



NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (NEC)



ELECTION DAY MANUAL FOR PARTY AGENTS OBSERVATION

**THIS MANUAL HAS BEEN PRINTED BY THE NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION
TRAINING, CAPACITY BUILDING, VOTER EDUCATION AND PROCEDURES
DEPARTMENT.**

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Forwarding Note from CEC/Chairperson

The year 2012 will mark another historic event in the democracy of our country. Sierra Leoneans will be going to the polls to elect a President, Members of Parliament, Mayors, Chairpersons of Local Councils and Councillors on the same day.

You have been chosen to represent your Political Party or Candidate at the polls on Election Day. As a Party Agent, you will be the official representative of your Political Party or Candidate at the polling station. Your job as a Party/Candidate Agent will be to observe and record the voting process on behalf of your party or candidate, question irregular activities in the polling station and to verify the results of the vote count.

This booklet is meant to help you perform your duties as a Party/Candidate Agent, but the 1991 constitution, the Public Elections Act (PEA), 2012 and the National Electoral Commission's (NEC) "Polling and Counting Manual" are the ultimate authorities on election procedures. If disagreements about voting procedures arise, refer to these documents. The Presiding Officer at your Polling station will have a copy of the NEC's guidelines.

On behalf of the National Electoral Commission, I want to wish everyone success in the preparation and conduct of the 2012 multiple elections.

Signed

Christiana A. M. Thorpe (Dr.)

CEC/Chairperson

National Electoral Commission, Sierra Leone

ACRONYMS

ADEO	Assistant District Electoral Office
BBC	Ballot Box Controller
BPI	Ballot Paper Issuer
DEO	District Electoral Officer
FVR	Final Voters' Register
HQ	Head Quarters
ID	Identification Card
MP	Members of Parliament
NEC	National Electoral Commission
PEA	Public Elections Act
PC	Polling Centre
PCM	Polling Centre Manager
PO	Presiding Officer
PP	Political Party
PS	Polling Station
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
TBG	Tactile Ballot Guide
TEE	Tamper Evident Envelope
TOT	Training Of Trainers
VR	Voter Registration
VIO	Voter Identification Officer
VRC	Voter Registration Centre

ELECTIONS OBSERVATION

Who can serve as Election Observer?

During elections, a Candidate is allowed to appoint a representative, known as a Party/Candidate Agent, to each polling station in the constituency/ward, and this person also serves as a counting agent to observe proceedings at the respective polling station on his/her behalf.

Obviously, on the day of the election, a candidate cannot be present at all the polling stations in the constituency at the same time to ascertain whether the election is going on well. For this reason, each candidate is permitted to appoint in writing a representative, referred to as Party/Candidate Agent to be present at each polling station on his/her behalf.

Only one agent per candidate will be admitted to a polling station at any one time. However, a candidate may appoint more than one agent to take turns at a polling station.

Every Candidate must submit the names of his/her agents and their stations to the District Electoral Officer at least seven days before polling day for accreditation to be effected.

A Party/Candidate Agent must carry an accreditation letter, issued by the Candidate or his/her political party. This indicates that the agent has the confidence of the Candidate.

Why Do We Have Elections?

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights says that governments receive the authority to rule from its citizens. Elections held every few years allow citizens to choose who will govern them. Citizens should vote in secret, without fear of violence and intimidation. Results must be announced quickly and accurately. Elections are also held in compliance with legal provisions as enshrined in the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone and the Public Elections Act (PEA), 2012.

Who conducts these Elections?

The Constitution of Sierra Leone Act No 6 of 1991 mandates the National Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone to conduct all public elections and referenda in this country.

What legal instruments does NEC use in the conduct of these elections?

NEC uses several legal instruments in the performance of its constitutional duties and these include:

- Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991
- NEC Act of 2002
- Electoral Laws Act of 2002
- Local Government Act Of 2004
- Paramount Chieftaincy Act of 2009
- Public Elections Act of 2012
- Rules and Regulations developed by the NEC that have the force of the law.

How will these elections work?

Four elections will be held simultaneously: Presidential Elections, Parliamentary elections, Chairperson/Mayor and Councillor elections for 14 district councils.

Presidential elections will take place as one big election across the whole country on the same polling day, 17th November, 2012.

