



# **THE OFFICIAL MANUAL FOR RETURNING OFFICERS, SUPERNUMERARY RETURNING OFFICERS AND OTHER ELECTION OFFICIALS**

## **GENERAL & REGIONAL ELECTIONS**

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**GUYANA ELECTIONS COMMISSION**

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## FOREWORD

It is both an honour and a privilege to present this Manual of Instructions for Returning Officers, Supernumerary Returning Officers, and other Management Staff involved in the conduct of General and Regional Elections. This Manual serves as a comprehensive guide designed to ensure that all electoral processes are executed with integrity, transparency, and efficiency.


The primary purpose of this Manual is to equip Returning Officers, Supernumerary Returning Officers, and Management Staff with the necessary tools, knowledge, and procedures required for the successful administration of Elections. It outlines critical responsibilities, operational protocols, and best practices that must be adhered to throughout the electoral process. By following these guidelines, we can uphold our commitment to democratic principles and ensure that every citizen's right to vote is respected.

Elections are a cornerstone of democracy; they provide citizens with the opportunity to express their will through the ballot box. The integrity of our electoral process is paramount. This Manual emphasizes the importance of impartiality, accountability, and adherence to legal frameworks governing elections in Guyana. Each Returning Officer plays a vital role in maintaining public confidence in our electoral system.

To effectively implement the instructions contained within this Manual, ongoing training and capacity building for all personnel involved in election management are essential. This document not only serves as a reference but also as a foundation for continuous learning and improvement within our electoral framework.

As we prepare for upcoming elections, let us remain steadfast in our dedication to conducting free, fair, and credible elections. The guidelines provided herein are intended to support you in your critical roles as custodians of democracy. Together, we can ensure that every election reflects the true voice of the people of Guyana.

Thank you for your commitment to this important endeavour.



Chairman  
Guyana Elections Commission



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This manual is intended to assist all Management Officials, who are the persons appointed to perform the critical role of management of General and Regional Elections, and Election Officials other than Polling Day Officials, who are persons appointed and assigned to specific Polling Places / Stations within their respective District / Sub-District.

### **1.1 Objectives**

The main objectives of this manual are:

- 1) To develop an appreciation for the role of Election, Management and Polling Day Officials,
- 2) To provide an in-depth guide to the legal and administrative processes required for Management Officials with respect to the conduct of General and Regional Elections.

### **1.2 Role of the Elections Commission**

The Guyana Elections Commission is constitutionally required to exercise general direction and supervision over the conduct of elections. This includes –

- 1) appointing all Staff,
- 2) removing and disciplining such Staff, and
- 3) issuing instructions that are necessary or expedient to ensure impartiality, fairness and compliance with the Constitution and other laws of Guyana for the conduct of elections.

### **1.3 Reference to Elections Laws**

In this manual, reference is made to the laws governing the conduct of the Elections. These are:

- 1) The Constitution of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, Cap. 1:01 (the Constitution)
- 2) The Representation of the People Act, Cap. 1:03 (RoPA)
- 3) General Elections (Observers) Act, Cap. 1:10 (Observers Act)

#### 1.4 Divisions of Guyana for General and Regional Elections

- 1) For General and Regional Elections, ballots are cast throughout Guyana in favour of Lists of Candidates representing Political Parties, to elect the President, the sixty-five members of the National Assembly and the members of the ten Regional Democratic Councils.
- 2) For that purpose, Guyana is divided into ten (10) **Polling Districts** that coincide with the country's ten (10) Administrative Regions.
- 3) Three of those Districts are divided into **Sub-districts**, as follows:
  - (a) District 3, Essequibo Islands/West Demerara, is divided into three (3) Sub-districts –
    - (i) Essequibo Islands and River Sub-District,
    - (ii) St. Lawrence to Cornelia Ida Sub-District and,
    - (iii) Hague to Arabio Creek Sub-District.
  - (b) District 4, Demerara/Mahaica, is divided into four (4) Sub-districts –
    - (i) East Bank Demerara Sub-District,
    - (ii) North Georgetown Sub-District,
    - (iii) South Georgetown Sub-District and,
    - (iv) East Coast Demerara Sub-District.
  - (c) District 6, East Berbice/Corentyne, is divided into three (3) Sub-districts –
    - (i) East Bank Berbice to Canje Sub-District,
    - (ii) Upper Corentyne Sub-District and,
    - (iii) Lower Corentyne Sub-District.
- 4) Each **District/Sub-District** is comprised of **Polling Divisions**, which will coincide with registration divisions unless the Commission specifies otherwise by order.



- 5) Each **Polling Division** is then divided into **Polling Places** as appointed by the Returning Officer of the relevant District, subject to the approval of the Chief Election Officer (CEO).
- 6) Where it is impracticable to appoint a Polling Place within a Division or any part thereof, the CEO may appoint a place in another Division within the same District to allow electors of the former Division or part thereof to vote.
- 7) A **Polling Place** may be divided into **Polling Stations** by the Returning Officer of the District, taking into consideration the following factors:
  - a) Polling Places appointed may be divided into Polling Stations where there is adequate space.
  - b) Returning Officers may subdivide Polling Places into Polling Stations after carefully considering:
    - (i) the number of electors on the list for that Polling Place, since there must not be more than four hundred (400) electors assigned to vote at a Polling Station,
    - (ii) the size of the Polling Place,
    - (iii) the availability of internal and external space in the Polling Place to accommodate electors lining up at a reasonable distance apart,
    - (iv) the accessibility of the Polling Place for persons with disability, and
    - (v) any other relevant factor.

## **2. ELECTION OFFICERS**

### **2.1 Identity of Election Officers**

The following officials are Election Officers identified under RoPA:

- 1) Chief Election Officer (CEO),
- 2) Deputy Chief Election Officer (DCEO),

- 3) Returning Officers (ROs),
- 4) Deputy Returning Officers (DROs),
- 5) Supernumerary Returning Officers (SROs),
- 6) Deputy Supernumerary Returning Officers (DSROs),
- 7) Election Clerks (ECs),
- 8) Presiding Officers (POs),
- 9) Assistant Presiding Officers (APOs),
- 10) Poll Clerks (PCs), and
- 11) Counting Assistants (CAs).

## **2.2 Assignment of Election Officials**

- 1) The CEO, supported by the DCEO, has overall responsibility for the administrative conduct of the Elections, but he is subject to the direction and control of the Commission in this regard.
- 2) The following Election Officers are assigned as follows:
  - (a) For each District –
    - (i) A Returning Officer, and
    - (ii) An Election Clerk.
  - (b) For each Sub-District –
    - (i) A Supernumerary Returning Officer, and
    - (ii) An Election Clerk.
  - (c) For each Polling Station –
    - (i) A Presiding Officer,
    - (ii) A Poll Clerk, and

(iii) A Counting Assistant.

- 3) Deputy Returning Officers, Deputy Supernumerary Returning Officers, Assistant Presiding Officers and other Staff are appointed and assigned as necessary or desirable for the conduct of the Elections.

## **2.3 Oath of Office**

- 1) Before any Election Officer can perform any function under the Act, he/she must take an Oath on **Form 1** (see Appendix I).
- 2) Oaths referred to in paragraph (1) above must be administered by:
  - (a) a Justice of the Peace, or
  - (b) an Election Official who has already taken the oath.

## **2.4 Establishment of Offices**

- 1) On taking the Oath of Office, the Returning Officer must:
  - (a) Establish an office in his/her District,
  - (b) Have an advertisement placed in a newspaper circulating in the district identifying the place at which he/she has established his/her office, and
  - (c) Display prominently the location of his/her office and the hours of operation.
- 2) In line with the guidance and instructions given by the Chief Election Officer, the Returning Officer may also establish offices for any Deputy Returning Officers as are assigned to his/her Polling District.
- 3) The CEO will establish offices for Supernumerary Returning Officers in the respective Sub-Districts. Offices for Deputy Supernumerary Returning Officers may also be established by the Supernumerary Returning Officers, on the guidance and instructions of the CEO.

## 2.5 Roles and Responsibilities

### 2.5.1 *Returning Officers*

The Returning Officer **must** carry out all functions required of this office, as specified in the law, or any other function as directed by the Commission through the Chief Election Officer.

Specifically, he/she must:

- 1) Maintain close communication with, and report to, the CEO/DCEO.
- 2) Identify and establish Polling Stations.
- 3) Publicise –
  - (a) the Notice of Poll and
  - (b) the location of Polling Places (buildings in which Polling Stations are located).
- 4) Receive, for each List of Candidates contesting the Elections, appointments of –
  - (a) Assistant Agents,
  - (b) Counting Agents,
  - (c) Polling Agents and
  - (d) Alternate Polling Agents.
- 5) Liaise with Election Agents with regards to the establishment of Polling Stations.
- 6) Liaise with their respective Divisional Commander of the Guyana Police Force with regards to –
  - (a) the appointment of Police Officers for each Polling Station and
  - (b) general security arrangements for Polling Stations as well as other Offices established.
- 7) Publicise Lists of Candidates pursuant to Nomination Day Activities.
- 8) Prepare and display the Official List of Electors.

- 9) Coordinate the preparation of Polling Stations, including furnishing, security, and supplies.
- 10) Coordinate arrangements for the receipt, safe storage, delivery and return of all electoral materials.
- 11) Receive and investigate applications for (or cancellation of) Proxy, and issue Appointment of Proxies.
- 12) Receive applications for and issuing Certificates of Employment.
- 13) Supervise and instruct Deputy Returning Officers / Deputy Supernumerary Returning Officers accordingly.
- 14) Receive electoral materials after the Close of Poll.
- 15) Ascertain the results of the election in his/her District/Sub-District from Statements of Poll.
- 16) Prepare Election Returns on Form 24.
- 17) Conduct limited or general final counts, if applicable.
- 18) Ensuring all election materials are securely delivered to the Elections Commission.
- 19) Prepare final report of the elections in his/her District/Sub-District and deliver same to the Chief Election Officer.

