to the survey are kept completely confidential, by law. The ABS will destroy all information collected after the survey.

People who choose not to complete the form are encouraged to destroy it by tearing it into two or more parts.

More Information

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The results of the survey will be published on the ABS website by 15 November.

For more information on the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey visit the ABS website (www.abs.gov.au) or contact the Information Line on 1800 572 113, available 7 days a week, 8am - 8pm (Australian Eastern Standard Time).