In order to be elected, a candidate must receive at least 55% of the valid votes cast. If no candidate receives this many votes, then a second election, called a 'run off' is held between the two candidates who receive the most votes in the first round. The candidate who obtains a simple majority of the votes in the run off will be declared the winner.

Why observe Elections?

No election in any country is completely free of mistakes. People run elections and people make mistakes. When elections are conducted we produce winners and losers, and no one wants to lose, some candidates or parties may try to rig the outcome. The National Electoral Commission allows both political party agents and non-partisan observers to observe the elections.

The Importance of Party/Candidate Agents.

The National Electoral Commission attaches great importance to the work of the Party/Candidate Agents, because they act as watchdogs of the electoral process. If they do their work well, they can enhance the credibility of an election by helping to detect:

- Persons who pretend to be someone else in order to vote in that person's name. (Impersonation)
- Person who attempts to vote more than once. (Multiple Voting)
- Person(s) who try to tamper with the contents of a ballot box.
- Polling staff that do not follow the laid down procedures, or misconduct themselves.

Party/Candidates Agents enhance the acceptability of the overall election results by certifying the results of their various polling stations. This is done by appending their signatures to the provisional results.

The qualities of a good Agent

To be able to operate on Polling Day, the Party/Candidate agent must not only have confidence and trust of the candidate who appoints him/her. Additionally, s/he must preferably:

- Have a minimum level of education to be able to discern issues and sign documents at the station.
- Be familiar with basic election rules and regulations relating to activities at the polling station.
- Be knowledgeable about the duties of the election officials s/he will be working with.
- Be willing to collaborate with election officials to deliver a transparent, accountable, peaceful, credible, free and fair election.
- Be a resident of the Constituency/Ward and be reasonably familiar with the people residing in the Constituency/Ward.

Your Job

As a party agent your job is to help improve the election by observing what happens at a polling station. If you perform your job well, you will be able to:

- Uncover innocent mistakes and rigging by being alert and knowing the elections procedure.
- Correct problems by bringing them to the attention of the election officials
- Provide your party with information about the conduct of the election at your polling station by recording what you observe during the day.

Responsibilities of Party Agents?

What a Party/Candidate Agent is expected to do.

As a Party/Candidate Agent, you are expected to:

- Arrive at the polling station in time to observe the preparations before voting begins. Note that the Presiding Officer will go about his/her duties, whether you are present or not.
- Respect the rights of voters at all times, including:
 - ❖ The right to peaceful and orderly conduct of the election
 - ❖ The right to make one's own choice
 - ❖ The right to cast a secret ballot
- Position yourself in such a way that you can clearly see or hear whatever is going on and to feel free to move about the polling station at all times.
- Call the attention of the Presiding Officer to anything that you consider to be irregular, and if necessary, record any irregularity in your journal.
- Assist the Presiding Officer at his/her request to
 - ❖ Establish the true identity of a prospective voter whose identity is in doubt
 - ❖ Keep order at the polling station
- Pay close attention to the ballots that are rejected. A ballot paper should not be counted only if:
 - ❖ It does not bear the official ballot validation stamp of the NEC;
 - ❖ It is blank, that is, it has no mark at all on it;
 - ❖ It is marked for more than one candidate;
 - ❖ There is reasonable doubt as to the candidate the person has voted for;
 - ❖ Something that identifies the voter has been written on it.
- Closely observe the counting of the votes, making sure that each ballot is counted in favour of the candidate for whom it was cast.
- Ask for a recount, if you genuinely think the votes have not been counted correctly. Note however, that the votes cast at any polling station may be recounted there only once.
- Sign the Polling Station Result Form and the Polling Centre Return Sheet making sure that the total number of votes obtained by your candidate as well as the other candidates have been properly recorded, and obtain a signed copy of the results for the candidate who appointed you. If you refuse to sign the results, you must give reasons in writing for failing to do so to the Presiding Officer. Otherwise, remember that your failure to sign will not necessarily invalidate the results.

Once you have signed and received a copy of the results, the votes will not be counted again anywhere.

What a Party/Candidate Agent must not do.

