

STATES OF JERSEY



DRAFT ELECTIONS (JERSEY) AMENDMENT LAW 202- (P.28/2025): COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 6th May 2025
by the Comité des Connétables**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

The Comité des Connétables has prepared these comments on the following matters which the draft Law proposes should be amended:

1. Ballot papers:

Article 24(3C)(c.) provides for ballot papers in a public election to include a photograph of candidates if so specified by the JEA.

As the electoral administrator must arrange for the printing of ballot papers, an early decision is essential to ensure ballot papers can be made available in good time for postal and pre-poll voting. Such a requirement is also likely to add to the complexity and cost of printing for both Parishes and the States.

2. Polling stations:

Article 26(1) places the decision as to polling stations for a public election with the JEA to give greater flexibility as to where these are located and to ensure they are placed in the optimum positions for voters. The JEA must first consult with the *Autorisés*. In practice, electoral administrators will be reserving premises for use as a polling station up to a year or more ahead of the election. As the date for the 2026 elections has been agreed (Sunday 7 June 2026), the JEA will need to determine premises in the next couple of months.

3. Giving of ballot papers:

Article 32 amends the provision about giving ballot papers to an elector – in future an elector will receive all ballots for elections being held on the day and the Comité supports this amendment.

Whilst this may simplify the process, it may also deter an elector who has decided how to vote in one election but is still unsure for other election(s). The current provision was introduced in 2011 and was, at that time, favoured over giving the elector all the ballot papers. The report P.14/2011 refers on page 7 explained:

When the Working Party considered this matter, and discussed the practical arrangements with the Jurats, it was agreed that the alternative, whereby electors would be automatically handed all ballot papers whether they wished to vote in the elections or not, was unsatisfactory as it could simply lead electors to spoil ballot papers or even take them away from the polling station without completing them. This could lead to difficulties with the reconciliation of the number of votes cast.

4. Working days:

The Comité welcomes the amendments to reference ‘working days’ in timelines including, for example, the return of postal ballots in Article 44(5). The earlier return of postal and pre-poll ballots to the polling stations, under Articles 45 and 46, will ease polling day administration.