



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Independent Election Commission

POLLING REGULATION

This regulation has been approved by the Independent Election Commission under the authority given by article (66) of the Election Law to regulate polling related affairs.

Terms

Article 1:

In this regulation, the following terms have the meaning stated:

1. Commission: Independent Election Commission established under article (156) of the Afghan Constitution.
2. ECC: Electoral Complaint Commission established under article (61) of the Election Law.
3. Election: Includes the processes of voter registration, candidate registration, electoral campaigns, voting, counting and announcement of the results
4. Political Party: A political party registered with Ministry of Justice.
5. Election date: The Election Day which is announced by the IEC based on article (41) of the Election Law.
6. Polling Station Journal: A special journal for recording information regarding complaints and major events in each polling station.
7. Polling center: It is composed of polling stations for females and polling stations for males.
8. Polling station: A place for voting in a polling center.

Application

Article 2:

This regulation regulates polling in the following elections:

1. Presidential Election
2. Parliamentary Election
3. Provincial Council Elections
4. District Councils Elections

Right to Vote

Article 3:

1. Any vote eligible citizen who has been registered as a voter and received a registration card, may attend a polling station and cast his/her ballot on the Election Day upon presenting a valid registration card
2. The Commission will establish necessary conditions to maintain secrecy of the vote.

Polling Center and Polling Stations

Article 4:

1. Voting will be conducted in the centers which are to be established by the Commission across the country based on the population and voters' access to the centers.
2. If possible, special facilities will be provided for those eligible voters who might not reach the established voting centers due to different reasons.
3. If possible, voting centers will be established in the areas where public access is feasible.
4. Separate polling stations will be established for female voters at every polling center.
5. The Commission will determine the number of polling stations in each polling center.

Voting Day and Period

Article 5:

1. The Commission will determine publish the date of polling and the starting and ending time
2. If more than one election is held on the same day, necessary voting conditions will be provided to voters for this purpose.
3. Before announcing the ending time of polling, the last voter in the queue is marked and the voters standing in the queue are allowed to cast their votes. No one can join the voters' queue to vote after announcing end of the poll.
4. Considering conditions and necessity, the Commission can decide on extending voting hours in specific polling centers.

Polling Officials in Voting Centers

Article 6:

- 1) The voting process in the polling station is to be managed by Electoral Officials under the direct supervision of both polling station and center's chairpersons and Field Coordinator.
- 2) For better administration, the Chairperson may take the following actions:
 - a) If there is a violation of the Code of Conduct by an agent, an observer or a media representative, he/she may order the person to leave the polling.
 - b) Considering the crowd or for security reasons, he/she may put time limits on the presence of agents, observers or media representatives in the polling center.
- 3) For better administration, the Field Coordinator may take the following actions:
 - a) In case of a riot, violence, storm, flood or any other similar unexpected incidents, as a result of which voting process become impossible, he/she should issue an order to temporarily suspend the voting process in the concerned polling center.
 - b) After resolving the situation, the Field Coordinator may, after receiving permission of Provincial Election Officer, extend voting period on the same day, for the time during which voting process had been stopped.

- c) The Field Coordinator is responsible for informing the Commission of his/her decisions under the first and second parts of 3 through the Provincial Election Officer as soon as possible.

Polling Station Journal

Article 7:

Every polling station shall have a journal. The journal contains information about complaints made in the station, the actions taken about them and information regarding major events of the polling station which must be recorded in the journal by the chairperson of the polling station.

Permission to be present

Article 8:

- 1) Nobody is allowed to enter polling stations except the following persons:
 - a) Polling station staff, the Commissioners and the officials assigned by the Commission's Secretariat;
 - b) The persons introduced by the Electoral Complaint Commission
 - c) Eligible voters with valid registration cards;
 - d) Agents, observers and media representatives accredited by the Commission;
 - e) Special guests introduced by the Commission;
 - f) Persons authorized to help disabled voters in accordance with article (11) of this regulation.
- 2) The persons attending voting centers should respect the secrecy of the vote.

Eligibility of Voters

Article 9:

- 1) Polling officials must verify the eligibility of voters before giving him/her a ballot. Having a valid voter registration card is mandatory to participate in the voting process.
- 2) The extent of the information recorded by the polling officials about the voter will be specified by the Commission.

Challenges and Complaints

Article 10:

1. Candidates and agents can challenge a person's right of vote or his/her voting in a polling center. Challenges, in relation to balloting by a voter, are to be discussed with the chairperson of the relevant polling station; it is noteworthy to be stated that the chairperson will make a decision regarding the issue and record the challenge along with the reasons and the decision made in polling station journal.
2. If not satisfied with the decision of the center's chairperson, the objector or the person who has been challenged may file a complaint with the Electoral Complaints Commission.
3. Cases related to challenges and complaints are referred to the ECC in accordance with the relevant procedure.

Casting a ballot

Article 11:

1. A voter shall mark his or her ballot clearly and in secret.
2. Polling officials shall provide a voter with required information on the polling process before he/she enters behind the voting screen. Electoral Officials shall not influence or attempt to influence the voter's choice either directly or indirectly.
3. A voter who is disabled may request and receive assistance to mark a ballot from an authorized and reliable person including the polling station chairperson, as follows:
 - a) A person assisting a disabled voter will mark the ballot in the voter's presence in the way the voter wishes.
 - b) No person except for a polling station's chairperson may assist more than one disabled voter to vote.
 - c) Any assistance given to a voter in accordance with this article shall be recorded in the polling station journal.
 - d) The person giving assistance to a disabled voter should respect the secrecy of the disabled person's ballot.
4. Each voter's finger shall be marked with a special ink before receiving the ballot paper. An individual with this mark shall not be permitted to enter a polling station or polling station's queue except to assist a disabled voter.
5. If more than one election is to be held on the same day, each voter has the right to vote in all the elections.
6. The ballot issuer shall, in case a ballot is spoiled, provide the voter with a new ballot and keep the spoiled ballot and record it in the Polling Station Journal.

After the poll

Article 12:

1. After the last voter casts his/her ballot, the polling station chairperson shall seal the ballot boxes, collect the voting materials and places them in a safe place and keep record of all the ballots.
2. Sealing the ballot papers, making a report accounting, and transporting them to the Center may be observed by the agents, candidates, observers and media representatives.

Entry into Force

Article 13:

This regulation enters into force on the date it is approved and shall be published.