

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH  
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION (ELECTIONS.D) DEPARTMENT

Memo. No. 2146 /Elecs.D/A2/2014-1

Dated: 10-03-2014.

Sub:- General Elections to the HOP/APLA, 2014 –  
Revised guidelines for issue of EDC and Postal  
Ballot to voters on election duty – Regarding.

Ref:- From ECI, New Delhi, Lr.No. 52/2014-SDR/  
dated. 07-03-2014.

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The attention of all the Collectors & DEOs and Spl. Commissioner, GHMC and DEO, Hyderabad/ Returning Officers/ DGP, AP/ MD, APSRTC is invited to the reference cited. (copy enclosed) The ECI has issued revised guidelines for issue of Election Duty Certificate and Postal Ballot to voters on election duty, for the General Elections to the HOP/APLA, 2014.

2. Therefore all the District Elections Officers/ Returning Officers/ Director General of Police, AP/ MD, APSRTC are requested to follow the instructions of the ECI scrupulously for issue of Election Duty Certificate and Postal Ballot for voters on election duty, for the General Elections to the HOP/APLA, 2014.

V. VENKATESWARA RAO,  
ADDL. CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER &  
JOINT SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

To:

All the Collectors & D.E.Os. (except Collector, Hyderabad) (w.es.)  
The Spl. Commissioner, GHMC and DEO, Hyderabad. (w.es.)  
All the R.Os, in the State.(through the DEOs concerned) (w.es.)  
The Director General of Police, AP, Hyderabad. (w.es.)  
The Managing Director, APSTRC, Hyderabad. (w.es.)

//FORWARDED :: BY ORDER//

*P. Krishna Rao*  
SECTION OFFICER

*A*



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**ELECTION URGENT**  
**BY EMAIL/CAMP BAG**

**ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA**

NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001

No.52/2014-SDR/

Dated : 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2014

To.

The Chief Electoral Officers of  
all States and Union Territories.

**Subject:- Guidelines for issue of Election Duty Certificate – regarding.**

Sir/Madam,

A very large numbers of persons are put on duty for the purpose of conduct of elections. These include persons in polling teams including Presiding Officers and Polling Officers, all Police personnel, Sector and Zonal Officers, Returning Officers, Assistant Returning Officers, District Election Officers and their staff, Micro-Observers, Assistant Expenditure Observers, drivers conductors and cleaners of vehicles used in elections etc. The Commission is keen that all persons appointed on election duties who are registered as electors and by reason of being on election duty are unable to vote at the assigned polling station are able to exercise their franchise as per law.

2. Under the provisions of rule 20 of the C.E. Rules, 1960, there are two ways in which franchise can be exercised by a person on election duty. If the person is on duty in the same constituency where he is enrolled as an elector, he is given "Election Duty Certificate" (EDC), which entitles him to cast his vote in another polling station of the same constituency where he is on election duty. If on the other hand, the person is on duty in some constituency other than the one in which he is enrolled as an elector, he is entitled to vote by **Postal Ballot (PB)**. Many Persons on election duty are not even aware that they are entitled to EDC or Postal Ballot.

3. During the general elections to the Legislative Assemblies of various States held in the past when only postal ballot option was made available to "voters on election duty" as officials are normally not assigned duty in the constituency where they are registered as electors, it posed a great challenge to properly manage various activities connected with issue of postal ballot papers, provide facility for casting of vote at the Facilitation Centre, handling of polled PBs

received by post or dropped in person after the actual date of poll in the constituency, transmission of polled PBs to the respective ROs within the district as well as inter district etc. and again at the time of counting of votes. Certain other problems, such as, the officials not collecting the PB even after applying for the same, many persons not voting at the facilitation center after obtaining the PB, persons not enrolling at their ordinary place of residence but continuing to be enrolled in their native villages or towns where they are not living any longer, enrolling at more than one place etc. were encountered. Apart from this, some candidates asked for list of voters issued with PB, etc.

