



**Aboriginal Health Council**  
of South Australia Ltd.

# Your Voice Your Vote

## South Australian Election Booklet

A resource on the South Australian 2026 State Election  
For AHCSA Member Services and the Aboriginal Community in SA

Date Created: February 2026

# Your Voice, Your Vote

## Acknowledgements

AHCSA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters across Australia and pays respect to Elders past and present. We acknowledge the strength, leadership and knowledge of Aboriginal communities and the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health sector and the vital role they play in improving outcomes for Aboriginal people.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide clear, independent information about how South Australia's Parliament work and how Aboriginal people and ACCHOs can use democratic and government pathways as one way to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people and communities.

This resource is intended to be shared, discussed and used across communities and organisations and was developed to support Aboriginal self-determination through informed civic participation.

## Why Our Voice Matters

The decisions made by the South Australian Government affect our families, our Elders, and our communities every day. These choices shape important things like:

- Our health and wellbeing services
- Housing and homelessness support
- Disability and aged care services
- Mental health and social and emotional wellbeing services
- Education, jobs, training and community safety

When we vote, we help choose the people who will listen to our communities, understand our priorities, and speak up in Parliament. Our Voice matters, for our families, culture and our future generations.





## A Simple Snapshot of South Australia’s Parliament

South Australia has a Parliament has **two houses** – the **Lower House** and **Upper House**. Both houses work together to make the laws that shape our lives, communities and future.

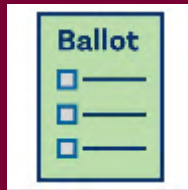
### House of Assembly (Lower House)

*This is where Government is formed.*

- 47 Members sit in the House of Assembly and are called Members of Parliament (MPs)
- Each MP represents a local area, called an electorate
- You only vote for the MP in your electorate
- The political party with the most MPs forms government
- The Premier and most Ministers sit in this house



Find your local electorate  
<https://www.ecsa.sa.gov.au/map>



When you go to vote – you use the green ballot paper to vote for your local MP

#### Why this matters:

- Most laws and funding decisions start in the Lower House

Your local MP helps shape laws that affect your community, services and daily life

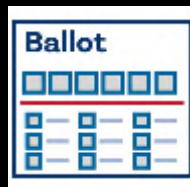
### Legislative Council (Upper House)

*This house reviews the laws.*

- 22 Members sit in the Legislative Council (MLCs)
- Elected by voters across the whole state
- Members serve longer terms



Elected by voters across the whole State



When you go to vote – the white ballot paper is used

#### Why this matters:

- MLCs check, review and can change laws
- They can delay or stop laws that may harm communities
- The Upper House often includes minor parties and independents, giving more voices a say



## South Australia State Election 2026

State elections in South Australia happen every four years and next State Election will be held on 21 March 2026. Voting at state elections is compulsory.

At this state election:

- All 47 House of Assembly seats are contested
- Some Legislative Council seats are contested
- Voters choose their local MP

On election day you will be asked to vote for candidates in both:

- the House of Assembly (Lower House)
- the Legislative Council (Upper House)

Your Vote:

- Voting is private and confidential
- No-one can see how you vote
- Voting is your personal choice



## Understanding the Political Landscape in South Australia

In South Australia, different political parties and independent candidates run for Parliament. Each brings their own ideas, priorities and plans for our communities.

### Major Political Parties

There are two major parties in SA, the Australian Labor Party (SA) and the Liberal Party of Australia (SA)

- Either can form Government or Opposition
- Both hold seats in the Lower and Upper Houses
- Since the early 1900's, one of the two major parties has formed government.

### Minor Parties and Independents

Alongside the major parties, voters may also choose:

- Minor parties (smaller parties)
- Independent candidates (not part of any political party)

These members may be elected to either house and often bring different voices and community perspectives into Parliament.

## Your Electorate and Representation

South Australia is divided into 47 electorates. Each area **elects one MP** to the House of Assembly (Lower House).

### Your Local MP:

- Speaks up for your area in Parliament
- Raises local issues with Government Ministers
- Can be contacted by community members and ACCHO's

### Members of the Legislative Council (MLCs) (Upper House)

- Are elected by voters from **across the whole state**
- Review, change and block laws
- Often sit on committees and look at big statewide issues
- May be from major parties, minor parties or be independents

Both MPs (Lower House) and MLCs (Upper House) play important roles. They are key people who can listen to Aboriginal communities, raise concerns and help drive change in Parliament.