### ***2.5.2 Deputy Returning Officers***

The Deputy Returning Officer must:

- 1) Ensure all requirements are in place for Polling Stations prior to election day.
- 2) Ensure that all Polling Day Officials appointed, have the skills for the effective and efficient performance of their duties by aiding the delivery of training programmes as needed.
- 3) Ensure that all election materials are made available to Polling Stations in sufficient quantities and on time.

- 4) Disseminate official information within his/her assigned cluster / area.
- 5) Provide general guidance to Presiding Officers and other Polling Day Officials and act as a conduit between Polling Stations and the Returning Officer on election day.
- 6) Coordinate activities after the Close of Poll including, but not limited to, the secure transport and delivery of election materials to the Returning Officer.
- 7) Give general assistance to the Returning Officer as needed.

### ***2.5.3 Supernumerary Returning Officers***

- 1) Supernumerary Returning Officers are given specific, statutory roles in the procedure after the close of poll, which are detailed in Chapter 5.
- 2) Before, during and at the close of Poll, Supernumerary Returning Officers will assist the Returning Officers/Deputy Returning Officers in the performance of their duties in relation to the Sub-District to which they are assigned, when required to do so.
- 3) In performing the functions referred to in paragraph 2 above, Supernumerary Returning Officers may be required to:
  - (a) Maintain close communication with, and report to, the Returning Officers/Deputy Returning Officers.
  - (b) Liaise with –
    - (i) Election Agents and,
    - (ii) other representatives of Lists of Candidates appointed to Polling Stations in the Sub-District to which they are assigned.
  - (c) Assist in the preparation of Polling Stations, including furnishings, security, and supplies.
  - (d) Supervise and instruct any Deputy Supernumerary Returning Officers.

#### ***2.5.4 Deputy Supernumerary Returning Officer***

- 1) Deputy Supernumerary Returning Officers are only given statutory authority to act in the place of the Supernumerary Returning Officer where that Officer is not available, specifically in relation to conducting a recount.
- 2) Apart from their role as identified in paragraph (1), Deputy Supernumerary Returning Officers may be required to assist the Supernumerary Returning Officer in the performance of their duties.

#### ***2.5.5 Election Clerk***

The role of the Election Clerk is to:

- 1) Provide general assistance to the Returning Officer/Deputy Returning Officer/Supernumerary Returning Officer/Deputy Supernumerary Returning Officer in the performance of all election related duties including –
  - (a) pre-poll activities - including the distribution of electoral materials and supplies to Polling Stations; and
  - (b) post-poll activities with regards to the return and safe custody of materials and supplies referenced above.
- 2) Function as an Office Manager charged with ensuring all administrative needs, of the Office to which they are assigned, are met.

#### ***2.5.6 Clerical Assistant***

The Clerical Assistant is assigned to either the Office of the Returning Officer/Supernumerary Returning Officer, reports to the Election Clerk and is required to:

- 1) Facilitate communication between stakeholders and the office to which he/she is assigned.
- 2) Perform clerical duties including to –
  - (a) prepare digital documents and

- (b) file/organise correspondences and other documents for the Office.
- 3) Ensure that the Office is kept in a clean and tidy manner and that stakeholders are comfortably received.
- 4) Perform other duties as may be assigned by the Election Clerk.

## **2.6 Code of Conduct**

- 1) Election Officials –
  - (a) have a critical role in the election processes and must execute the responsibilities assigned to them with the highest-level of professionalism.
  - (b) have direct contact with various stakeholders including electors and contestants, and they must perform their duties in a manner that exudes confidence in the electoral process and, by extension, the Elections Commission.
- 2) To fulfil their role in paragraph 1 above, they must carry out their duties with –
  - (a) Courtesy,
  - (b) Respect,
  - (c) Willingness,
  - (d) Integrity
  - (e) Neutrality,
  - (f) Transparency and,
  - (g) Fairness.
- 3) Specifically, they must –
  - (a) Respect the secrecy of the vote.
  - (b) Ensure that the materials and property of the Elections Commission are handled and stored securely.



- (c) Report promptly and accurately, all information, including the results of the elections.

## **2.7 Organisational Structure for Elections**

Refer to Appendix II.

## **3. PREPARATIONS FOR THE POLL**

Prior to Polling Day, Election Officials are required to ensure preparedness in line with various categories of requirements. The following sections outline these areas.

### **3.1 Appointment of Polling Places/Stations**

#### ***3.1.1 Determine quantum and situation of Polling Places/Stations***

- 1) The number of Polling Places/Stations needed for each division is dependent on the number of electors listed on the Official List of Electors for that division.
- 2) Since no more than four hundred (400) electors may be assigned to vote at a Polling Station, the number of electors listed on the Official List of Electors for that division must be divided by 400 to determine the number of Polling Stations needed for that division. Such division must be done based on electors' last name taken alphabetical order (referred to as "alpha-splitting").
- 3) In some cases, where the number of electors in a division does not exceed 400 but the geographical size of the division necessitates the appointment of multiple polling stations to ensure ease of access to those electors, a split of the list based on the addresses of the electors may be taken into consideration. Such a split is referred to as a "geo-splitting". For the avoidance of doubt, after geographically splitting the list of electors for a division, further alpha splitting may be necessary depending on the number of electors in each geographically-split list.
- 4) The number of Polling Places would be dependent on how many public and, if necessary, private buildings are available to be used and are needed to accommodate the number of Polling Stations identified at paragraph 2 above.

- 5) The information obtained in paragraph 4 above about a division may indicate that it is impracticable to appoint a Polling Place in that division or any part of it, in which case a place in another division within the same district would have to be appointed as a Polling Place for electors in the first-mentioned division to vote.
- 6) The appointment in paragraph 5 above is subject to the same conditions noted in paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 above.

### ***3.1.2 Appoint Polling Places/Stations***

- 1) Based on the information obtained above, Returning Officers must appoint the necessary number of public buildings as Polling Places / Polling Stations for each village or locality within each Polling Division with respect to their Districts.
- 2) The appointment of Polling Places / Stations as required in paragraph 1 above is subject to the approval of the CEO.
- 3) Where there are no, or insufficient numbers of, public buildings available to be appointed as required by paragraph 1 above, the CEO may rent the required number of private buildings so that these may be appointed as Polling Places / Stations.
- 4) Any private buildings appointed pursuant to paragraph 3 above **must be unconnected with political parties or politicians.**
- 5) Where there are also no private buildings available to be appointed as Polling Places / Stations under paragraph 3 above, the CEO may direct that temporary structure(s) be erected at appropriate site(s) within the division and appoint these as Polling Places to allow for electors in those divisions to vote.
- 6) Where it is impracticable to appoint a Polling Place / Station within a division or any part of it, and there are no appropriate sites that may be used in the manner identified in paragraph 4 above, the CEO may appoint a Polling Place in another division within the same district for electors in the first-mentioned division to vote.
- 7) In other cases, where none of the above provisions are practicable to facilitate the voting of electors in a particular division, the CEO may make whatever arrangements as he determines to be necessary to appoint Polling Station(s) which will enable

electors within that division to properly cast their ballots in the same manner as other Polling Stations are appointed aforementioned.

- 8) The Returning Officer shall affix to each Polling Place in his/her district, a copy of the Official List of Electors and the List of Candidates **no later than 20 days before Election Day**.

### ***3.1.3 Polling Stations***

- 1) Polling Places appointed under Section 3.1.2 above may be divided into Polling Stations where there is adequate space.
- 2) Returning Officers may subdivide Polling Places into Polling Stations after carefully considering:
  - (a) the number of electors on the list for that Polling Place, since there must not be more than four hundred (400) electors assigned to vote at a Polling Station,
  - (b) the size of the Polling Place,
  - (c) the availability of internal and external space in the Polling Place to accommodate electors lining up at a reasonable distance apart,
  - (d) the accessibility of the Polling Place for persons with disability, and
  - (e) any other relevant factor.
- 3) The division of Polling Places into Polling Stations, as referenced above, is subject to the approval of the CEO.

### ***3.1.4 Timeline for appointment of Polling Stations***

- 1) Each Returning Officer must send the list of Polling Stations identified in their district to the Election Agent of each List of Candidates, **no later than the 30<sup>th</sup> day before Election Day**.
- 2) The Election Agents may, **no later than 7 days after the receipt of the list of Polling Stations**, as indicated in paragraph 1 above, raise with the Returning Officer any concern in relation to the list.

- 3) The Returning Officer must address any concerns, referred to in paragraph 2, above so that the situation of each Polling Station in the district is specified, **no later than the 21<sup>st</sup> day before Election Day**, in –
  - (a) the Notice of Polling Places to be published in the Official Gazette by the CEO, and
  - (b) the Notice of Poll on Form 9 (see Appendix VIII), prepared by the Returning Officer, which must indicate:
    - (i) The day on and the hours between which the poll will be conducted, and
    - (ii) The situation of each polling place in the district.

### **3.2 Staffing the Polling Station**

- 1) The Elections Commission appoints persons to the positions of Presiding Officers, Assistant Presiding Officers, Poll Clerks and Counting Assistants/Ballot Clerks and any other staff necessary for the management of all Polling Stations.
- 2) The duties and responsibilities of those Officials are clearly laid out in the ***Official Manual for Presiding Officers and other Polling Day Officials*** (herein after referred to as the *Manual for Polling Day Officials*) prepared by the Elections Commission, and that Manual should be considered as an Appendix to this Manual.