- Do not wear any dress or take anything whatsoever to the polling station that identifies your candidate or party.
- Do not take part in the actual administration of the election, including the counting of the votes after the poll has closed.
- Do not inspect the ID cards of the person who are in the queue to vote.
- Do not directly confront any person in the polling station. If you have an objection to make against any person in relation to the election, tell the Presiding Officer.
- Do not assist a voter who needs help to vote.
- Do not give orders to the election staff, or in any way interfere with or disrupt their work.
- Do not try to find out how someone is going to vote or has voted.
- Do not campaign for your Candidate, or offer advice to, or try to influence a voter to vote for a particular party or candidate.
- Do not handle any election material without the permission of the Presiding Officer.
- Do not try to supervise the work of the polling staff.

Note: ***The Presiding Officer is the person in charge of the polling station, and he has the final say on any matter concerning the poll, except where an appeal to a higher authority is permitted.***

NOTE WELL:

- No person who purports to be a Party/Candidate will be admitted to a polling station without proper accreditation or identification;
- Like anyone else connected with the elections, as a Party/Candidate Agent you are subject to the law. If you commit any offence in or near the polling station you may be arrested and prosecuted;
- The Presiding Officer or a Superior Electoral Official can ask you to leave the polling station if you obstruct the work of the polling staff or otherwise misconduct yourself.
- Finally, as a Party/Candidate Agent, you must protect the interest of the candidate that appointed you. The candidate has put great trust in you, and you must not disappoint him/her. Together with the election officials and the Security personnel, you form a team, charged with the

responsibility to ensure that the elections are run properly at your polling station, in accordance with the rules and regulations. You must carry out your duties with absolute dedication, honesty and integrity.

Preparing for Election Day

Being a party agent is not difficult, but to do the job well, you must understand Election Day procedures and prepare yourself well. Attending a training session for party agents organized by your party is a good way to learn about what is expected to happen on Election Day.

This manual also explains these procedures, so you can refer to it if you need to. Also, don't be afraid to ask your party trainer questions. It is his/her job to help you understand how the election works.

Observing a polling station is an all day job. You must stay at your assigned polling station throughout the election, unless your alternate arrives to relieve you. Before Election Day, you should prepare yourself by assembling supplies that you will need during the day and evening:

- Manual for Party Agents
- Observing checklist
- Mobile phone
- Notebook
- Pens
- Food
- Water
- Candle or Flashlight
- Contact information for your political party supervisors and leaders

Getting accredited

In order to be allowed to observe the polls on Election Day, you have to be accredited by the National Electoral Commission. To be accredited, you must fill out a NEC accreditation form and your party must bring it to the NEC District Electoral Office and two passport photos with your name written on the back. Then, within a few days, NEC will make an accreditation card available to you which you can pick up from your party leaders. It must be noted that your party must submit their list of party agents before the deadline set by the NEC.

What is a Polling Center?

A Polling Centre is a former Voter Registration Center. Within any particular Polling Center there will be a number of polling stations where a predefined number of voters will cast their ballots. A polling centre can have a single polling station or a number of polling stations, but will not generally have more than four.

What is a Polling Station?

A polling station is a place designated by law for the purpose of voting.

A place within the Polling Center where a team of polling staff/officials work together to issue ballot papers to eligible voters.

Who should be in a polling station?

Only certain people are allowed to be in the polling station on Election Day (*17th November, 2012*). This helps to ensure that voting and counting takes place in an orderly manner. The NEC assigns seven staff members to each polling station. These staff members should remain at their posts all day:

Presiding Officer: manages the assigned polling station, supervises other polling staff: counts the ballots and ensures that all required documentation is completed correctly.

Voter Identification Officer (VIO): Verifies the presence of each voter on the final voters register, verifies that the voter has not already voted and punches the voter's ID card to prevent it from being used twice.

Ballot Paper Issuers (2): Validates the ballot paper using the NEC validation stamp and issues the ballots to the voter and directs the voter to a vacant voting screen.

Ballot Box Controllers (2): guards the ballot boxes and ensures that the voter's finger is inked immediately after voting.

Queue Controller: controls the entrance and exit of the polling station and ensures that the queue is maintained in an orderly manner.

Note: There will be at every Polling Centre vicinity a Voter **Enquiry Desk** with an assigned **Enquiry Officer**.