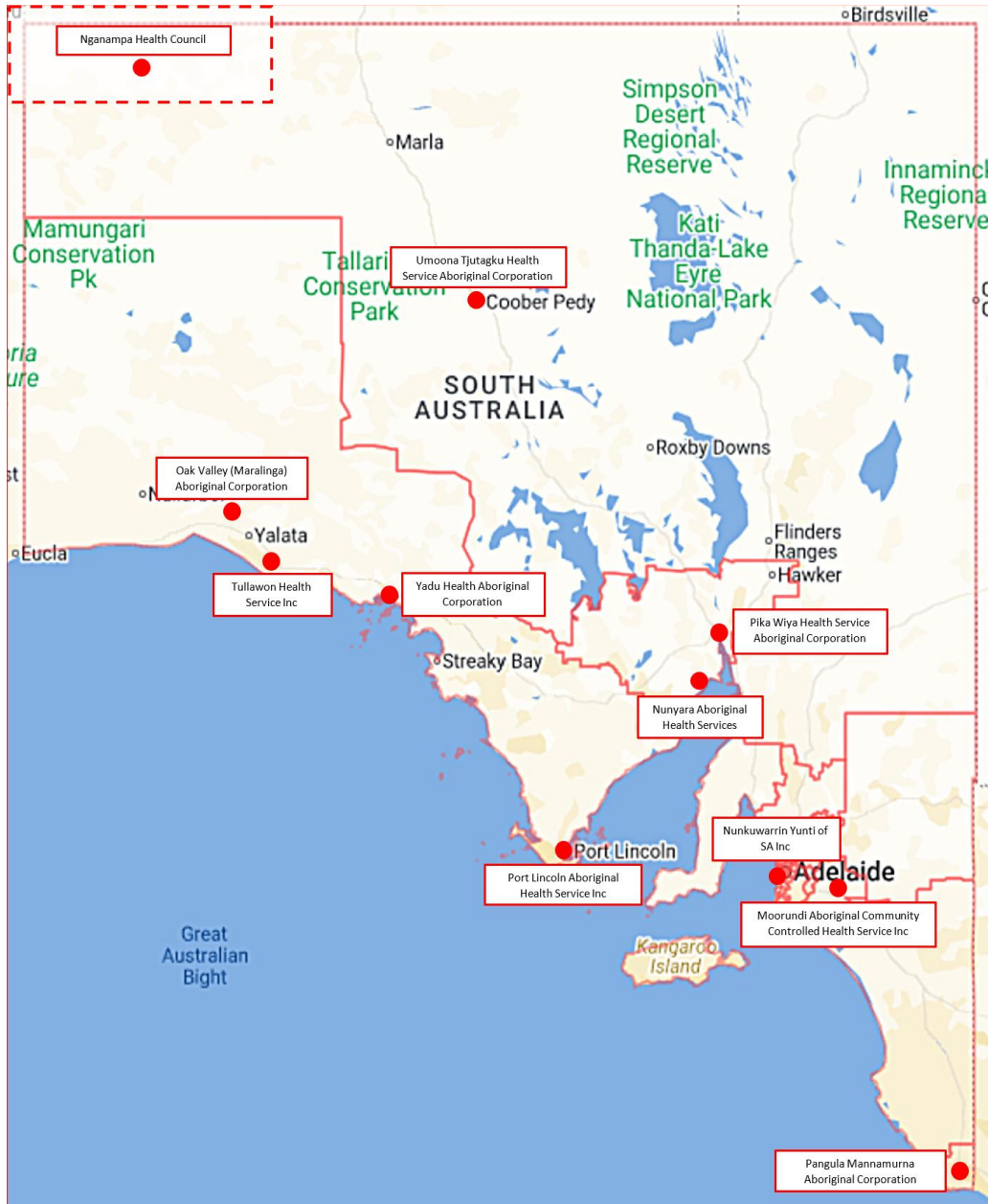
## Local electorates – did you know?

South Australia's 47 Electorates are based on **population**, not **land size**. This means each electorate has about the same number of enrolled voters, so everyone's vote is valued equally.

- City electorates are small in land size but have many people living close together.
  - Regional and remote electorates are huge in land area but have fewer people spread far apart
- For example:
- [Unley - Electoral Commission SA](#) has one of the smallest electorates in SA (about 14km<sup>2</sup>)
  - [Stuart - Electoral Commission SA](#) has one of the biggest, covering around 636,000 km<sup>2</sup> reaching the NT, WA, QLD and NSW borders and includes the APY Lands
- Electorate boundaries can change every few years as populations grow or move.
  - Each electorate has approx. **28,000 enrolled voters** (these numbers do not include children or people not eligible to vote so the population of each electorate area is often much greater than these numbers).
  - You can find your **electorate** and **Local First Nations Voice Regions** on the ECSA interactive Map [ECSA South Australian Electoral Map](#) just enter your address.
  - Information on each electorate district including geographic features, boundaries and past election results can be found at: [State electoral district profiles - Electoral Commission SA](#)