### **3.3 Equipping the Polling Station**

#### ***3.3.1 Responsibility of equipping the Polling Station***

- 1) The Returning Officer must ensure that every Polling Station in his/her district is provided with all furniture, equipment and other relevant supplies necessary for the conduct of the entire elections process at the Polling Station.
- 2) Such supplies as referred in paragraph 1 must be requisitioned no later than 14 days before Election Day on Form A36 (see Appendix IV) in time for the Polling Day Officials to arrange the Polling Stations for Election Day.
- 3) The task referred to in paragraph 1 is usually delegated to the Deputy Returning Officer.

### **3.3.2 Furniture**

- 1) The basic requirements for each Polling Stations are:
  - (a) Tables and chairs for the –
    - (i) Presiding Officer,
    - (ii) Assistant Presiding Officer,
    - (iii) Poll Clerk(s) and
    - (iv) Counting Assistant/Ballot Clerk,
  - (b) A supplies table,
  - (c) A table on which the voting compartment will be placed, and
  - (d) Chairs for Agents
  - (e) Facilities for Voting Compartments
- 2) The Polling Station will be arranged prior to the opening of poll in a manner as outlined in the *Manual for Polling Day Officials* and must be rearranged for the counting of votes after the close of poll.

### **3.3.3 Equipment and Materials**

- 1) For Polling Day, each Presiding Officer must be provided with:
  - (a) Presiding Officer's seal
  - (b) Ballot box with plastic and wire seals
  - (c) Voting compartment(s) for the electors to cast their vote in secrecy.
  - (d) Stamp for the Official Mark (Six-Digit Stamp)
  - (e) Stamp pad/ink
  - (f) Electoral ink
  - (g) Ballot pencils

- (h) Emergency lighting equipment
  - (i) Other required stationery
- 2) These items, except the ballot box and voting compartment, are placed in PE 19 (Poll Bag) and are to be delivered to the Presiding Officer prior to the opening of poll.
- 3) For a more detailed description of the materials and equipment to be provided to the Presiding Officer, see Chapter 3 in the *Manual for Polling Day Officials*.

### **3.3.4 Documents**

- 1) In addition to furniture and materials/supplies, the Act requires the Returning Officer to provide sufficient copies of documents, crucial to the effective conduct of poll and for activities after the poll, to each Presiding Officer.
- 2) A full list of the documents to be provided is laid out in Section 3.2 of the *Manual for Polling Day Officials*.
- 3) Specifically, in relation to Ballot Papers:
  - (a) A sufficient number will be provided to cater for the number of electors on the Official List allocated to each Polling Station.
  - (b) An additional number will be provided, as determined by the Commission, to cater for –
    - (i) spoilage as well as,
    - (ii) any additional elector who would need to be added to the Official List (in the case of *Certificates of Employment*).

## **3.4 Agents/Candidates**

### **3.4.1 Election Agent**

- 1) The Representative of a List of Candidates must appoint himself or some other person to be the Election Agent for that List.
- 2) Notice of the appointment of the Election Agents must **be sent by the Representatives** of the respective Lists **to the CEO**.

- 3) The Notice in paragraph 2 above must be sent **no later than the 32<sup>nd</sup> day before election day.**

### **3.4.2 Other Agents**

- 1) After the appointment of the Election Agent, the following may be appointed for each List of Candidates:
  - (a) **ONE Assistant Agent** for each –
    - (i) district and
    - (ii) sub-district.
  - (b) Other **Assistant Agents** as counterparts of Deputy Returning Officers.
  - (c) **ONE Counting Agent** for each –
    - (i) district and
    - (ii) sub-district.
  - (d) **ONE Polling Agent** and **ONE Alternate Polling Agent** for each
    - (i) Polling Place and
    - (ii) Polling Station.
- 2) Notice of the appointment of Agents identified in paragraph 1 above must be **sent by the Election Agent** of the respective Lists **to the Returning Officer** of the respective districts, and it must state the –
  - (a) name of the Agent and
  - (b) address of the Agent.
- 3) The Notice in paragraph 2 above must be sent **no later than the 7<sup>th</sup> day before election day.**

**Note: a person may be appointed as an Assistant Agent for two or more Districts or Sub-Districts, or as Polling Agent / Alternate Polling Agent for two or more Polling Station or as both Assistant Agent and Counting Agent.**

### ***3.4.3 Duly Appointed Candidates***

- 1) **ONE** candidate from each List of Candidates may be appointed (the duly appointed candidate) to attend the poll at a Polling Place.
- 2) **ONE** candidate from each List of Candidates may also be appointed (also termed the duly appointed candidate) to attend the counting of the votes in a district.
- 3) Notice of the appointment(s) in paragraphs 1 and 2 above must be given in writing **by the Election Agent** of the respective Lists **to the Returning Officer** of the respective districts, and it must –
  - (a) state the –
    - (i) name of the candidate and
    - (ii) address of the candidate, and
  - (b) be signed by the Election Agent.
- 4) The Notices in paragraph 3 above must be sent **no later than the 7<sup>th</sup> day before election day**.

### ***3.4.4 Notice of Appointments***

- 1) On receipt of the notices referred to in paragraph 2 of Section 3.4.2 and paragraph 3.4.3 above, the Returning Officer must:
  - (a) Give public notice of the names and addresses of the persons so appointed, and
  - (b) Notify the relevant Presiding Officers of appointments.
- 2) The Notice in paragraph 1 above must be given **no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> day before election day**.
- 3) To facilitate the appointment of other Assistant Agents in paragraph 1(b) of Section 3.4.2, Returning Officers must give notice to the Election Agents of –
  - (a) the number of Deputy Returning Officers to be appointed and
  - (b) the duties to be performed by them.



- 4) The Notice in paragraph 3 above must be given **at least 21 days before Election Day.**

### ***3.4.5 Roles of Agents/Candidates***

The roles of the Agents and Candidates referred to in Section 3.4.2 and Section 3.4.3 above, respectively, are laid out in Section 2.2.7 of the *Manual for Polling Day Officials*, except for the Duly Appointed Candidates to attend the counting of the votes, whose roles are found in this Manual below.

### ***3.4.6 Death/Revocation of Appointment and Replacement of Agents***

- 1) Where an Agent referred to in Section 3.4.2 above dies or has their appointment revoked, the Election Agent must forthwith give notice of this, in writing, to the Returning Officer to whom notice of the appointment was given.
- 2) Notice of any replacement of an Agent who died or had their appointment revoked must be given in the same manner as indicated in Section 3.4.2 above.
- 3) Similarly, notice of any replacement of a Duly Appointed Candidate must be given in the same manner as indicated in Section 3.4.3 above.
- 4) The Returning Officer, to whom notice is given pursuant to paragraphs 2 and 3 above, must:
  - (a) Give public notice of the names and addresses of the persons so appointed as replacements, and
  - (b) Notify the relevant Presiding Officers of the replacements.
- 5) The Notice referred to in paragraph 3 above must be given **no later than one (1) day after receiving notice from the Election Agent of the replacement.**

## **3.5 Proxies**

### ***3.5.1 Identity of a Proxy***

- 1) A proxy is someone appointed by the Returning Officer pursuant to an application made by any elector for someone to vote on their behalf on Election Day.
- 2) Such a person must –

- (a) be an elector listed on the same Official List of Electors for the same Polling Station as the person on whose behalf he/she is being appointed to vote.
  - (b) be appointed as proxy for **no more than two (2) electors**.
- 3) Additionally, an elector may be appointed as proxy for no more than two other electors listed on the same Official List of Electors for the Polling Station. No elector must have appointed for them, more than one proxy.

### ***3.5.2 Entitlement to Vote by Proxy***

An elector may be entitled to vote by proxy if that elector is unable, or likely to be unable, to go in person to the Polling Station at which he/she is listed and if he/she is –

- 1) employed on election day as a member of a disciplined force, or as a rural constable, or for a purpose connected with the election.
- 2) appointed as a Returning Officer for a District in which his registered address is located.
- 3) employed on election day by the Returning Officer for a District in which his/her registered address is different from the District in which he/she is employed for election purposes.
- 4) employed with the Transport and Harbours Department and is engaged with running a vessel on election day.
- 5) a candidate at the election, and is engaged in any activity connected with the election in a District other than the District in which he/she is assigned to vote,
- 6) blind or otherwise physically incapacitated **AND** cannot go in person to the Polling Station or, if able to go, is unable to vote unaided.

### ***3.5.3 Applying for Appointment of a Proxy***

- 1) An elector who is desirous of appointing another elector to vote on their behalf must submit –

- (a) an Application for Appointment of a Proxy on Form 5 (Part A) (see Appendix VI), and
  - (b) a letter of consent from the elector named as proxy in the application on Form 5 (Part B) (see Appendix VI).
- 2) The application in paragraph 1 above must be addressed to the Returning Officer of the district in which both the name of the applicant and the proxy are listed on the same Official List of Electors.
- 3) The application must be submitted **no later than 21 days before Election Day**.

#### ***3.5.4 Notice of and Objections to Applications to vote by proxy***

- 1) The Returning Officer must cause a list of the names of the applicants and the electors named as proxies to be –
  - (a) affixed to a conspicuous part of one building in each division of his district, and
  - (b) published daily –
    - (i) on the Commission’s website,
    - (ii) in a newspaper, on television, and
    - (iii) in other media.
- 2) Persons may make objections to the Returning Officer before the Returning Officer issues a Notice of Appointment and notifies the applicant.

#### ***3.5.5 Notice of Appointment of Proxies***

- 1) The Returning Officer shall issue a Notice of Appointment of Proxy on Form 6 (see Appendix VII), to the person appointed to be Proxy and notify the Applicant accordingly if the Returning Officer is satisfied that:
  - (a) The application was submitted as required pursuant to Section 3.5.3 above,
  - (b) The person whose appointment is sought is entitled to vote as a proxy on behalf of the applicant, and

- (c) Objections made under paragraph 2 of Section 3.5.4 have been thoroughly investigated and were found to be unwarranted.
- 2) There must be only **ONE PROXY** appointed to vote on behalf of any **ONE ELECTOR**.
- 3) **ONE PROXY** may be appointed to vote for no more than **TWO ELECTORS**.