- Voters who went through the Voter Registration process, who do not have their voter ID cards will go to the Voters Enquiry Officer (VEO) to collect such cards. The Enquiry Desk will be located in the vicinity of each polling centre nationwide;
- After collecting his/her card from the Enquiry Officer, the Voter is directed to the centre where to vote on that polling day (17th November, 2012). Such voter is required to join the queue at the Polling Centre/Station and cast his/her votes for the Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Council Elections

The following people are prescribed by the law to be in a polling station:

- Eligible voter- Registered voters, voting or waiting to vote at that particular Station;
- Polling Staff as described above;
- Accredited Party Agents of political parties, coalitions/alliances and independent candidates’;
- Accredited Observers, national and international;
- Assigned security Officer, please note that SLP or other security officers must wear their uniforms and display their ID cards. Security Officers should remain outside of the polling station. However, if a disturbance occurs, the Presiding Officer or another senior NEC official may invite the security officer(s) into the polling station to restore order. If this happens, make a note on your form or in your report describing the incident;
- NEC Officials with special polling pass or with special duties relating to polling and counting, such as the Polling Centre Manager who is in charge of several polling stations that are located in the area;
- Accredited Press/Media Officials with valid Press Identity cards.

Rights and Responsibilities of Party Agents

As a party agent, you have certain rights and responsibilities; keep these things in mind as you do your work on Election Day.

You have the right:

- To observe the polling and counting exercise on behalf of your party;
- To raise concerns. If you have a question or think that there is a problem, raise the issue with the presiding officer to solve it. If you do

not raise concern on behalf of your political party, no one else will. If you raise a concern with the Presiding Officer, you have the right to have it recorded in his or her official journal;

- Sign the NEC result form, record of seals form, and other documents you are required to sign at the polling station;
- Receive a copy of the polling station result form and deliver it to your party leaders.

You have the responsibility:

- To be at your polling station. The NEC allows two party agents from each party to be assigned to a single polling station, but only one of you may be in the station at a time. One of you must be at the polling station, until voting and counting are completed. The other may act as a relief if you get tired. If you do not stay at your polling station, no one will defend your party's interests.
- To carry your ID card or badge issued by the NEC and make sure that it clearly refers to the Section/Area where your assigned polling centre is located.
- To remember that election officials are responsible for the election. To stay calm if problems arise. Nobody is perfect. Honest mistakes will happen. If you raise concerns and you feel that the presiding Officer has not been responsive, there is a process for taking the issue with his or her superiors. This process is explained in page 16 of this manual.
- Not to interfere with the polling and counting process in any way.
- Not to intimidate or interfere with any voter. On Election Day, do not campaign on behalf of your party.
- Not to make false accusations that can hurt your reputation and those of your candidate and party. Do not let partisan interests cloud your judgement.
- To leave the polling station if the Presiding Officer asks you to.

Detecting fraud

Although many of the errors you will find on Election Day are the result of human errors, unfortunately there are those who will try and cheat at the ballot box in order to increase their votes. There are many different ways people can abuse the process, but ballot box stuffing is one of the most

common. Ballot box stuffing is when someone marks empty ballot papers and placing them into the ballot box when no one is looking. You can help make sure this doesn't happen with a few key strategies.

- **Spread out:** Make sure your party spreads out agents to as many polling stations as possible. Highly contested polling stations are often the safest from fraud because so many people are watching them. Precincts largely controlled by one party, where it is expected they will get a high percentage of the votes are the potential problem areas for this kind of fraud.
- **Know your numbers:** Know the number of registered voters in your polling station. Make sure the number of ballots counted does not exceed the number of people registered to vote.
- **Count:** Count the number of people who vote on Election Day. Keep track of people going into the polling station or the voting screen, when your replacement shows up, show them your count and have them continue. You can assist in ensuring that no voter leaves the polling station with the ballot paper, if you notice that a voter wants to leave the polling station without depositing the ballot paper in the ballot box, you should bring it to the notice of the Presiding Officer immediately. Track your records with the total number of ballots used. Your number will be an estimate, but if it is different by more than 15-20 ballots, register a complaint with the Presiding Officer.

