Muslim Votes Matter – Volunteer FAQ (Updated After Session 2)

General Election Day Questions

1. Are we allowed to make statements about particular candidates at the booth?

Answer:

MVM volunteers will distribute our How-to-Vote (HTV) cards, which may include recommendations for particular candidates. However, volunteers must not campaign on behalf of or represent themselves as part of a candidate's official team. Keep all messaging aligned with MVM materials only and avoid additional commentary unless specifically trained to do so.

2. When will the How-to-Vote cards be available?

Answer:

HTV cards will be finalised and printed **approximately 2 weeks before election day**, once all candidates are confirmed and the AEC issues final ballot orders.

3. Will the HTV cards differ from who we've endorsed?

Answer:

In most cases, our endorsements will align with the order on the HTV cards. However, HTV cards are strategic tools that may also take into account local dynamics and preferences flow. If there are differences, we will be transparent and provide clear reasoning.

4. Will MVM have a presence at booths in Calwell (or my electorate)?

Answer:

MVM is aiming to man polling booths in all of our focus seats where we are endorsing candidates. Yes, Calwell is one of our priority electorates.

5. Has the MVM HTV platform been tested to ensure it won't crash on election day?

Answer:

Yes, our technical team has conducted testing on the platform's performance and is continuing to monitor for stability and scalability to manage traffic on election day.

6. When will booth captains be allocated?

Answer:

Booth captain rosters are being finalised and will be communicated over the next 2 weeks prior to election day. If you expressed interest, someone will be in touch.

7. What is the minimum age to volunteer?

Answer:

There is no strict minimum age. Children and teenagers may assist with adult supervision. Roles will be assigned based on capacity, comfort, and appropriateness.

8: How do we volunteer for pre-polling?

Answer:

Let your local seat lead or booth captain know that you are available for pre-polling. Pre-polling generally runs for two weeks prior to election day. Volunteers will be rostered accordingly.

9: Who decides which polling station we are at? Can we request a specific one?

Answer:

Booth allocations are handled by the local coordinator. If you have a preferred location (especially close to home), you can let them know, and we will try to accommodate where possible depending on needs and numbers.

Volunteer Behaviour & Booth Etiquette

8. What if party volunteers try to distract or tie us up in conversation?

Answer:

This is a known tactic by some parties. Be friendly but stay focused. Politely disengage and return your attention to voters. You are there to represent MVM and assist voters, not to socialise with other volunteers.

9. Can we volunteer for pre-poll days (before election day)?

Answer:

Yes! Pre-polling is a key opportunity. Retirees, students, and those with flexible schedules are especially encouraged to assist. Express your availability to your booth captain or local coordinator.

10: Does the opening line when speaking to voters have to be in English?

Answer:

While it's preferable to start in English to ensure clarity and inclusivity, you're welcome to use a familiar greeting in another language (like “Salam Alaikum”) if appropriate and respectful. Always make sure the voter feels comfortable and included.

11: Should we target only Muslim voters? How do we decide who to approach?

Answer:

No. Approach all voters equally and respectfully. Don’t assume someone’s religion or background based on appearance. MVM HTV cards are for anyone who shares our values.

12: If someone says something racist, when should we escalate?

Answer:

If you feel unsafe or someone uses threatening or discriminatory language, step away and report it to your Booth Captain immediately. They will assess whether to notify AEC officials or security. **Under no circumstances should you engage or respond to the individual.**

13: If someone says, "Why should I vote for you?" – what do we say?

Answer:

You're not the candidate—so respond: "I'm here on behalf of Muslim Votes Matter, an independent group. We've endorsed a candidate based on their responses to our priorities. You can read more on our website or take this flyer." Keep it simple, non-confrontational, and focused.

General Feedback

14. How do I know how many volunteers are needed in my electorate?

Answer:

Our goal is to have 150–300 volunteers per electorate. Booth captains and state coordinators will update you on specific needs as we finalise rosters.

Strategy & Media

15. I've seen media trying to smear MVM – what's our response?

Answer:

We are aware of misleading reports. Our official response is:

"Any claims suggesting collaboration or preference deals with parties we haven't publicly endorsed are completely false. We remain independent and accountable to our community."

We will continue to be transparent and principled in how we engage with the media and the public.

16: Can we distribute the How-to-Vote cards before election day?

Answer:

Yes, once the cards are finalised and printed, they can be distributed during pre-poll, in the lead-up to election day, and electronically. However, you must still follow AEC regulations, which restrict certain activities within 6 metres of a polling booth.

17: Are the How-to-Vote cards available online?

Answer:

They will be available on our website as soon as the AEC releases the official ballot order. Volunteers and the public can access them at www.muslimvotesmatter.com.au. There will be one for every electorate in the country.

18: How do we pass MVM How-to-Vote cards to postal voters?

Answer:

You can share the digital version of the HTV card by sending them the link to their electorate page on our website. There will also be an SMS notification option they can subscribe to for easy access. You can also get physical copies of the HTV and hand it to them.

19: Are we endorsing the Greens in all the seats we're targeting?

Answer:

No. While some endorsed candidates are Greens, we also support independents and others whose values align with our policy priorities. Each endorsement is based on the individual candidate's positions, not their party alone.

20: Are we endorsing Fatima Payman's party or candidate?

Answer:

We have endorsed one of Australia's Voice candidates, following a review of their positions against our policy priorities. This is independent of any personal affiliations or assumptions. Full details are on our social media channels.

21: What do we say to people who ask for more details about policy?

Answer:

Keep your responses simple and direct voters to our website or the candidate's published questionnaire response. Say something like: "MVM evaluated each candidate based on a set of 15 policy issues. You can read their answers on our social media pages." Avoid going into policy debates unless you're specifically trained.

22: If someone asks why MVM endorsed a particular candidate, is that the same as talking about policy?

Answer:

It can be, but if you stick to describing the process (not debating the content), that's fine. Say: "They responded to our policy questionnaire and we endorsed candidates who align with our values. You can find the full response online."