### ***3.5.6 Notice of Refusal of Proxies***

If the Returning Officer refuses an application, he/she must notify the applicant of the refusal specifying the reasons therefor. Such notification must be done as soon as practicable but not later than the point at which the List of Proxies are final on the 4<sup>th</sup> day before Election Day.

### ***3.5.7 List of Proxies***

- 1) The Returning Officer must keep a List of Proxies on Form 7 (see Appendix VIII), which sets out, for each elector and the proxy appointed to vote on their behalf, their:
  - (a) names,
  - (b) addresses and
  - (c) Serial Numbers of their registration records.
- 2) At the request of an Election Agent, the Returning Officer shall allow that Agent to inspect and copy the list of Proxies **on the 4<sup>th</sup> day before Election Day**.

### ***3.5.8 Cancellation of Appointments of Proxy***

- 1) An elector may cancel the appointment of his/her proxy by giving notice in writing on Form 8 (see Appendix X) to the Returning Officer who issued the Notice of Appointment.
- 2) A Notice referred to in paragraph 1 above must be received by the Returning Officer **no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> Day before Election Day**.
- 3) On receipt of such a notice, the appointment issued shall be void and the Returning Officer must:

- (a) Notify the proxy whose appointment is cancelled and,
- (b) Delete the names of both electors from the list of proxies (Form 7).

### **3.5.9 Procedure for Voting by Proxy**

The process for voting by proxy on Election Day is detailed in Section 5.6 in the *Manual for Polling Day Officials*.

## **3.6 Certificates of Employment**

- 1) An Elector may vote at a polling station, other than the one to which he/she is assigned to vote on Election Day, if he/she is employed at that polling station for a purpose connected with the election as –
  - (a) An election officer, or
  - (b) A member of the –
    - (i) Guyana Police Force, or
    - (ii) Guyana Defence Force.
- 2) In order to vote as in paragraph 1 above, the Elector must obtain a Certificate of Employment in Form 4 (see Appendix V) **no later than 2 days before Election Day**.
- 3) The Certificate referred to in paragraph 2 above must state the:
  - (a) Name of the Elector,
  - (b) Number of his identity paper, and
  - (c) Fact that he is to be so employed.

## **3.7 Final preparations**

**Not later than the 14<sup>th</sup> day before Election Day**, the Returning Officer must affix the following to one building in each division within the district:

- (i) a copy of the Notice of Poll on Form 9 (referred to at Section 3.1.4 (b)),
- (ii) a copy of each List of Candidates,

- (iii) notification of joinder of any such Lists of Candidates, and
- (iv) a copy of the Official List of Electors for that division.

### **3.8 Returning Officer's Report on State of Preparedness for The Poll**

- 1) To ensure that everything is arranged as required for Election Day, the Returning Officer must prepare and submit, to the CEO, a Report on the status of plans and activities in preparation for Election Day.
- 2) The Report referred to in paragraph 1 must be submitted **on the 7<sup>th</sup> day before Election Day.**
- 3) This report shall contain, inter-alia, the following information:
  - a) State of preparedness of Offices of the Returning / Supernumerary Returning Officers and Deputy Returning / Deputy Supernumerary Returning Officers catering to the display of maps, signs and notices as well as relevant records to be maintained,
  - b) Status of familiarisation of boundaries, divisions, clusters and splits,
  - c) Status of budget and movement plans,
  - d) Status of polling places/stations,
  - e) Security arrangements in place pre-, peri- and post-poll,
  - f) Status of the conduct of mock polls,
  - g) Status of posting of the Official List, List of Candidates, Notices of Poll, List of Proxies and Notice of Joined Lists.
  - h) Status of requisition of materials for polling stations,
  - i) Status of investigation of application for appointment of proxies,
  - j) Status of applications for and issuance of certificates of employment.

### 3.9 Timelines for the Returning Officer

The following table references the critical timelines relevant to the responsibilities of the Returning Officer:

Ser	Activity	Timeline (not later than)	Reference
1	Appoint Polling Places / Stations	40 <sup>th</sup> day before E-Day *	3.1
2	Send list of Polling Stations to Election Agents	30 <sup>th</sup> day before E-Day	3.1.4
3	Give Notice of Poll	21 <sup>st</sup> day before E-Day	3.1.4
4	Give notice to Election Agents of the number of DRO's appointed to the district and their duties.	21 <sup>st</sup> day before E-Day	3.4.4
5	Receive applications for Appointment of Proxies	21 <sup>st</sup> day before E-Day	3.5.3
6	Post Official List of Electors and List of Candidates at every Polling Place	20 <sup>th</sup> day before E-Day *	3.1.2
7	Affix to one building in each division: (i) a copy of the Notice of Poll on Form 9, (ii) a copy of each List of Candidates, (iii) notification of joinder of any such Lists of Candidates, and (iv) a copy of the Official List of Electors for that division.	14 <sup>th</sup> day before E-Day	3.7
8	Requisition materials and supplies for Polling Stations	14 <sup>th</sup> day before E-Day *	3.3
9	Receive Notice of Cancellation of Appointment of Proxies.	10 <sup>th</sup> day before E-day	3.5.8
10	Prepare and submit report on the state of preparedness for the Poll to the CEO	7 <sup>th</sup> day before E-Day *	3.8
11	Receive notice of appointment of Assistant Agents, Counting Agents, Polling and Alternate Polling Agent from Election Agent	7 <sup>th</sup> Day before E-Day	3.4.2
12	Give public notice of names and addresses of Agents appointed by Election Agents	5 <sup>th</sup> day before E-Day	3.4.4
13	Allow Election Agents to inspect and copy the List of Proxies	on the 4 <sup>th</sup> day before E-Day	3.5.7
14	Issue Certificates of Employment	2 <sup>nd</sup> day before E-Day	3.6

\* - the timeline for these activities is administratively determined by the Commission with due consideration to other related activity timelines specified in RoPA.

The timelines referred to above are represented diagrammatically for ease of use in Appendix III.

#### 4. CONDUCT OF THE POLL

- 1) The conduct of the Poll is detailed in the *Manual for Polling Day Officials*, particularly in Chapter 5.
- 2) In that Chapter, specific duties of Returning Officers are detailed in relation to the intermixing of ballots cast by –
  - (a) Members of Disciplined Forces (Section 5.13), and
  - (b) Non-resident Electors (Section 5.14).

#### 5. PROCEDURE AFTER THE POLL

##### 5.1 Delivery of Packages

- 1) After the Presiding Officer has finished counting the votes, he/she must prepare, among other things, the following:
  - (a) Ballot Box,
  - (b) Secure receptacle,
  - (c) **PE 2**,
  - (d) Poll Bag (**PE 19**), and
  - (e) Packages for the –
    - (i) Chairman of GECOM, and
    - (ii) CEO.
- 2) The packages identified in paragraph 1 above must be delivered to the –
  - (a) Returning Officer, in the case of every district except Districts 3, 4 and 6, OR
  - (b) Supernumerary Returning Officer, in the case of the Sub-Districts in Districts 3, 4 and 6.
- 3) The Returning Officers and Supernumerary Returning Officers referred to in paragraph 2 above must provide adequate transportation for such delivery, but the



Presiding Officer has the responsibility for the transportation and delivery of the packages.

- 4) Upon receipt of the packages, the Officers referred to in paragraph 2 above must ensure that –
  - (a) All packages are verified on receipt.
  - (b) The Statements of Poll are checked for accuracy.
  - (c) A log is kept with all pertinent signatures.
  - (d) There is smooth and organised flow of personnel in and out of the receipt area.
- 5) The Officers referred to in paragraph 2 above must ensure the delivery of the packages for the Chairman and Chief Election Officer at their respective offices.

## **5.2 Posting electronic copy of Statement of Poll**

- 1) Upon receipt of the packages, the Returning Officer / Supernumerary Returning Officer must **immediately** post an electronic copy of each certified Statement of Poll to the website of the Commission for it to be viewed by the public.
- 2) The CEO will provide appropriate facilities to ensure that the requirement in paragraph 1 above is complied with by the Officers.
- 3) Where any Statement of Poll cannot be successfully posted as required, or an incorrect copy of a Statement of Poll has been posted, the CEO must ensure that such Statement of Poll is posted using his copy referred to in paragraph 5 of Section 5.1 above.

A specimen of the Statement of Poll (Form 23 A) (SoP) is provided at Appendix XI.

## **5.3 Correction of Statement of Poll**

### ***5.3.1 Officials who can identify errors on Statement of Poll***

A SoP may be corrected if a material error on it is discovered by:

- (a) An Election Officer,
- (b) A Counting Agent for the relevant Polling District or Sub-District,

- (c) A Polling Agent for the relevant Polling Station, or
- (d) A Duly Appointed Candidate.

The following subsections outline the procedure for this correction.

**5.3.2 Correction of a Statement of Poll BEFORE it is sent to Returning Officer/Supernumerary Returning Officer**

- 1) If the error is discovered before the Statement of Poll is sent to the Returning Officer/Supernumerary Returning Officer, the person from Section 5.3.1 above who discovered the error must inform the Presiding Officer for the Polling Station concerned.
- 2) The Presiding Officer must then, in the presence of the persons who signed the original Statement of Poll:
  - (a) Prepare a corrected Statement of Poll, which must be signed by –
    - (i) the Presiding Officer, and
    - (ii) the original signatories who are present.
  - (b) Certify signed copies of the corrected Statement of Poll, to be sent to the –
    - (i) Returning Officer, in the case of every district except Districts 3, 4 and 6, OR
    - (ii) Supernumerary Returning Officer, in the case of Districts 3, 4 and 6, and
    - (iii) the Chairman and the CEO in the same manner as provided for in paragraph 5 of Section 5.1.
  - (c) Distribute certified copies of the corrected Statement of Poll to the relevant –
    - (i) Duly Appointed Candidates,
    - (ii) Counting Agents, and
    - (iv) Polling Agents or Alternate Polling Agents.