Process for registering and recording complaints

On Election Day, your job is to observe the voting and counting processes and record what happens on the forms/note books given to you by your party. If you see or observe something happening that is in violation of the NEC's election procedures and regulations (Which are explained in detail in the "Election Procedures" section on pg. 19-28 of this manual), you are allowed to bring this issue to the attention of the Presiding Officer. These

are the appropriate steps you should take when lodging an official complaint:

- 1) If you see or observe a violation taking place, you should calmly and respectfully raise the issue with the Presiding Officer immediately. You are able to do this either in writing or in speaking. He or She should respond immediately to your concern.
- 2) Presiding Officers have a journal for recording complaints and how they responded to them. Make sure that the issue you raised is recorded in the journal and that you sign your name next to the entry.
- 3) If you are not satisfied with the Presiding Officer's response to your concern, you are allowed to bring the issue in writing or in speaking to the Polling Center Manager, if there is one. He or She should also record your complaint in a journal, which you should sign.
- 4) If the violation was minor and if it was addressed quickly by the Presiding Officer or Polling Center Manager, you should make a note of the incident on the voting process form or note book you are given by your political party or candidate.
- 5) If you are still not satisfied with the response by the Presiding Officer and Polling Center Manager, you must stay calm. The NEC Staff makes the final decision on how to deal with incidents in the polling stations and everyone must respect that. However, you should make a note on your form or notebook and explain the problem in as much detail as possible. This information will be helpful to your party or candidate if they choose to raise the concern with more senior NEC officials after Election Day.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ON THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

PRESIDING OFFICER (PO)

- Manages and maintains order inside the assigned polling station.
- Supervises polling station staff to ensure the integrity and procedural accuracy of the polling operation
- Deals with political parties and independent candidates agents, observers and the media at the polling station
- Deals with complaints raised at polling station level
- Undertakes thorough and accurate counting of the votes cast and recording of the results
- Completes all documentation required for the polling station correctly

Opening of the Polls

The polling centre managers and the presiding officers are fully responsible for ensuring proper implementation of polling procedures on polling day.

On polling day, 17th November, 2012, the polling officials must arrive at the polling station not later than **6 a.m.** in order to prepare for the conduct of the poll. Party agents are also required to arrive at the polling station not later than 6:00 a.m. to observe the opening of polls. Voting will begin at 7 a.m. but you should arrive an hour early at 6 a.m. to observe the NEC staff set up the polling station. The first thing you should do when you arrive at the polling station is introduce yourself to the Presiding Officer, showing him or her, your accreditation card and to any other observers from political parties, domestic groups or international organizations.

At 7 a.m. in full view of party/independent candidate agents and observers who are present, the PO will:

- Open the ballot box and allow those present to see the empty ballot box;
- Seal the four sides of the ballot box using the security seals.
- Record the seal numbers used to secure the ballot box in the “Record of seals” form. Party agents and observers will sign the form and also record the numbers in their journals;
- Hand over the sealed ballot box to the ballot box controller.

After all the preparations are concluded, the PO will announce that the polling station is open for voting.

Suspension of Polling Due To disturbances or other Incidents

The PCM must suspend polling if advised to do so by the ADEO or the Police, or if the polling centre is threatened by riot, violence, storm, flood or any other event which makes orderly polling impossible.

After polling has been suspended, the presiding officer with the help of other PS officials must ensure that all sensitive materials are properly secured:

Close of the polling station

Polling closes at 5 p.m. However, voters standing in the queues at this time can still vote. Any person joining the queue after 5 p.m. should not be allowed to vote.

The Presiding Officer counts the voters standing in the queue and asks the queue controller to stand behind the last person. The queue controller should not allow voters who arrive after 5 p.m. to join the queue. After the last voter in the queue has voted, polling closes.

PACKING OF POLLING MATERIALS

Packing of polling materials will take place immediately after the necessary parts of the reconciliation form are filled in. The presiding officer will supervise the packing of all the materials from the station.

COUNTING

The counting of the ballots in the parliamentary/ward bye election for Members of Parliament of the Republic of Sierra Leone/Local Council will take place immediately upon the conclusion of polling at every Polling Station. Staff of the polling station will conduct the count. Each presiding officer is responsible for organising the count in his/her respective polling station.

There are four stages of the counting process:

1. PREPARATION FOR COUNTING

Polling officials are under the supervision of the Presiding Officer.

Counting staff should always work only on one side of the table during the reconciliation, sorting and counting, and should never turn their backs to party/independent candidate agents and observers whilst handling ballot papers.

All pens, pencils, other writing instruments or stamps should be removed from the counting table.

2. RECONCILIATION OF BALLOT PAPERS

Reconciliation means checking that the number of ballots in each ballot box equals to the number of ballots which were handed out to voters in that specific polling station.