4. During the ensuing General Election to Lok Sabha 2014, polling staff would be primarily drawn from and posted within the parliamentary constituency itself, though they may not be deployed in their own Assembly Constituencies. Therefore, most of the voters on election duty can vote by using EDC. Voting through EDC has following advantages :-

- a) No special arrangements have to be made to facilitate casting of ballot by employees who have been issued EDC;
- b) No special monitoring of casting of ballots has to be made by the RO;
- c) Allegations of violation of secrecy of ballot, and influencing or intimidation of voters, are avoided;
- d) Complaints about issue of Postal Ballot even after the poll day are completely avoided;
- e) No special arrangements have to be made to send polled Postal Ballot to the Returning Officer concerned for counting.
- f) Time consumed in counting of postal ballot is saved.

5. In view of the above advantages of management of EDC over Postal Ballot, the Commission hereby directs that employees randomization software shall be made in such a manner that to the extent possible the polling staff is deployed in election duty in the same Parliamentary Constituency in which they are registered as voter but not in the same assembly segment where they are resident.

6. As per the provisions of sub-rule (2) of rule 20 of C.E. Rules 1961, if a voter on election duty, being a Polling Officer, Presiding Officer or other public servants on election duty in a constituency of which he is an elector, wishes to vote in person at an election in the constituency, he shall send an application in **FORM 12A** (Annexure-1) to the Returning Officer so as to reach him at least **4 days or such shorter period** as the RO may allow before the date of poll. The

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RO, after he is satisfied that the applicant is such public servant and voter on election duty in the constituency, shall issue an Election Duty Certificate in **FORM 12B** (Annexure-2) to authorise the voter on election duty to vote at any polling station in said constituency where he may be on duty on the date of poll.

7. The Election Duty Certificate in Form 12B shall be printed in adequate number either centrally by the CEO or the DEO, as may be convenient, and each such certificate shall be serially numbered with a unique serial number.

8. In the format of application for EDC in Form 12 A, there is column for mentioning the number and name of the polling station within the constituency where he is posted on election duty and also the S.No. & Part No. of the electoral roll in which his/her name is registered as an elector. While the details of the assembly constituency, Part No. of electoral roll, Sl. No. of the voter where his/her name is entered in the roll and EPIC number will be available in the employees database, the details of polling station where s/he is posted on election duty would be known only after the third round of randomisation is done to assign specific polling station. Therefore, the details regarding the polling station where posted for duty need not be filled by the applicant. The rule also mandates that the letters "EDC" should be indicated in the **"marked copy of the electoral roll"** against the name of the person to whom EDC is issued to ensure that the same person is not allowed to vote at the polling station where he would otherwise have been entitled to vote. The voter on election duty can exercise his/her franchise **in person** on the basis of the EDC at the polling station where he is deployed on poll duty.

9. In the case of polling staff while issuing the appointment orders drafting them on election duty after first randomisation, the copy of Form-12A (either pre-filled generated from the employees database or blank Form where the database is not populated with electoral roll particulars) shall be sent to them.

10. In the case of police personnel who are also treated as voters on election duty, the SP or other competent officer will maintain a database of all police personnel in the district. In that database, the elector details, like, No. & Name of Assembly Constituency, Part No. & Sl. No. of electoral roll where name is registered as an elector shall also be populated. The SP shall prepare the deployment plan for the police officials in the district well in advance. At this stage the

constituency where they are deployed on election duty would be known, whether within the constituency where registered as elector or in a different constituency. Those posted within the constituency will be eligible for voting on the basis of "EDC" and those posted outside the constituency will be eligible for voting through Postal Ballot. The SP shall appoint a Nodal Officer to coordinate all activities related to facilitating the exercise of franchise by police personnel through postal ballot or EDC. Form 12A (for EDC) or Form 12 (for Postal Ballot) shall be provided by the SP or the nodal officer identified for this purpose to enable the police personnel to make application for EDC or PB, as the case may be. The SP or the nodal officer shall ensure that these applications in Form 12 and 12A with the electoral roll details duly entered and signed by the police personnel are sent to the concerned Returning Officer at least 7 days before the date of poll so that EDC or PB, as the case may be, can be issued after making necessary entries in the marked copy of the electoral roll.