### ***5.3.3 Correction of a Statement of Poll AFTER it is sent to Returning Officer/Supernumerary Returning Officer***

- 1) If the error is discovered after the Statement of Poll is sent to the Returning Officer/Supernumerary Returning Officer, the person from Section 5.3.1 above who discovered the error must inform the Returning Officer/Supernumerary Returning Officer.
- 2) The Officer informed in paragraph 1 above must:
  - (a) Inform the relevant Presiding Officer of the error.
  - (b) Summon the –
    - (i) Presiding Officer, and
    - (ii) other original signatories.
- 3) The Presiding Officer must then carry out the requirements in paragraph 2 of Section 5.3.2 above.

## **5.4 Ascertainment of the Votes**

### ***5.4.1 Persons entitled to be present***

No person shall be present at the ascertainment of the votes except:

- (a) The Returning Officer/Supernumerary Returning Officer,
- (b) Members of the Commission,
- (c) Duly Appointed Candidates,
- (d) Counting Agents,
- (e) Such other persons as, in the opinion of the Returning Officer or the Supernumerary Returning Officer, have good reason to be present.

### ***5.4.2 Ascertaining Votes from Statements of Poll***

- 1) Votes **must be tabulated from the Statements of Poll** by the:

- (a) Returning Officer, in the case of every district except Districts 3, 4 and 6, and
  - (b) Supernumerary Returning Officer, in the case of Districts 3, 4 and 6.
- 2) The Officers referred to in paragraph 1 above must:
- (a) Display, using the electronic mechanism provided, each Statement of Poll for all the persons identified in Section 5.4.1 above to clearly see the information on it.
  - (b) Record the votes cast in favour of each list, as contained in each Statement of Poll that is being displayed, on an empty –
    - (i) District Tabulation Form, in the case of every district except Districts 3, 4 and 6, OR
    - (ii) Sub-District Tabulation Form, in the case of Districts 3, 4 and 6.
  - (c) Give opportunity for objections from –
    - (i) Duly Appointed Candidates, or
    - (ii) Counting Agents.
  - (d) **Not** move on to display another Statement of Poll unless all of the information required from the Statement of Poll being displayed is dealt with to the satisfaction of every person present.
  - (e) Add the Votes recorded on the Form to ascertain the total number of Votes for each List of Candidates.
  - (f) Record the total found, pursuant to paragraph (d) above, on the Form.
  - (g) Publicly declare the total Votes recorded on the Form for each List of Candidates.
- 3) In carrying out the requirements in paragraph 2 above, the Officer must ensure that a suitable time is established for the commencement of that process, to ensure maximum participation and transparency, and effectively communicate that time to the –
- (i) Chief Election Officer,

- (ii) Election Agents,
- (iii) Duly Appointed Candidates,
- (iii) Counting Agents.

#### ***5.4.3 Ascertaining Votes from Sub-District Tabulation Forms***

- 1) When a Supernumerary Returning Officer has completed the requirements in Section 5.4.2 above, he must immediately:
  - (a) Print and certify a copy of the Sub-District Tabulation Form on which the Votes are recorded, and
  - (b) Deliver it manually, by the quickest available means, to the Returning Officer of that District.
- 2) Immediately after receiving the Sub-District Tabulation Forms, the Returning Officer must:
  - (a) Display, using the electronic mechanism provided, each Sub-District Tabulation Form for all the persons identified in Section 5.4.1 above to clearly see the information on it.
  - (b) Record the **total votes cast in favour of each list** for the Sub-District, as recorded on each Sub-District Tabulation Form that is being displayed, on an empty District Tabulation Form,
  - (c) Give opportunity for objections from –
    - (i) Duly Appointed Candidates, or
    - (ii) Counting Agents.
  - (d) **Not** move on to display another Sub-District Tabulation Form unless all of the information required from the Form being displayed is dealt with to the satisfaction of every person present.
  - (e) Add the Votes recorded on the District Tabulation Form to ascertain the total number of Votes for each List of Candidates.

- (f) Record the total found, pursuant to paragraph (d) above, on the District Tabulation Form.
  - (g) Publicly declare the total Votes recorded on the District Tabulation Form for each List of Candidates.
- 3) In carrying out the requirements in paragraph 2 above, the Officer must ensure that a suitable time is established for the commencement of that process, to ensure maximum participation and transparency, and effectively communicate that time to the –
- (i) Chief Election Officer,
  - (ii) Election Agents,
  - (iv) Duly Appointed Candidates,
  - (iii) Counting Agents.

## 5.5 Recount of Votes

### *5.5.1 Request for a Final Count of the Votes counted by a Presiding Officer*

- 1) A request for a final count of the Votes counted by a Presiding Officer may be made by:
  - (a) Any Counting Agent for the District or Sub-District concerned, or
  - (b) A Duly Appointed Candidate.
- 2) Such a request **must** be submitted:
  - (a) in writing,
  - (b) by hand,
  - (c) **to the Returning Officer, including** the Returning Officers of Districts 3, 4 and 6,
  - (d) **before 12:00pm (noon)** of the day following the declaration in Section 5.4.2 above,
- 3) The request **must** indicate whether it is for a –

- (a) General Final Count, OR
  - (b) Limited Final Count, in which case it must specify the Polling Stations in respect of which the Limited Count is to be conducted.
- 4) Where –
  - (a) the Returning Officer is unavailable, the Deputy Returning Officer may receive and grant the request.
  - (b) the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer are unavailable, in the case of a Sub-District, the Supernumerary Returning Officer may receive and grant the request.
  - (c) all of the persons referred to in paragraph (b) above are unavailable, the request may be received and granted by the –
    - (i) Chief Election Officer, or
    - (ii) Chairman of the Commission.
- 5) Any request made pursuant to paragraph 4 above must comply with the other requirements in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 above.

#### ***5.5.2 Officer to Conduct the Final Count***

- 1) The Final Count must be conducted by the:
  - (a) Returning Officer, in the case of every district except Districts 3, 4 and 6, OR
  - (b) Supernumerary Returning Officer, in the case of Districts 3, 4 and 6.
- 2) Where the Returning Officer is unavailable to conduct the Final Count, the Deputy Returning Officer must conduct the Final Count.
- 3) Where the Supernumerary Returning Officer is unavailable to conduct the Final Count, the Deputy Supernumerary Returning Officer must conduct the Final Count.

### ***5.5.3 Persons to attend the Final Count***

The Officer identified in accordance with Section 5.5.2 above must permit the following persons to be present during the Final Count:

- 1) Other Election Officers whom he appoints to assist him in the counting,
- 2) Members of the Commission,
- 3) Duly Appointed Candidates,
- 4) Counting Agents, and
- 5) Any other person who, in the opinion of the Officer conducting the Count, have good reason to be present, such as any accredited –
  - (a) Local Observers, and
  - (b) International Observers.

### ***5.5.4 Conduct of a Limited Final Count***

- 1) Where a Limited Count has been requested, the Officer identified in accordance with Section 5.5.2 above must review **ONLY** the decisions of the Presiding Officers of the Polling Stations specified in relation to –
  - (a) Questioned Ballot Papers, that is those Ballot Papers marked ‘Q’ by the Presiding Officer, and
  - (b) Rejected ballot papers.
- 2) The Officer must:
  - (a) Ensure that the device and system to be used to conduct the Count are functioning properly to effectively display the documents.
  - (b) Ensure that there is available, constant and sufficient lighting in the place where the Count is to be conducted.
  - (c) Give the Duly Appointed Candidates and Counting Agents –



- (i) all reasonable facilities for overseeing the Count, including adequate seating for them to properly see the information being displayed.
  - (ii) the opportunity to make objections that they have reason to believe the information being displayed has been falsified.
  - (iii) all such information relating to paragraphs (i) and (ii) above as can be given, consistent with the orderly conduct of the Count and the discharge of the duties of the Officer.
- 3) In conducting the Count, the Officer must:
  - (a) Open each Ballot Box containing the Ballot Papers to be counted.
  - (b) Take out the Ballot Papers.
  - (c) Count and record the number of Ballot Papers taken from each Ballot Box.
  - (d) Count the Votes recorded for each List of Candidates.
- 4) In counting the Votes in paragraph (3) above, the Officer must reject as invalid, and **NOT count**, any ballot paper –
  - (a) which does not bear the official mark.
  - (b) which has not been marked for any List of Candidates.
  - (c) on which it is uncertain as to which List of Candidates the mark relates.
  - (d) on which marks have been placed for more than one List of Candidates, unless there is a clear intention that the vote shall be for **one** of the Lists of Candidates, in which case the Vote must be counted for that List of Candidates.
  - (e) on which there is any writing or mark by which the Elector can be identified.
- 5) Where the Officer rejects a Ballot Paper pursuant to paragraph (4) above, he must:
  - (a) Endorse the word ‘REJECTED’ on that Ballot Paper, and
  - (b) Endorse the words ‘REJECTION OBJECTED TO’ where his decision to reject a Ballot Paper is objected to by –

- (i) a Duly Appointed Candidate present, or
  - (ii) a Counting Agent present.
- 6) Where the Officer agrees with the decision of the Presiding Officer, he must write the word 'CONFIRMED' on the back of the Ballot Paper.
- 7) Where the Officer disagrees with the decision of the Presiding Officer, he must write the word 'VARIED' on the back of the Ballot Paper.
- 8) Where a Duly Appointed Candidate or a Counting Agent disagrees with the Officer conducting the Final Count, the Officer must write the letter 'Q' on the back of the Ballot Paper.
- 9) Any markings made pursuant to paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 above are in addition to any marking the Officer is required to place pursuant to paragraph 5.
- 10) All markings referred to in paragraphs 2-5 above must be –
  - (a) made on the **back of the Ballot Paper**,
  - (b) written **in ink different in colour** from that used by the Presiding Officer, and
  - (c) **endorsed with the initials** of the Officer.