Important: Unstamped ballot papers will be included in the count but will be treated as invalid. The word “**REJECTED**” will be written across the back of invalid ballots.

3. SORTING OF BALLOT PAPERS: During this phase, the ballot papers are sorted by candidates according to the voters’ choice. At this stage the PO will also determine the validity of the ballot papers.

The rules for determining valid and invalid ballots are based on the principle that, to the greatest extent possible, the ballot should be counted **if the intention of the voter is clear**. In other words, every ballot shall be presumed to be valid unless there is a clear and good reason to justify its rejection. This policy is based on the fundamental principle that the object of any election is to obtain the expressed will of the voter.

4. COUNTING OF VOTES

Once the ballots have been sorted into separate stacks for each candidate and invalid ballots, each stack will be counted separately in the order in which the candidate appears on the ballot paper. When the stacks have been counted for all the candidates, the invalid ballots will be counted separately. Counting of the votes must be done in full view of party/independent candidates' agents and observers. The PO will announce the results loudly after the votes are counted for each candidate so that party/independent candidate agents and observers present at the polling station can record the results.

DISPLAYING THE POLLING STATION RESULTS

All Parliamentary/Ward Councillor bye elections provisional results will be displayed at each polling station and at the polling centre for public viewing, and for the party/independent candidate agents, copies of the polling stations results will be given to them.

PACKING AND DELIVERY OF ELECTORAL MATERIALS

At the conclusion of the count, POs will hand over all the sensitive and non sensitive materials to the PCM, who will then deliver all the polling centre materials to the District Electoral Office through the ADEO.

- ✓ **Determining valid/invalid ballot papers:** Presiding Officers should stick to the principle of interpreting the intention of the voter. For example, if

there are two marks within the space for one candidate, that ballot must be considered as valid.

✓ **The importance of writing REJECTED at the back of the invalid ballot papers**

It is important to write the word rejected at the back of any invalid ballot or unstamped ballot. This is essential in case a recount is needed.

✓ **Reconciliation, sorting and counting**

• The reconciliation is one of the most important processes during the counting of the votes. The reconciliation process for the 17th November, 2012 polls will be the same as for the 2007/2008 elections and previous elections.

Remember: the number of the ballot papers taken from the ballot box should always be equal to the total number of valid votes plus invalid votes. If the number does not match and there is a discrepancy between those two, the Presiding Officer should check the calculations one more time. If the calculations are correct but the number still does not match, then the Presiding Officer has to recount the ballot papers and find where the mistake is.

• If the Reconciliation is successfully completed and the reconciliation form is filled in, the Presiding Officer will immediately continue with sorting and counting of ballot papers without returning the ballot papers to the ballot box.

• For the sorting of the ballot papers there will be stacks for each candidate and one for invalid ballot papers.

✓ **The packing of the sensitive materials and Tamper Evident Envelopes (TEEs).**

• TEEs are not supposed to be inside the ballot box

• TEEs are not to be opened at all once they have been sealed.

• The remarks are to record whatever has happened with that TEE

Consequences of not following procedures

• Results can be missing

• Creating suspicions from the Political Parties

• Creating delays in the declarations of results

• Invalidating the results

•

Polling Station Staff

PRESIDING OFFICER (PO)

- Manages and maintains order inside the assigned polling station.
- Supervises polling station staff to ensure the integrity and procedural accuracy of the polling operation
- Deals with political parties and independent candidates agents, observers and the media at the polling station
- Deals with complaints raised at polling station level
- Undertakes thorough and accurate counting of the votes cast and recording of the results
- Completes all documentation required for the polling station correctly

Voter identification Officer (VIO):



Ref Voting step 2

- Does not allow two voters at the table unless one voter has a disability and is being assisted;
- Examines the Voters identification card to ensure the voter's identity is correct
- Checks the Final Register of Electors to ensure that the voter's name is included in the Final Register of Electors for that polling station;
- If s/he doubts the voter's identity, asks the voter's name to ensure that the identification card belongs to the voter;
- Confirms that the details on the identification card match the details in the Final Register of Electors;
- Ticks the appropriate box corresponding to the name of the voter in the Final Register of Electors. Directs the voter to the ballot paper issuer.



If there is a problem with the identification of the voter, the Presiding Officer's decision is final. Any person trying to impersonate may be reported to the police officer if this is considered to be an appropriate action.