11. Similarly, in the case of drivers/conductors/cleaners and other persons appointed for specific election related duties also a Nodal Officer may be appointed. The enrolment details like No. & Name of Constituency, Part No. and Sl. No. of entry in the electoral roll of the persons so drafted for election duty shall be ascertained by the Nodal Officer and they shall be provided Form 12A (for EDC) if posted on election duty within the constituency of enrolment or Form 12 (for Postal Ballot) if posted in a different constituency to enable them to make application for EDC or PB, as the case may be. The nodal officer shall ensure that these applications in Form 12 and 12A with the electoral roll details duly entered and signed by the driver, conductor etc. drafted on election duty are sent to the concerned Returning Officer at least 7 days before the date of poll so that EDC or PB, as the case may be, can be issued after making necessary entries in the marked copy of the electoral roll.

12. Marking of 'EDC' in the marked copies of electoral roll should be done as early as possible after the officials would have submitted applications for EDC in Form 12A. The ROs may not insist upon the mentioning of P.S.No in application in Form 12A. Preparation of marked copy of electoral roll should not be delayed till the stage of issue of EDC. Once Form 12A application is submitted, the officials concerned can only vote using the EDC (Form 12B) at the polling station where he is on duty or in a nearby polling station if he is not assigned any specific polling station.

13. Similarly, when an official is deployed on election duty in the capacity of Zonal Magistrate or Sector Officer in a parliamentary constituency where he is a voter, he should also be given EDC so that he can exercise his franchise in any one of the polling stations that comes under the zone/sector allotted to him.
14. The question whether particular polling personnel is deployed on election duty at a polling station or is in reserve will be known immediately after second randomization. At that stage, the total number of staff going to be deployed in polling stations inside the PC will be known.
15. In the case of the officials who would be eligible for EDC, they should be briefed about the EDC facilities at the first training. As mentioned above, a copy of the Form 12A should be sent to the officials requisitioned for election duty together with the duty order. The officials should be instructed to submit the same duly signed, when they come for the first training itself. In this Form 12A they need not mention the Sl. No. and name of P.S. where they are posted on election duty within the constituency in that Form as that would not be known before third randomization of polling personnel.
- a) In case Form 12A is generated from the database then he should check the electoral roll details already printed and correct mistakes if any in the AC No. & Name, Part No. & Sl. No. of electoral roll and EPIC number.
  - b) In case Form 12A is not generated, then he should fill up the details legibly. Those officials who do not know the part no. and serial no. of their entry in the electoral roll may be provided all necessary assistance to ascertain the same to enable the polling personnel to mention in Form-12A the particulars relating to their electoral roll entries (Sl No., Part No. of entries in the electoral roll). The copies of the electoral rolls will be kept in separate counters, assembly segment wise with sufficient number of staff to assist the election duty officials to locate their name in the roll.
  - c) The Form 12A should be submitted together with a copy of the duty order and photocopy of EPIC in order to ensure that no ineligible person is issued a EDC.
  - d) Applications in Form-12A, completed in other respects and duly signed by the polling personnel, would be collected at the first training class itself. These, again, should be collected assembly segment wise.

- e) The DEO shall make arrangements to ensure that all applications received in Form 12-A are immediately forwarded to the concerned RO.
16. The RO shall prepare the Election Duty Certificate in respect of all personnel who have submitted duly signed application in Form 12A. This should be done well before the second training/facilitation so that the EDC can be delivered to the electors on the second training/facilitation day. While preparing the EDC, the Part No. should be suffixed after the serial No. of the elector in the space provided for this in the format of EDC, ( like 415/25 i.e. Sl. No.415 in Part No.25 of electoral roll).
17. At this stage, proper account of the EDCs issued shall be maintained in a register. The names of the polling personnel issued with EDC and unique serial no. of the EDC should be entered in the register and the signature of the polling personnel obtained against that entry as and when EDC is issued to them. The Register shall be in the format enclosed herewith as Annexure-3.
18. The persons who after making application for EDC do not come to collect the EDC on the second day of training/facilitation may be asked to collect it from the RO/Officer-in-charge on a subsequent date as may be decided by the RO. Any leftover personnel can be given the EDC at the time of dispatch of polling party.
19. For the polling personnel kept as reserves, if they are deployed on duty in any polling station on the day of poll, they can cast vote using EDC in such polling station. For other staff on reserve who are not assigned to any particular polling station they can vote in any polling station located near the place where the reserve personnel are stationed.
20. At the polling stations, the Presiding Officers should brief the polling agents about the facility provided to the polling personnel to vote in that polling station using EDC. It may also be made clear to them that once EDC is issued they can vote only on the basis of EDC.
21. The Presiding Officer of a polling station shall take following action as per provision of rule 35A of C.E. Rules, 1961, whenever any polling staff presents EDC for casting of vote at that polling station :-



- a) Obtain the signature of the person producing the EDC on the EDC;
- b) Have the name and electoral roll details as mentioned in the EDC entered at the end of the marked copy of the electoral roll along with the particulars of electoral roll details;
- c) Each such entry should be serially numbered consecutively after the last serial number of entries in the relevant part of electoral roll.
- d) The EDC shall be retained by the first polling officer.