#### ***5.5.5 Conduct of a General Final Count***

- 1) Where a General Count has been requested, the Officer identified in accordance with Section 5.5.2 above must review **ALL** used Ballot Papers, **including** rejected Ballot Papers, from **ALL** Polling Stations.
- 2) In doing so, the Officer must comply with the requirements in paragraphs 2-10 in 5.5.4 above.

#### ***5.5.6 Conduct of a Further Recount***

- 1) When the counting, or any recount, of the Votes is completed, a request to have the Votes recounted, or again recounted, may be made by:
  - (a) A Duly Appointed Candidate, or

- (b) A Counting Agent present when the counting, or recount, referred to was completed.
- 2) The request for the recount, or further recount, must be made to the:
  - (a) Returning Officer, or
  - (b) Supernumerary Returning Officer in the case of a Sub-District.
- 3) The Officer referred to in paragraph 2 above **may refuse** the request if he/she considers it to be unreasonable.

## **5.6 Procedure on completion of Final Count**

### ***5.6.1 Preparation and delivery of Election Return Form***

- 1) When the counting referred to in the sections above has been completed, the Officer who conducted the count must:
  - (a) Seal, in separate packets, the –
    - (i) Counted Ballot Papers, and
    - (ii) Rejected Ballot Papers.
  - (b) Replace the packets referred to in paragraph (a) above in the Ballot Boxes from which they were removed, and reseal the Ballot Boxes in the same manner as done in Section 6.7.5 of the *Manual for Polling Day Officials*.
  - (c) Verify the Ballot Paper Accounts (for General and Regional Elections) given by each Presiding Officer by comparing it with the –
    - (i) number of Ballot Papers recorded,
    - (ii) unused and spoiled Ballot Papers in his/her possession,
    - (iii) record of Tendered Ballots used as per record in the Poll Book.
  - (d) Reseal the packets of unused and spoiled Ballot Papers.
  - (e) Prepare a written statement on the verification of the Ballot Paper Accounts and give a signed copy to everyone entitled to be present who attends.

- (f) Publicly declare the result of the final counting.
- (g) Prepare and certify the Election Return Form (Form 24) (see Appendix XII), which must set out the number of –
  - (i) Total number of votes cast within the district disaggregated by List of Candidates,
  - (ii) Total number of valid votes cast for all Party Lists of Candidates (a grand total of the above),
  - (iii) Total number of spoiled ballot papers,
  - (iv) Total number of destroyed ballot papers,
  - (v) Total number of used tendered ballot papers,
  - (vi) Total number of rejected ballot papers and its disaggregation by category, i.e.: a) Want of Official Mark, b) Unmarked or Void for Uncertainty, c) Marked for more than one List of Candidates and d) Marked so the Elector can be identified, and
  - (vii) Total number of persons who appeared to have voted (the sum of the total valid votes cast and total rejected ballot papers).
- (h) Deliver manually, by the quickest means available, Form 24, prepared in paragraph (g) above, to the Chief Election Officer.
- (i) Give certified copies of Form 24 to the –
  - (i) Duly Appointed Candidates present, and
  - (ii) Counting Agents present.

***Notes:***

- i) there is **no requirement** for persons present to sign on this Form as witnesses.
- ii) The results on District/Sub-District Tabulation Forms and Forms 24 shall be final, provided that there is no request, to the Returning Officer by an

appointed Counting Agent or Duly Appointed Candidate, for a recount of the votes counted by a Presiding Officer (s) within the District (outlined in Section 5.5 above).

- 2) In carrying out the functions above, in addition to the sealed envelope containing the Tendered Ballot Papers, the Officer must **NOT** open the sealed envelope containing –
  - (a) Marked copies of the Official List of Electors or part thereof, and
  - (b) Counterfoils of Used Ballot Papers.

#### ***5.6.2 Revised Ascertainment of Votes following Recount in a Sub-District***

- 1) Where a recount was conducted in relation to a Sub-District pursuant to the provisions in Section 5.5 above, the provisions of Section 5.4.3 above must be carried out.
- 2) If the recount referred to in paragraph 1 above was conducted after the requirements in Section 5.4.3 above had already been complied with, the relevant Returning Officer must use the Sub-District Tabulation Forms received after the recount, pursuant to paragraph 1 above, to ascertain the Votes for each List of Candidates.
- 3) If there was any variation in the Votes following that recount, the Returning Officer must –
  - (a) vary the declaration accordingly, and
  - (b) publicly declare the new totals of the Votes as ascertained pursuant to paragraph 2 above.

#### ***5.6.3 Delivery of Tabulation Forms***

- 1) When the counting referred to in the sections above has been completed, and Votes for all districts and sub-districts have been ascertained, including after any variations following any recounts pursuant to Section 5.5 above, a certified copy of each Tabulation Form must be delivered manually to the Chief Election Officer, by the quickest means available, by the –
  - (a) Returning Officer of each District, including Districts 3, 4 and 6, and
  - (b) Supernumerary Returning Officers of each Sub-District.

- 2) Certified copies of the Forms delivered pursuant to paragraph 1 above must also be given to the –
  - (a) Duly Appointed Candidates present at the count,
  - (b) Counting Agents present at the count, and
  - (c) Chairman of the Commission.

#### ***5.6.4 Delivery of Remaining Election Material***

- 1) As soon as practicable after delivering the Election Return as required above, each Officer who completed the Return must then:
  - (a) Gather the following (received pursuant to paragraph 1 of Section 5.1 above):
    - (i) Secure receptacle,
    - (ii) **PE 2**, and
    - (iii) Poll Bag (**PE 19**).
  - (b) Add to those packages any other papers used at the Polling Stations that are in his possession, sealed in a parcel so that it cannot be opened without breaking the seals.
  - (c) Deliver the packages referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b) above to the Chief Election Officer.
- 2) In the case of each Sub-District, the relevant Officer must deliver the packages referred to in paragraph 1 above to their respective Returning Officer, who will then deliver them to the Chief Election Officer.
- 3) The Officer referred to in paragraph 1 above must then deliver to the Commission the sealed Ballot Boxes used at the Elections that are in their possession in accordance with directions given by the Chief Election Officer.
- 4) The Officer would be taken to have satisfied the requirement of paragraph 3 above by delivering the Ballot Boxes to the container provided to house the Ballot Boxes, which container must be locked by the Officer with –

- (a) His lock, and
- (b) The locks of Polling Agents/Counting Agents/Duly Appointed Candidates if they so desire.

## **6. ELECTION OFFENCES AND PENALTIES**

A detailed list of Election Offences and Penalties, provided for in RoPA, is contained in Chapter 7 of the *Manual for Polling Day Officials*.

## 7. APPENDICIES

### Appendix I      Form 1 - Oath by an Election Officer

#### FORM 1

#### THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT GENERAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS

#### **OATH BY ELECTION OFFICER**

I .....

NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS

having being appointed .....

TITLE OF APPOINTMENT

For polling district.....

Swear/affirm that will faithfully perform the duties of the said office according to law, without  
partiality, fear, favour or affection.

So Help Me God

.....

Signature of Election Officer

Sworn/Affirmed before me on.....this.....

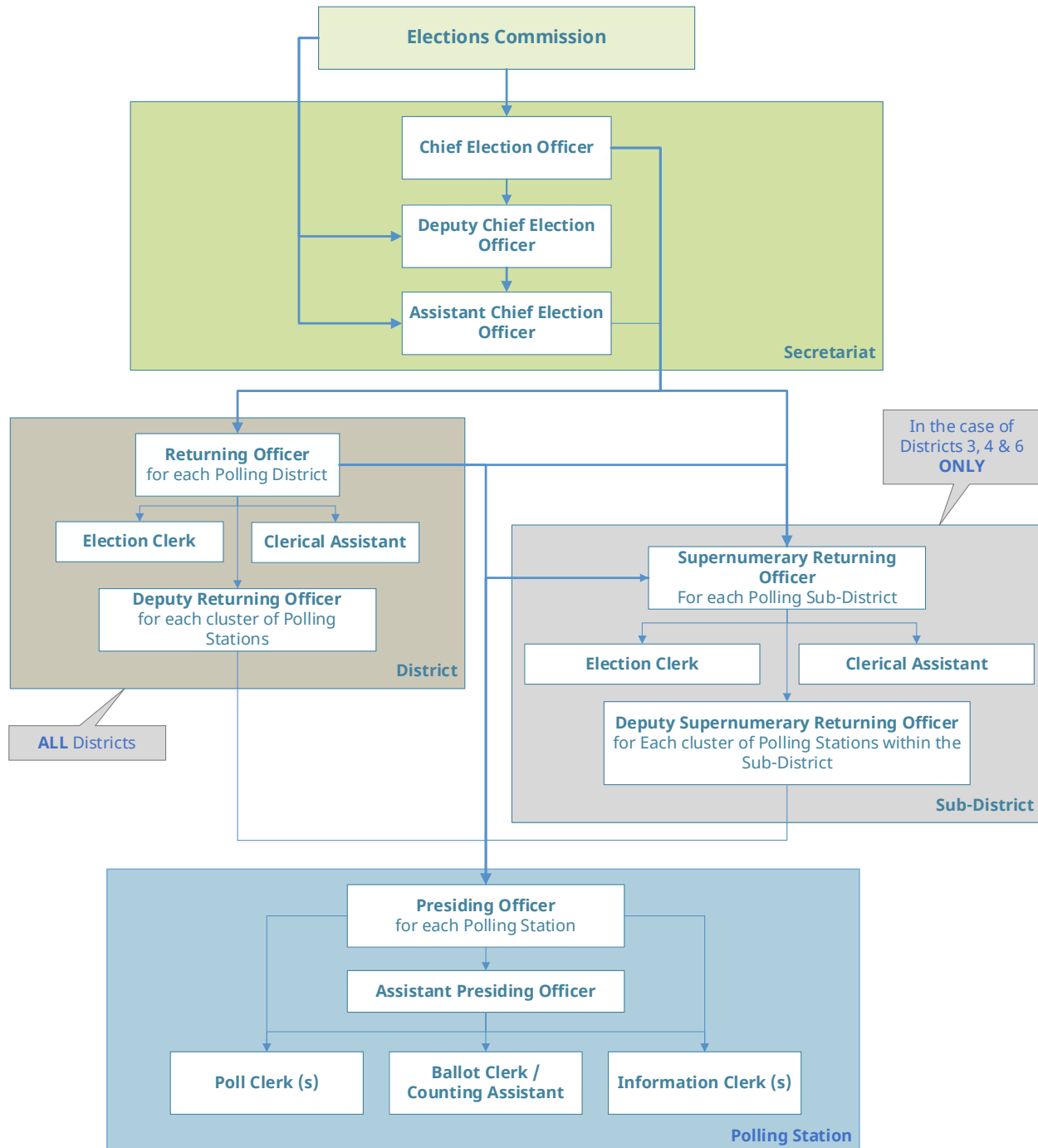
Day of .....20.....