The importance of checking the fingers by the Voter Identification Officer for traces of ink

Voter Identification Officer needs to check the voter's finger before he/she starts identifying the voter in the Final Voters Register (FVR).

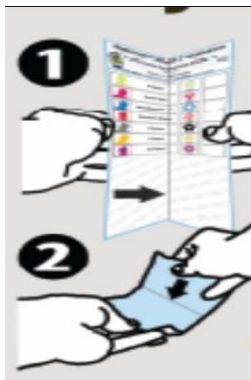
The ballot paper issuer will confirm the number of ballot papers received;

Ballot Paper Issuer (BPI)- Issuing of ballot papers

For purposes of the 2012 elections there will be two Ballot Paper Issuers. One to issue ballots for presidential and parliamentary elections (BPI 1); the other for Chairperson/Mayor and Councillor elections (BPI 2)

The Ballot Paper Issuer:

- Detaches the ballot papers from the books;
- Stamps the back of the ballot paper with the official stamp;
- Pre-folds, open and shows the ballot to the voter
- Explains the method of voting. The explanation must be completely impartial;



- Issues a blind voter with Tactile Ballot Guide when necessary (see instructions on TBG below) and ensures that the ballot is placed properly in the TBG;
- Pre-folds (by showing the voter the way to do it -when the voter is blind, this explanation is given verbally) and then unfolds the ballot paper, and gives it to the voter
- Explains that:
 - a. S/he must tick or mark with a thumbprint against the candidate of his/her choice in the blank box that corresponds to the symbol/photo of the candidate of his/her choice
 - b. S/he must only make one mark on the ballot paper;
 - c. Once s/he has made a mark, especially by thumbprint, s/he should wait a moment till the mark becomes dry before folding;
 - d. S/he should fold the ballot paper and deposit it in the ballot box;
 - e. The choice of the voter is secret and that no one has the right to know how s/he has voted;
- Directs the voter to a vacant voting screen;
- Ensures that only one voter goes into one portion of the voting screen at a time, unless the voter needs help;

- Is responsible for the security of the ballots at all times. If s/he needs to leave the polling station, the Presiding Officer takes her/his place.



Remember: ballot papers with no stamp will be treated as invalid

Replacement of spoilt ballots

- If a ballot paper is torn as it is being removed from the booklet or destroyed or soiled, writes “**SPOILED**” on the back of the ballot paper (**using red pen**) and places it in the envelope for spoiled ballot papers and gives the voter a new ballot paper;
- If a voter claims that s/he has mis-marked his/her ballot, retrieves it without looking at the front of the ballot paper, writes the word “**SPOILED**” on the back of the ballot paper, puts it in the envelope for spoiled ballot papers and gives the voter a new ballot;

A ballot paper will be considered as spoiled when:

- The ballot paper issuer mistakenly tears or damages it when detaching from the stub
- A voter accidentally damages it either by tearing or dirtying
- A voter makes a mistake in marking the ballot
- A ballot paper is found lying around the station

All spoiled ballot papers will be put in the “***Spoiled ballot paper envelop***” provided.



VERY IMPORTANT

- ✓ **The importance of not pre-stamping the ballot papers and giving the ballot papers unfolded.**
- Emphasis need to be placed on stamping the ballot papers in front of the voter for the transparency of the process.
 - ✓ **The difference between spoiled and invalid ballot papers**
- A spoiled ballot paper is the ballot paper that has been soiled, torn or mis-marked and never cast.

- An invalid ballot paper is a cast ballot on which there are no marks or is impossible to determine for which candidate it was marked or there is no official stamp.

The Ballot Box Controller (BBC):

For purposes of the 2012 elections there will be two Ballot Box Controllers. One to control 2 boxes for presidential and parliamentary elections (BBC 1); the other for Chairperson/Mayor and Councillor Elections (BBC 2)

The Ballot Box Controller:

- Ensures that the secrecy of the vote is always protected;
- Guards the ballot box at all times;
- Controls the ballot box and does not admit more than one voter to the ballot box area (except a guide for a blind voter);
- Ensures that the voter places folded and stamped ballot papers in the correct ballot box;



Ref. Voting step 5

Note: If the voter folds the ballot in such a way that the stamp is not visible, ask the voter to refold it so the stamp can be seen.



- Asks voter to dip left hand index finger in the ink.