22. Thereafter, the person shall be allowed to vote by following the usual procedure. In the Form 17A (register of voters), in the column meant for serial number of elector in the electoral roll, the serial number, part number and the name of Assembly Segment of the EDC holder shall be mentioned. For example, if the EDC holder is enrolled at Sl. No. 415 in part No. 25 of Assembly Segment 'XYZ', the entries in column 2 of Form 17A in that case would be '415/25/XYZ'. In the remarks column of Form 17A, "EDC voter" shall be written.

23. The polling personnel using EDC facility should cast vote at the time when the polling agents are present in the polling station except in cases where no polling agent turns up. In the case of the reserve polling personnel, they should be advised to vote as soon as possible in the beginning itself, as they may be required later or to be shifted to different polling stations to meet emergent situations.

24. The Presiding Officer should note the total number of electors who voted on production of EDC against the relevant item in the PO Diary. In Item No.1 of Form 17C (Part-I) regarding the total number of electors assigned to the Polling Station, the figures of total number of electors as per the relevant part of the electoral roll plus electors who voted on production of EDC shall be indicated. The actual number of electors assigned as per the total number of electors in that part of electoral roll may be shown first followed by votes polled on production of EDC. For example, if the total no. of electors assigned to a polling station is 1125 and 9 votes were cast on production of EDC, then in Form 17C it shall be shown as "1134 (1125 + EDC 9)".

25. The Presiding Officer shall keep all the EDCs produced in the polling station in a separate envelope mentioning thereon the No. & name of the polling station and the total number

of EDCs inside the envelope. This envelope shall be sealed and returned alongwith the other election material.

26. In the collection centre, all the envelopes containing EDCs should be kept separately and these envelopes should later be stored in a separate trunk. In the event of any repoll in any polling station, the electors who voted in that polling station on the basis of the EDC shall be issued a fresh EDC to enable them to exercise their franchise during the repoll at the concerned polling station. In case any person cast vote by EDC in the polling station going to repoll his details can be known by opening the envelope in which the EDCs used at that polling station are kept.
27. The DEO will be responsible for proper coordination of the whole activities.
28. In the States of Mizoram, Nagaland & UTs of A & N Islands, Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, D & N Haveli, Lakshadweep and Puducherry having only one parliamentary constituency, every category of voters on election duty will be issued EDC only.
29. In the States of Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Sikkim where simultaneous election will be held for Lok Sabha and Legislative Assembly all voters on election duty viz. polling personnel/police personnel/Drivers, cleaners, videographers and all other category of voters on election duty will be issued only Postal Ballot Paper as otherwise as per the existing randomisation norm of posting within PC but outside AC they will get one EDC for PC and PB for AC.
30. The above instructions may be brought to the notice of all concerned for implementation without any deviation.

Yours faithfully,

  
(Ashish Chakraborty)  
Secretary

Annexure--1

**FORM 12A**

[See rule 20(2)]

**APPLICATION FOR ELECTION DUTY CERTIFICATE**

To,

The Returning Officer,

.....	Assembly	constituency
	Parliamentary	

Sir,

I intend to cast my vote in person at the ensuing election to the Legislative Assembly/ House of the People from the .....constituency.

I have been posted on election duty within the constituency at .....(No. and name of the polling station) but my name is entered at Serial No. .... Part No.....of the electoral rolls for..... assembly constituency comprised within..... Parliamentary constituency.

I request that an Election Duty Certificate in Form 12B may be issued to enable me to vote at the polling station where I may be on duty on the polling day. It may be sent to me at the following address:-

.....  
.....

Place.....

Date.....

