



Comhshaol, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil
Environment, Community and Local Government

Oifig an Aire
Office of the Minister

// January, 2013.

Ms. Emer O'Gorman,
South Dublin County Council,
County Hall,
Tallaght,
Dublin 24

RE: REP7129/PH/12

Dear Ms. O'Gorman,

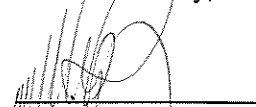
I have been asked by Mr Phil Hogan, T.D. and Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government to refer further to your recent letter in connection with early and/or postal voting (ref.: M5/1212).

Under electoral law, in order to be able to vote at elections in Ireland, a person's name must be entered in the register of electors for a constituency in the State in which the person ordinarily resides. With some exceptions, all persons must attend in person to vote at their local polling station.

Postal voting is provided for in electoral law in respect of certain categories of person who are entered in the register of electors. The Electoral Act 1992 provides for postal voting by whole-time members of the Defence Forces, members of the Garda Síochána, and Irish diplomats serving abroad and their spouses/ civil partners. Subsequent legislation enacted by the Oireachtas has extended postal voting to other categories: electors living at home who are unable to vote because of a physical illness or a physical disability (the Electoral (Amendment) Act 1996); electors whose occupation, service or employment makes it likely that they will be unable to vote in person at their local polling station on polling day and full-time students registered at their home who are living elsewhere while attending an educational institute in the State – in these cases, the law provides for completion of the necessary voting documentation at a Garda station (the Electoral Act 1997); certain election staff employed at the poll outside the constituency where they reside (the Electoral (Amendment) Act 2001); and electors who because of the circumstances of their detention in prison pursuant to an order of a court are likely to be unable to go in person on polling day to vote (the Electoral (Amendment) Act 2006).

While electoral law is subject to on-going review, there are no proposals currently to alter the existing arrangements along the lines suggested.

Yours sincerely,


Eddie Kiernan,
Private Secretary

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