## Electorate Areas of ACCHO Member Services



[ECSA South Australian Electoral Map](#)

[Electoral District of Stuart:](#) Umoona Tjutagku Health Service Aboriginal Corporation, Nganampa Health Council

[Electoral District of Flinders:](#) Oak Valley Aboriginal Corporation, Tullawon Health Service Inc, Yadu Health Aboriginal Corporation, Port Lincoln Aboriginal Health Service

[Electoral District of Giles:](#) Nunyara Aboriginal Health Services, Pika Wiya Health Service Aboriginal Corporation

[Electoral District of Adelaide:](#) Nunkuwarnin Yunti of SA Inc

[Electoral District of Hammond:](#) Moorundi Aboriginal Community Controlled Health

[Electoral District of Mount Gambier:](#) Pangula Mannamurna Aboriginal Corporation



## Ways Aboriginal Communities and ACCHOs can influence change

**Your voice matters – not just at election time.**

You can help shape decisions and services all year round.

There are simple ways Aboriginal people, communities and ACCHOs can influence policy and change.

### 1. Talk to your Local MP

Your MP represents your area in Parliament.

*You can:*

- Invite them to visit your community or services
- Share local stories, needs and priorities
- Tell them what's working and ways not

*\*You don't need to be an expert. Community knowledge is powerful.*

### 2. Meet with Government Ministers or their Advisors

Government Ministers make big decisions about health housing, education, disability, justice and more.

*You can:*

- Ask for a meeting to discuss issues that fall under their portfolio
- Send written information or letters
- Speak through sector or peak body discussions
- This helps Ministers understand Aboriginal priorities

### 3. Make Submissions to a Parliamentary Committee

Committees look at different issues and proposed laws

*You can:*

- Send in a written submission (Plain English is ok and often preferred - you don't need to be a policy expert)
- Speak in person or online if invited
- Share lived experience to shape better outcomes

*\*Peak bodies may offer support with submissions, or you could partner to do a joint submission*

### 4. Respond to Government Consultations

Government often asks the community for feedback on various topics and your input helps:

- Improve programs and services



## CHECKLIST– Ways ACCHOs and Aboriginal Communities can participate

### Before the March 2026 Election

- Share information about voting and enrolment with community
- Invite local MPs or Candidates to visit your service or community
- Share local priorities, stories and concerns with MPs or Candidates

### Ongoing (before and after the Elections)

- Contact your local MP to raise community issues and priorities
- Meet with Ministers or their advisors about health, housing, justice or key areas that are important to you
- Respond to Government Consultations
- Make Submissions to Parliamentary Committees (plain English is ok)
- Work together through ACCHOs and peak bodies to strengthen advocacy

**Reminder** – Our advocacy is not aligned to political parties. It is grounded in a commitment to equity and self-determination and focuses on addressing structural barriers and improving outcomes for Aboriginal people and communities. Our Policy team provides strategic advice and support to advance these priorities. We can provide our members with help with advice and support: [policy@ahcsa.org.au](mailto:policy@ahcsa.org.au)



# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## South Australian State Election 2026

Aboriginal voices are vital in elections. Being an informed voter helps make sure decisions reflect our families, Elders, children, young people and Communities. *\*These FAQs are for information only and do not endorse any political party.*

### Deciding How to Vote

#### Q How do I decide who to vote for?

Choosing who to vote for can be very confusing. Start with what matters most to you, for example.

- Strong, culturally safe health services
- Cost of living and housing
- Climate Change and the environment
- Education, jobs and youth support for our young people

#### Then:

- Find your electorate and see who is running
- Look at their websites or social media pages
- Watch interviews or debates

#### Ask:

- Do their values align with mine and my community?
- Do they listen to Aboriginal communities?
- Do they understand local issues?
- Do they have clear plans, not just promises?

You can keep up to date with Election news [South Australia Election 2026 - ABC News](#)

#### Q What are the key issues this State Election?

Key issues often include;

- Cost of living
- Housing affordability and access
- Healthcare, including regional services and ambulance delays
- Energy, including renewable energy
- Water security, including drought resilience and regional supply

*\*Ask local candidates how their plans and policies will benefit Aboriginal people and communities.*



## How South Australian Parliament Works

### Q What does South Australian Parliament look like?

Parliament is where laws are made for our state. It has two houses:

- The House of Assembly (lower house) forms government and introduces laws
- The Legislative Council (upper house) reviews laws to make sure they are fair

### Q How is Government formed?

- The party (or group of parties) with the most seats in the **House of Assembly** (Lower House) forms Government
- The leader of that party becomes the Premier
- Most Ministers are chosen from the **House of Assembly** and make decisions as a group called Cabinet

### Q What is the House of Assembly (Lower House)?

The **House of Assembly**, forms government and introduces laws. The state is divided into **47 electoral districts** with similar populations - [find your electorate here](#).