Yours faithfully

(signature)

Name in full

**Note:** Please attach a copy of the appointment order/EPIC or Service ID with photograph

**FORM 12B**

[See rule 20(2) and 35A]

**ELECTION DUTY CERTIFICATE**

No. ....

Certified that ..... is an elector in the  
..... Assembly / Parliamentary constituency, his electoral roll  
number being ..... That by reason of his being on election duty he is  
unable to vote at the polling station where he is entitled to vote and that he is  
therefore hereby authorized to vote at any polling station in the said  
constituency where he may be on duty on the date of poll.

Signature .....

Place .....

Returning Officer

SEAL

**REGISTER OF ACCOUNT OF "EDCs" ISSUED**

No. &amp; Name of the PC/AC: \_\_\_\_\_

No. & Name of Assembly Segment \_\_\_\_\_  
(in the case of PC)

Running Sl. No.	Unique Sl. No. of "EDC"	Name of voter on election duty	Sl. No./ Part No. of electoral roll in which registered	Signature
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
PAGE 2				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
.....				

Total No. of electors issued EDC \_\_\_\_\_ (in number)

\_\_\_\_\_ (in words )

(Signature)

RO/ARO/Nodal Officer



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**ELECTION URGENT**  
**BY EMAIL/CAMP BAG**

## **ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA**

NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001

No.52/2014-SDR/

Dated: 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2014

To,

The Chief Electoral Officers of  
all States and Union Territories

*(except A & N Islands, Chandigarh, Daman & Diu,  
Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Lakshadweep having only one PC)*

**Subject:-Guidelines for issue of Postal Ballot Papers – regarding**

Ref: - ECI Letters No. 52/2102/SDR/216-250, dated 13<sup>th</sup> August 2012, No. 52/2012/SDR/181-215, dated 13<sup>th</sup> August 2012 and No. 2/2012/SDR/251-285, dated 13<sup>th</sup> August 2012

Sir/Madam,

1. Election Commission has issued detailed instructions for facilitation of casting of postal ballots by persons on poll duty from time to time. The Commission had modified and refined these instructions during the **general elections to various State Legislative Assemblies held in 2012-2013**. This has resulted in a significant increase in the casting of postal ballots by persons on poll duty. The Commission has considered various logistical problems in the process of facilitation of postal balloting by persons on election duty and has decided to further modify these instructions. These comprehensive instructions are being issued **in supersession of all existing instructions on facilitation of postal balloting by persons on election duty.**

2. **Persons on election duty who are entitled for Postal Ballots (PB) and Election Duty Certificate (EDC)** – All persons appointed on election duty who are not able to cast their vote at the polling station where they are enrolled as a voter are entitled to **the facility of** – either an EDC or a postal ballot. In case they are put on election duty in the same constituency in which they are enrolled as a voter, they are entitled to get an EDC, which entitles them to vote at the polling station where they

are on duty. If they are on duty in a constituency other than the constituency where they are enrolled as a voter, they are entitled to a Postal Ballot. These persons include employees in polling parties, Sector Officers, Zonal Officers, Returning Officers and Assistant Returning Officers, District Elections Officer, Deputy District Election Officer, employees posted in the offices of District Election Officer, returning Officer, Control Room and other election related offices, micro-observers, all police personnel, home guards, drivers, conductors and cleaners of vehicles, engaged for election work etc. if such persons are not able to cast their vote at the polling station where he or she is enrolled as a voter by reason of being on duty in relation to elections. Polling agents of candidates also fall in the category of voters on election duty for this purpose. A person is entitled to an EDC if he or she is on duty in the same constituency where he or she is enrolled as a voter, and entitled to a postal ballot if he or she is on duty in any other constituency.

3. **Reasons for Facilitation of Postal Balloting by person on election duty** -

Commission has received representations from time to time that many electors on election duty are not able to cast their postal ballots, and many a times postal ballots cast by such persons do not reach the Returning Officer in time for counting. The Commission has also received representations about the possibility of undue influence or intimidation of persons who cast their vote by postal ballots. To address these issues, the Commission has decided to facilitate casting of postal ballots by persons on election duty during the training sessions to take care of such complaints. Voting through postal ballot in such training sessions is referred to as voting in facilitation centre. The Commission has also decided that facilitation should be done in a completely transparent manner so that all stakeholders are involved in the process at every stage.