.....

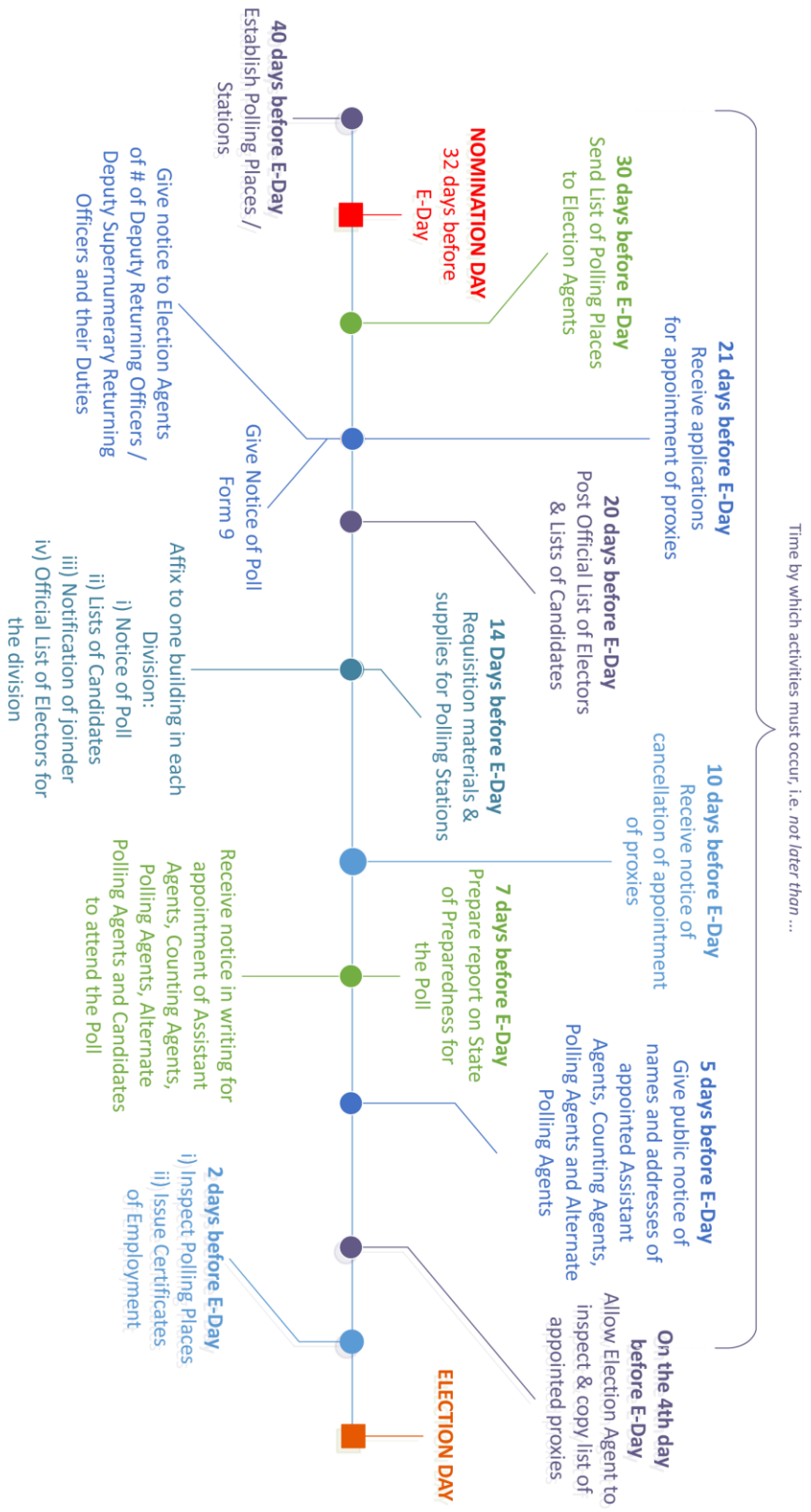
***Justice of Peace/  
Chief Election Officer/  
Election Official***



## Appendix II      Organisational Structure for Elections



Appendix III Timelines for the Returning Officer



**Form A 36**

**GENERAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS**

**REQUISITION OF ELECTIONS SUPPLIES**

**BALLOT BOX PACKING FORM**

DISTRICT NO: .....

SUB-DISTRICT: .....

NO. OF POLLING STATIONS: .....

NO. OF BALLOT BOXES: .....

STAGING AREA: .....

NUMBER OF ELECTORS: .....

TO BE USED BY RETURNING AND DEPUTY RETURNING OFFICERS FOR  
REQUISITIONING SUPPLIES.

### List of Forms and Supplies for Presiding Officers

FORM #	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY REQUIRED	QUANTITY SUPPLIED	QUANTITY RETURNED	REMARKS
<b>(A) STATUTORY FORMS</b>					
1	Oath by Election Officer				
4	Certificate of Employment				
6	Appointment as Proxy				
7	List of Proxies				
9	Notice of Poll				
10	Directions for Voting				
11	Form of Ballot Paper				
12	Tendered Ballot Paper				
13	Poll Book				
19	Oath of Identity				
20	Interpreter's Oath				
21	Oath of Blind and Incapacitated elector				
22	Oath of Friend of Incapacitated or Blind Elector				
23	Ballot Paper Account				
23A	Statement of Poll				
23B	Statement of Poll Account				
24	Election Return				

FORM #	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY REQUIRED	QUANTITY SUPPLIED	QUANTITY RETURNED	REMARKS
<b>(B) ADMINISTRATIVE FORMS</b>					
A 4	Specimen Ballot Paper				
A 8	Polling Station Sign				
A 9	Polling Place Notice				
A 10	"IN" Sign				
A 11	"OUT" Sign				
A 12	Tearing Down of Elections Notice				
A 13	Maintenance of Secrecy at Polling Place				
A 14	Molestation of Electors and Preservation of order at polling Place				
A 23	Tally Sheets				
A 36	Ballot Box Packing Form				

PE #	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY REQUIRED	QUANTITY SUPPLIED	QUANTITY RETURNED	REMARKS
<b>(C) ENVELOPES</b>					
PE 1	Registration Folio				
PE 2	Returning Officers Package				
PE 3	Spoiled Ballot Paper				
PE 4	Unused Ballot Papers				
PE 4	Unused Tendered Ballot Papers				
PE 5	Used Tendered Ballot Papers				

<b>PE #</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>QUANTITY REQUIRED</b>	<b>QUANTITY SUPPLIED</b>	<b>QUANTITY RETURNED</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
PE 6	Counterfoils of Used Ballot Papers and Counterfoils of Used Tendered Ballot Papers				
PE 7	Ballot Papers cast for each List of Candidates				
PE 8	Rejected Ballots Papers				
PE 9	Marked List of Electors				
PE 10	Proxy Document – Notice of Appointment & List of Proxies				
PE 11	Certificate of Employment Form 4 – Oaths/Affirmation Poll Book – Form 13				
PE 12	Ballot Paper Account - Form 23 and Tendered Ballot Paper Account				
PE 13	Statement of Poll – Form 23A and Tally sheets – Form A23 for both General and Regional Elections				
PE 15	Unused Ballot Papers – PE 4 and unused Tendered Ballot Papers – PE 4  Counterfoils of used Ballot Papers and				

PE #	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY REQUIRED	QUANTITY SUPPLIED	QUANTITY RETURNED	REMARKS
	Counterfoils of used Tendered Ballot Papers – PE 6  PE and PE 6 should be placed in this envelope.				
PE 16	Destroyed Ballot Papers and Tendered Ballot Papers				
PE 17	Used ballot box seals				
PE 18	Six Digit Number & P.O seals				
PE 19	Supply Bag with other Election materials				
PE 20	Disciplined Services' Ballot and Non- Residents Ballots envelopes				
PE 21	Used envelopes of Disciplined Services ballot and Non- Residents Ballots – PE 20				

Ser #	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY REQUIRED	QUANTITY SUPPLIED	QUANTITY RETURNED	REMARKS
<b>(D) SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT</b>					
1	Voting compartment				
2	Electoral Ink				

<b>Ser #</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>QUANTITY REQUIRED</b>	<b>QUANTITY SUPPLIED</b>	<b>QUANTITY RETURNED</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
3	Six-Digit Stamp				
4	Ink Pad				
5	Stamp Pad Ink				
6	Plastic Seals for sealing Ballot Box				
7	Plain Envelopes				
8	Note Paper				
9	Pens				
10	Pencils				
11	Pencils Sharpener				
12	Waste Bin/Tissue				
13	Thumb Tacks				
14	Paper Tape				
15	Twine				
16	Fluorescent Battery Lamp				
17	Batteries				
18	Polling Station Staff Badges				
19	Presiding Officer's Seal				
20	Holy Bible				
21	Koran				
22	Ramayana				
23	Gita				
24	Rulers				
25	Markers				



Ser #	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY REQUIRED	QUANTITY SUPPLIED	QUANTITY RETURNED	REMARKS
26	List of Candidates				
27	Official List of Electors				
28	Ballot Pencils				
29	Staple Machine				
30	Staples				
31	Scissors				
32	Rubber band				
33	Ordinary Ballot Papers				
34	Tendered Ballot Papers				
35	Ballot Box				
36	Secure Receptacle				

I hereby acknowledge that this box was packed with the above quantities:

Signature of Packer: .....

