

We thank Forum writers Ng Cheng Hoon and Rahul Patwardhan for their letters “Let Singaporeans vote in the elections, no matter where they are”, and “Make it easier for overseas Singaporeans to vote” (both April 1).

Ms Ng suggested that we implement online voting via a secure digital platform, such as the Singpass application, so that Singaporeans who are travelling on Polling Day can vote.

The Elections Department has previously studied this suggestion. We have not implemented online voting because it is difficult to prevent voter impersonation and ensure voter secrecy.

For voters and contesting candidates/political parties to be sure that online votes are accurately recorded, the system will need to retain information on the voter’s choice in case an audit is required. This will compromise voter secrecy. For now, voting by paper ballot remains the most transparent and secure method of voting.

Mr Patwardhan suggested that we remove the current requirement for an overseas Singaporean to have resided in Singapore for an aggregate of 30 days in the last three years before he can qualify as an overseas voter.

This is a longstanding requirement to ensure that overseas voting is extended only to Singaporeans who continue to maintain links to Singapore.

Besides the arrangement for overseas Singaporeans to be able to vote at one of the 10 overseas polling stations, we have recently introduced postal voting to improve voter access for overseas Singaporeans. This was implemented at the 2023 Presidential Election and will also be available for the upcoming general election.

The Elections Department would also like to remind Singaporeans intending to vote from overseas in the upcoming general election to register as overseas voters early, if they have not already done so.

Applications to be registered as overseas voters will close at the end of the second day after the Writ of Election is issued. Eligible overseas Singaporeans may register as overseas voters via “voter services” on the Elections Department website.

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