4. During the ensuing General Election to Lok Sabha 2014, polling staff including police personnel, driver/conductor/cleaner of vehicles, persons engaged for videography, etc, would be mostly drawn from within the parliamentary constituency. Therefore, large majority of voters on election duty can vote by using EDC. However, if there are persons who are put on duty in a constituency different from the one where he/she is enrolled as elector, such person will need to apply for postal ballot paper to exercise franchise.

5. **Preparation of Database** - A database of persons to be issued postal ballots on account of being on election duty should be prepared well in advance. Along with other information, these databases should necessarily have information about the No. and name of



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Assembly Constituency, Part No. and the Serial Number in Part where the person is enrolled as a voter. The EPIC number of each person should also be captured in the database. The database should also have fields to capture information about the location and address of facilitation centers for postal balloting. The facilitation center will be the same as the place identified for imparting training. If a person is to be called for training more than once, information about all the trainings should be captured in the database. Information about the electoral roll enrolment of a person can be found by using search facility based on EPIC number and search facility based on name and surname. This search facility is provided at the website of all Chief Electoral Officers. These databases should be prepared in the following manner: -

- a) **Database of employees on election duty** - The District Election Officer has to prepare one database of employees for duty in polling parties, and for other election duties like sector officers, zonal officers, micro-observers etc. This database should include all persons appointed on election duty of any kind if such a person is not able to cast his vote at the polling station where he or she is enrolled as a voter on account of being on election duty.
- b) In the case of police personnel who are also treated as voters on election duty, the SP or other competent officer will maintain a database of all police personnel (including home guards, if deployed on election duty) in the district. In that database, the elector details, like, No. & Name of Assembly Constituency, Part No. & Sl. No. of electoral roll where name is registered as an elector shall also be populated. The SP shall prepare the deployment plan for the police officials in the district well in advance. At this stage the constituency where they are deployed on election duty would be known, whether within the constituency where registered as elector or in a different constituency. Those posted outside the constituency will be eligible for voting through **Postal Ballot**. The SP shall appoint a Nodal Officer to coordinate all activities related to facilitating the exercise of franchise by police personnel through postal ballot or EDC. Form 12A (for EDC) or Form 12 (for Postal Ballot) shall be provided by the SP or the nodal officer identified for this purpose to enable the police personnel to make application for EDC or PB, as the case may be. The SP or the nodal officer shall ensure that these applications in Form 12 and 12A with the electoral roll details duly entered and signed by the police personnel are sent

to the concerned Returning Officer at least 7 days before the date of poll so that **EDC or PB**, as the case may be, can be issued after making necessary entries in the marked copy of the electoral roll.

- c) Similarly, in the case of drivers/conductors/cleaners and other persons appointed for specific election related duties also a Nodal Officer may be appointed. The enrolment details like No. & Name of Constituency, Part No. and Sl. No. of entry in the electoral roll of the persons so drafted for election duty shall be ascertained by the Nodal Officer and they shall be provided Form 12A (for EDC) if posted on election duty within the constituency of enrolment or Form 12 (for Postal Ballot) if posted in a different constituency to enable them to make application for EDC or PB, as the case may be. The nodal officer shall ensure that these applications in Form 12 and 12A with the electoral roll details duly entered and signed by the driver, conductor etc. drafted on election duty are sent to the concerned Returning Officer at least 7 days before the date of poll so that **EDC or PB**, as the case may be, can be issued after making necessary entries in the marked copy of the electoral roll.

6. **Issue of pre-filled FORM-12 and collection of signed FORM-12** – FORM -12 should be issued to all those persons who are put on election duty outside the constituency of enrolment. FORM-12 can be pre-filled with information about Name of Elector, No. and Name of Assembly Constituency, Part No. and Serial No. in Part where the person is enrolled in the electoral roll. This information should be available in the database of employees prepared by the DEO. Pre-filled FORM-12 can be printed from the database of employees by software to be prepared by the CEO. A note should be printed at the bottom of FORM-12, that the employee should check the pre-filled details and make corrections if these details are not correct. FORM-12 should be distributed to police personnel through the Superintendent of Police / the nodal officer appointed for the purpose. FORM-12 should be distributed to drivers, conductors and cleaners of vehicles used in elections through the nodal officer /officer in-charge of transportation.

