

<b>Circular Details</b>	20-10 / 25 March 2020 / A696536
<b>Previous Circular</b>	20-06 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Development Updates
<b>Who should read this</b>	Councillors / General Managers / All council staff
<b>Contact</b>	Council Governance Team/ 02 4428 4100/ <a href="mailto:olg@olg.nsw.gov.au">olg@olg.nsw.gov.au</a>
<b>Action required</b>	Information

## Postponement of the September 2020 Local Government Elections

### What's new or changing?

- The Minister for Local Government has announced that the September 2020 local government elections will be postponed to address the risks posed by the COVID-19 virus.
- The *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) has been amended to confer on the Minister, a time-limited power to postpone council elections.
- The amendment, which operates for only a limited period of 12 months, allows the Minister by an order published in the Gazette, to postpone elections for 12 months from the date of the order. The order may be extended for an additional period to 31 December in the year after the order is made.
- The postponement of the next election will not change the future schedule of council elections, and the subsequent election will still proceed in September 2024.

### What this will mean for your council

- Where the Minister exercises the power to postpone elections under section 318B, the election requirements of the Act are suspended for the period specified in the order and current councillors will continue to hold their civic offices.
- Popularly elected mayors will continue to hold their office until an ordinary election is held. In the case of mayors elected by councillors, mayoral elections will need to be held for mayors elected in September 2018 when their two year-terms expire. Mayors elected in September 2019 will continue to hold office until September 2021, once the election date is determined.
- The composition of joint organisation boards may need to change if mayors of member councils elected by councillors are not re-elected.
- The postponement of elections will have implications for the activities councils may be required to undertake in the current and next integrated planning and reporting (IP&R) cycles. In general, OLG will seek to extend the current IP&R cycle for 12 months, with a next cycle to be truncated to 3 years. The Office of Local Government will be providing further detailed guidance on this and other changes to statutory timeframes that may become necessary as a result of deferring elections.

### Where to go for further information

- For further information please contact the Council Governance Team on 02 4428 4100 or by email at [olg@olg.nsw.gov.au](mailto:olg@olg.nsw.gov.au).



**Tim Hurst**  
Deputy Secretary  
Local Government, Planning and Policy