- 47 members, each representing a local electorate
- Members are elected for 4-year terms
- The party (or coalition) with a **majority forms government** (generally 24 or more seats)
- The Premier and most Ministers sit in this house
- Responsible for
  - Introducing most laws
    - Passing the state budget
    - Running the day-to-day government

*Remember – When you vote: use the green ballot paper to choose your local MP*

### Q What is the Legislative Council (Upper House)?

The Legislative Council is the upper house of the South Australian Parliament

- 22 Members of the Legislative Council (MLCs) represent the whole state, not individual electorates
- Members serve 8-year terms, (half elected every 4 years)
- The Upper House **does not form government**
- Often includes more minor parties and independents
- It reviews, changes or can block laws

*Remember – When you vote: use the white ballot paper to choose Upper House candidates*



## How South Australian Parliament Works

### Q What is the difference between State, Federal and Local governments?

Each level of government has different responsibilities and provides different services to Australians

Local/Council (voting is not-compulsory)	State (voting is compulsory)	Federal (voting is compulsory)
Local roads and footpaths	Schools, TAFE and education	Medicare, Centrelink, aged care
Libraries	Hospitals and health services	Welfare payments and family support
Recycling and rubbish collection	Roads and highways	National policies
Sporting facilities and Parks	Public transport	Defence and boarder protection
Town planning and building regulations	Housing including public housing	Immigration and passports
	Police, courts and prisons	Taxation
	Water, environment and emergency services	
	Child protection	



## How Elections Work

### Q What happens at the State Election?

- Election Day is Saturday 21 March 2026.
- State elections are held every four years.
- You vote for your **local MP** (green ballot paper) and for the **Upper House candidates** (white ballot paper)
- All 47 House of Assembly (Lower House) seats are up for election
- 11 of the 22 seats in the Legislative Council (Upper House) seats are open for voting

### Q What is an Electorate District?

- A local area used for the Lower House Vote
- SA has 47 electorates
- Each electorate has about 28,000 enrolled voters

### Q Who are the people running for election?

- The people running for election are called candidates
- The Electorate Commission of SA (ECSA) publishes the **official list of candidates** for both houses after nominations close (2 March 2026) available [Parties and candidates - Electoral Commission SA](#)
- You can also check out [ABC South Australia 2026 Election Guide](#) that includes a running list of candidates that is regularly updated once they are announced.

### Q How do I enrol to vote?

- If you are over 18 and an Australian Citizen, you must enrol and vote
- Go to the ECSA website to check, enrol or update your details: [Check my enrolment](#)
- Call [1300 655 232](tel:1300655232)
  - Find your electorate by typing your address on the ECSA website: [ECSA South Australian Electoral Map](#)

### Q What is the South Australia First Nations Voice?

The [South Australia First Nations Voice](#) is an elected, advisory body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in South Australia. It gives communities a way to raise priorities and issues with government. The voice is advisory only and does not make laws or decisions. Elections for each Local First nations Voice region will be held on 21 March 2026, the same day and same locations as the South Australian State Election. To vote you must be:

- An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person,
- 18 years or older and on the electoral roll.



[First Nations Voice to Parliament | First Nations Voice to Parliament](#)



## Further information

For more information on the upcoming election, including how to vote go to [Home - Electoral Commission SA](#) or call [1300 655 232](tel:1300655232)

### \*Disclaimer

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*The Electoral Commission of South Australia (ECSA) is the official source for electoral information, enrolment, and voting procedures*

[Home - Electoral Commission SA](#)

## Useful Websites

[Home - Electoral Commission SA](#) - Your official guide to South Australia's state election

[First Nations Voice to Parliament – South Australia](#)

[Voting Easy Read Guides - Electoral Commission SA](#)

[South Australia Electoral Map](#)

[Information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People - Australian Electoral Commission](#)

[About South Australia's Parliament – Video Series](#)

[Vote Compass Australia 2025 - Australia Votes - ABC News](#) - Explore how your views compare to parties and candidates.

[Parliamentary Education Office](#) - Resources and education covering all levels of government



[South Australian  
Elections 2026 - South  
Australian Electoral  
Commission - Home](#)



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