7. Signed FORM-12, **alongwith a copy of the appointment letter as proof of having been drafted for election duty and photocopy of EPIC in order to ensure that no ineligible person is issued a Postal Ballot should be collected on the first day of training** or as soon as possible. Efforts should be made to collect signed FORM-12 before the last date

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of withdrawal of candidature. However if for some reason FORM-12 of some persons on election duty could not be collected before this date, they should be collected even after this date as soon as possible. Signed FORM-12 should be sent by the District Election Officer to the concerned Returning Officers **within the district** for issue of Postal Ballots.

8. **Issue of Postal Ballots to Service Voters** - All postal ballots for service voters will be printed within 24 hours of the finalization of list of contesting candidates and issued within the next 24 hours. **The outer envelope (FORM 13C) for postal ballots to service voters shall be in YELLOW color (both for parliament and assembly elections)** to distinguish them from the postal ballots for employees on poll duty. On the envelope in Form 13C, the complete particulars of the Parliamentary or Assembly Constituency, as the case may be, should be clearly mentioned. Chief Electoral Officer will have a meeting with the head of the postal department for the State, and work out an arrangement that the postal ballots for service voters are handed over by the Returning Officer/Asstt. Returning Officer of each constituency to a designated employee of the postal department nominated for this purpose. Postal Department shall then ensure that all postal ballots for service voters are delivered to the respective Record Offices within 48 hours.

9. **Issue of Postal Ballots to other categories** - The District Election Officer will fill the information of facilitation center for each employee in the database. In general, each training center will also be a facilitation center so that **Voters on election duty can** cast their postal ballots when they come for **second/subsequent** training to be imparted after the printing of postal ballot. All police personnel and drivers, conductors and cleaners of vehicles used in elections will be called at least once for training for the purpose of facilitation of postal balloting by employees. If more than one training session is organized for certain categories of employees, facilitation of postal balloting should be done in each session so that if an employee has not cast his postal ballot in an earlier session, he or she is able to cast postal ballot in the next training session. The Returning Officer will prepare the Postal Ballot papers for those who have submitted signed FORM-12. This should be done as soon as possible after postal ballot paper is printed. The Returning Officers will then check the location and address of the facilitation center of the concerned employee and send the postal ballot to the Officer-in-charge of postal balloting facilitation center for being delivered to the employee.

- = If the facilitation center is located in an area within the jurisdiction of the Returning Officer who issues the postal ballot, he will send the postal ballot directly to the Officer-in-charge of that postal balloting facilitation center.
- = If the facilitation center is outside the jurisdiction of the Returning Officer who issues the postal ballot, but within the district then he will send it directly to the Officer-in-charge of the concerned facilitation center within the district instead of routing it through the District Election Officer.
- = Generally there should be no need of sending the postal ballot outside the district as employees are generally not sent for election duty outside their district. If, however, it becomes necessary to send a postal ballot to a Facilitation Center outside the district, the District Election Officer will co-ordinate with the District Election Officer of the other district and do the needful.
- = If any official who submits Form 12 and for whom postal ballot has been prepared does not collect the Postal Ballot paper personally at the second/subsequent training at the facilitation centre, the Postal Ballot for such person should be dispatched by Registered post with A/D within 24 hours. No postal ballot prepared for issue should be retained with the RO/any other official.

10. **Procedure at the Facilitation Center** - District Election Officer shall appoint one senior officer as in-charge of postal balloting at each Facilitation Center. This officer shall be responsible for the postal balloting at the Facilitation Center. The procedure to be followed at the Facilitation Center is described below:-

- a) **Information to Political Parties** - All Recognized Political Parties will be informed in writing the schedule of facilitation of postal balloting at the Facilitation Centers. They shall be allowed to send their representatives to witness the facilitation process at the Facilitation centers.
- b) **Time to be set apart for Postal Balloting** - In each training session at least 2 hours shall be set apart for facilitation of postal balloting. If necessary more than 2 hours may be set apart for this purpose as per need. Postal Balloting shall be done after the training is over. Political Parties representatives shall be allowed in the Facilitation Center after the training is over and the process of facilitation of postal balloting begins.
- c) **Arrangements for representatives of candidates** - Arrangement shall be made for candidates to sit and watch the process of facilitation without interfering with the