Note: If the voter has no left index finger, the ink may be applied on the next closest finger on the left hand. If the voter has no left hand then follow the above procedures for the right hand, and if he/she has no

arms, it is not necessary to apply ink.

Voter refuses to be inked

If a voter refuses to be inked, the ballot box controller must explain that it is a necessary part of the procedures. If voter still refuses to comply, the ballot box controller should report the case to the presiding officer who in turn should try to persuade the voter by mentioning that refusing to be inked could be construed as wanting to vote twice which is an electoral offence. If voter still refuses, the presiding officer will refer the issue to the police. In any case, the PO will record the event and will write the voter's name and ID card number in the PO journal.

- Thanks the voter for participating in the elections and directs him/her out of the polling station;
- Ensures that NO ballot paper is taken out of the polling station or dropped on the floor;
- Ensures that the ballot box does not get too congested, by shaking the box at intervals in order to re-distribute the ballots inside the box;
- Ensures that no unauthorized materials are deposited in the ballot box and that no one tampers with the ballot box;
- Is responsible for the security of the ballot box at all times. If the ballot box



- **Remember:** under no circumstances should a polling official inspect a marked ballot paper.

controller needs to leave the polling station, the PO takes his/her place.

-

Polling Centre/ Station Queue controllers:

Polling centre queue controllers will control the entrances of the PS until the counting process has finished in all polling stations and POs have handed over materials to the Ward Coordinator.

- Ensure that only authorized people enter the centre and that voters do not remain at the centre after voting;
- Check that voters have their Identification Cards and directs voters to the correct polling stations;

Note: If the person does not have a valid identification card receipt to identify him/herself, the official will politely ask the voter to go and collect one.



Ref. Voting step 1

Polling station queue controller:

- Organises queues so that only authorised people enter the polling station and that the polling station does not become crowded;
- Takes position at the entrance of the polling station and keeps voters in an orderly line

outside the polling station;

- Ensures that the flow of voters to the identification officer is constant;
- Gives priority to the aged, voters with disabilities, pregnant voters and parents with babies;
- Reminds voters with disabilities in line that they can be accompanied by any person of their choice (**order than a polling staff**) if they need assistance to mark their ballots. It should be made clear that nobody can assist more than one voter;
- Stays in contact with the Presiding Officer who will indicate to him/her to slow down or to speed up the voter's flow into polling station;
- From time to time informs the voters in queue about the range of ID numbers assigned to that specific station;
- Checks if the voter has traces of ink on the left hand index finger before entering the polling station;

Note: The voter is admitted into the polling station only after Queue Controller makes sure that there is no ink on the voter's left index finger. If the voter has been inked s/he cannot vote again.

- Asks voters to have their identification card ready to show to the Identification Officer and directs them one at a time to the Identification Officer;
- Keeps the entrance to the polling station clear at all times
- Ensures that voters leave the polling station as soon as they finish voting;
- Reports any security concerns to the Presiding Officer.



VERY IMPORTANT: The polling staff must ensure that directional signs, Polling Station codes, and Polling Station numbers are placed in the polling stations where voters can easily see them.

- Ward Coordinators, Polling and polling centre queue controllers should make a previous arrangement to manage the crowd before polling day.
- Polling centre and polling station queue controllers should be organizing the voters, already at the centre, in queues, before 6 am.
- Polling Center queue controllers should be positioned in strategic places to be able to direct voters to their polling stations.
- If at the end of the day members of the public refuses to leave the Polling Center, the barrier tape can be used to establish a limit and not allow them to get near the Polling Station(s) or where the counting is taking place.

Reporting to your Political Party

When you have completed your job as a Party Agent, you must remember to sign the result form after the Presiding Officer has entered the correct result according to the counting procedures. Send your result forms and provide a report to your party/candidate as soon as possible. Your report or form should be written very clearly. Sign your report or form and provide your name, contact information, the date and the number of the polling station you observed. The information you provide in your report or your form may be critical in helping your party or candidate:

- Confirm that the results announced by the National Electoral Commission are correct;
- Assess whether any problems that you or others observed occurred in only a few places or may have been widespread or severe enough to affect the election result;
- Build a legal case for contesting the election, if your party or candidate determines this is appropriate. If a legal case is warranted, the written information you provide may be required as evidence. You may even be required to testify in court about what you observed.