Date: .....

Signature of Supervisor:.....

Date: .....

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of the quantities shown above:

Signature of Returning Officer: .....

Date: .....

**Appendix V      Form 4 – Certificate of Employment**

**FORM 4**

**THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT  
GENERAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS**

**CERTIFICATE OF EMPLOYMENT**

Polling District.....

I certify that ..... who holds identity paper no:

..... being registered under serial no: ..... in the no:

..... Polling Division of the .....

Polling District is likely to be unable to go in person to the Polling Station assigned to him/her for  
the elections to be held on the ..... day of ....., 2025 by reason of his/her

employment      on      that      date      at      the      Polling      Station      as      a  
.....

.....

***Returning Officer***

.....

***Date***

**Appendix VI      Form 5 – Application for Appointment as Proxy**

**FORM 5**

**THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT**

**GENERAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS**

**PART A**

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT OF A PROXY**

**To the Returning Officer**

of Polling District.....

.....

(SURNAME IN BLOCK LETTERS)

.....

(Other Name(s))

of.....

(ADDRESS)

being holder of identity paper no: .....

and being registered in Polling Division No: ..... of the .....

..... Polling District hereby certify that I am entitled to vote by proxy by reason of not having any person to vote for me. I do hereby apply for the issue of a proxy paper appointing the following person as proxy to vote for me:

Full Name .....

Occupation .....

Signature of Applicant..... Date .....

## NOTES

1. This application, if approved, entitles the proxy to vote for you at both elections and disentitles you from voting in person at either of the two elections.
2. You may cancel this application if you give notice on Form 8 to the Returning Officer so that he receives the Form **not later than the tenth day before election day**.
3. To be your proxy, a person must be entitled to vote at the same polling station that you are so assigned and must not already have been appointed proxy for more than one other elector.
4. You are entitled to vote by proxy if you are:
  - a. Unable, or likely to be unable to go in person to the polling station for any of the following reasons:
    - i. The particular circumstances of your employment on election day either as a member of a disciplined force, or as a rural constable, or for purpose connected with the election by the Returning Officer.
    - ii. The fact that at the election you are acting as a Returning Officer or Supernumerary Returning Officer for a District or Sub-District other than the District or Sub-District in which your address was entered in the Official List of Electors is situate.
    - iii. The fact that you are an employee of the Transport and Harbours Department engaged in running a vessel on election day.
  - b. A Candidate at the election where you are unable or likely to be unable to go in person to the polling station at which you are assigned to vote by reason of being engaged in any activity connected with the election, in a District other than the District in which that polling station is situate.
  - c. Unable or likely to be unable, by reason either of blindness or any other physical incapacity, to go in person to the polling station or if able to go, to vote unaided.

**FORM 5**  
**THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT**  
**GENERAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS**  
**PART B**

**CONSENT OF PERSON NAMED IN APPLICATION FOR PROXY PAPER**

I, .....(FULL NAME)  
of .....(ADDRESS)  
with occupation..... and with Identity Paper No: .....  
being registered in No: ..... Polling Division of the .....  
..... Polling District do hereby consent to act as a proxy for the  
abovenamed .....

.....  
*Signature of Person Consenting to Act as Proxy*

.....  
*Date*

**Appendix VII      Form 6 – Notice of Appointment as Proxy**

**FORM 6**

**THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT  
GENERAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS**

**APPOINTMENT AS PROXY**

Polling District.....

Polling Division No. ....

Polling Station.....

Name of Proxy.....

No. of Identity Paper.....

No. on Official List.....is hereby appointed as Proxy for

Name of Voter.....

No. on Official List.....to vote for him/her at the elections to be held on

the.....day of.....20.....

.....

***Returning Officer***

.....

***Date***

**Appendix VIII      Form 7 – List of Proxies**

**FORM 7**  
**THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT**  
**GENERAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS**

**LIST OF PROXIES**

POLLING DISTRICT.....

<i>Elector's Name</i>	<i>Elector's Address</i>	<i>Elector's Identity No.</i>	<i>Proxy's Name</i>	<i>Proxy's Address</i>	<i>Proxy's Identity No.</i>	<i>Polling Division of Elector and Proxy</i>

I hereby certify that Proxy papers were issued to the electors whose name appear in the fourth column above to vote as Proxies on behalf of the electors whose names appear opposite thereto in the first column.

.....

***Returning Officer***

**Appendix IX      Form 9 – Notice of Poll**

**FORM 9**  
**THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT**  
**GENERAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS**

**NOTICE OF POLL**

Polling District.....

**TAKE NOTICE** that a poll will be held on the .....day of .....20.....

Between the hours of **6am and 6pm** to elect 65 Members of the National Assembly and the members of the Regional Democratic Council for each Region of Guyana.

The situation of each Polling Station in the ..... Polling District and names of the electors who are entitled to vote thereat is given in the papers attached hereto.

.....  
***Returning Officer***

.....  
***Date***



**FORM 8**

THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT  
GENERAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS

**CANCELLATION OF PROXY**

**To the Returning Officer**

of Polling District.....

I, .....(FULL NAME)

being registered in the no: ..... Polling Division hereby cancel the appointment of

..... (Name of Proxy)

as proxy to vote for me at the elections to be held on the ..... day of ....., 2025

.

Address .....

Signature .....

Date .....

Appendix XI Specimen Form 23 A – Statement of Poll

FORM 23 A  
THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT Cap 1:03  
GENERAL ELECTION  
DISTRICT: 1

STATEMENT OF POLL

Polling District: BARIWA/ WANI No. 1





Polling Division No: .....

Polling Station Name: .....

Ballot Box Number: .....

Name of Presiding Officer: .....  
(IN BLOCK LETTERS)

1. 

NAME OF PARTY	SYMBOL	NUMBER OF VALID VOTES CAST FOR EACH PARTY
CAT CAT PARTY		
DOG DOG PARTY		
ELEPHANTS UNITED CONGRESS		
TMA THE MONKEY ALLIANCE		

2. Total number of valid votes for all Parties: List of Candidates

3. Rejected ballot papers

a) Want of official mark

b) Unmarked or void for uncertainty

c) Marked for more than one Party List of Candidates

d) Marked so that the elector can be identified

TOTAL (add a + b + c + d)

4. Total number of votes casts at polling station: (add 2 + 3)

5. Number of spoiled ballot papers

6. Number of destroyed ballot papers

7. Number of used tendered ballot papers

I hereby certify that this statement is correct.  
Dated this ..... day of ..... 2020.

NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS OF  
PRESIDING OFFICER

SIGNATURE OF  
PRESIDING OFFICER

The count for Polling Station No: .....  
has been witnessed and certified by the following Polling  
Agent (s) (PA) / Counting Agent (s) (CA).

NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS (surname first)	SIGNATURE	INITIAL LETTERS OF PARTY	PA/CA

NOTES:  
(A) ALL CHANGES ON THIS DOCUMENT ARE TO BE INITIALED.  
(B) WRITE SO THAT THE PRINT CAN APPEAR ON ALL PAGES.

(THE PRESIDING OFFICER SHALL AFFIX A COPY OF THIS STATEMENT OF POLL AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE COUNTING AND SIGNATURE OF THE COUNTING AGENT(S) SHALL BE AFFIXED IN BLOCK LETTERS IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL WITNESSES, AS EVIDENCE OF THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION FOR THAT POLLING STATION.)  
ALL SIGNATURES ON THIS PAGE MUST BE ORIGINAL SIGNATURES.

Note: Statement of Poll for Regional Elections follows the same format (blue border)

Revision: GECOM-GRE-MAN02-2025/03-010

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**Appendix XII      Form 24 – Election Return**

**FORM 24**

**THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT  
GENERAL ELECTIONS  
ELECTION RETURN**

For the Polling District: .....

1. Number of valid votes cast for each list of candidates:

List of: ..... total: ..... votes

List of: ..... total: ..... votes

List of: ..... total: ..... votes

2. Number of valid votes for all lists .....

3. Number of spoiled ballot papers .....

4. Number of destroyed ballot papers .....

5. Number of tendered ballot papers used .....

6. Rejected ballot papers:

a. Want of official mark .....

b. Unmarked or void for uncertainty .....

c. Marked for more than one List of Candidates .....

d. Marked so that the elector can be identified .....

Total number of rejected ballot papers .....

7. Number of persons who appeared to have voted in the district .....  
(add numbers (2) and (6))

I hereby certify that the above report is correct.

Dated this ..... day of ....., 2025

.....  
Returning Officer

Note: Election Return for Regional Elections follows the same format