- process. If any person interferes with the process of facilitation, the officer in-charge of facilitation can order such a person to leave the premises immediately.
- d) **Arrangements for casting Postal Ballot in secrecy** – Voting compartments similar to voting compartments in polling station shall be made in each Facilitation Center. This is done so that employees are able to mark their postal ballot in complete secrecy. More than one such voting compartment can be made if necessary. Arrangement of glue/gum shall also be made to seal the envelope (**Cover-A – FORM 13B**) after placing the polled postal ballot in it.
- e) **Availability of gazetted officers for attestation of declaration by the person casting postal ballots** – Under the law a declaration attested by a gazetted officer has to be made by each person in FORM-13A along with the postal ballot. For this purpose at least one gazetted officer shall be put on duty by the District Election Officer at each Facilitation Center. The gazetted officer shall attest the declaration based on the identification of the voter by his identity documents. **He must check before attestation that the Sl.no. of the ballot paper is filled up in the space provided in the declaration, it is signed by the elector and his postal address is mentioned. The attesting officer should append full signature with date and write in hand or put a stamp showing his designation & office address.**
- f) **Issue of Postal Ballots at the Facilitation Center** – Officer in-charge of a Facilitation Center will issue the postal ballot received from the Returning Officer to the voter for whom it is meant after verifying his identity based on EPIC or any other photo identity document, and obtain his signature as a token of having received the postal ballot in a register as per the FORMAT given below:-

Running Sl. No.	Part No. of electoral roll	Sl.No. of elector in the electoral roll	Details of the document produced by the elector in proof of his / her identification	Signature/T.I of elector	Remarks

**This register should be sealed in the same manner as the Register in Form 17A and kept alongwith other statutory covers mentioned in rule 93 (1).**

**Copy of the above register may be given to the candidates who demand for it after the date of poll in the constituency**

- g) **Time upto which Postal Ballot can be issued.**- Provisions regarding intimation by voters on election duty for issue of postal ballot paper, procedure for issue of postal

ballot paper and the time for return of postal ballot paper are given in Rules 20, 23 and 27 of the Conduct of the Elections Rules 1961. As per these provisions, whenever any postal ballot paper is issued to voters on election duty, in the counterfoil of the ballot paper the electoral roll number of the elector, as entered in the marked copy of the electoral roll set apart for conduct of poll at the polling station, is to be entered, and in the said marked copy of the electoral roll the words "PB" is to be marked against the name of the elector to indicate that a postal ballot paper has been issued to the elector in order to ensure that the same elector is not allowed to vote at any polling station. After postal ballot papers have been issued to voters on election duty entitled to vote by post, the RO has to send the relevant parts of electoral roll to the concerned Presiding Officers for marking the names of electors who cast their vote on EVM at the polling station on the day of poll. After the poll, this marked copy is to be sealed and kept in safe custody.

It is clear from the above provisions of law that once the marked copy of the electoral roll is ready to be sent to the Presiding Officers under clause (a) of sub rule (5) of Rule 23 of CE Rules 1961, no postal ballot paper can be issued thereafter. Therefore no ballot paper can be issued after the stage of preparing marked copy of electoral roll for supply to the presiding officers for conduct of poll.

- h). **Process of Postal Balloting** – After receiving his or her postal ballot, the voter shall go into the voting compartment and mark the postal ballot in secrecy. He shall write the serial number of the postal ballot paper, if not already filled up, in the space provided for the same in the declaration in FORM 13A and on the envelope in which the polled postal ballot is kept. He shall then keep the marked postal ballot in the inner envelope (Form 13B – Cover A) meant for this purpose and seal it properly. The voter shall thereafter sign the declaration in FORM-13A, write his/her postal address of registration in the electoral roll, write his name in the space provided and get it attested by a gazetted officer as required by law. The polled postal ballot should not be shown to the officer whose attestation is obtained on the declaration in FORM 13A. He shall then keep the sealed inner envelope containing the polled postal ballot and the declaration in FORM-13A, duly signed and attested, in the bigger envelope (Form 13C – Cover B) and seal this as well. The voter will then cast his postal ballot in the Facilitation Ballot Box as described below.
- i) **Casting of postal ballots in the facilitation ballot box** A large steel trunk with one opening at the top for casting of postal ballots shall be used as a facilitation ballot box

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at the facilitation center. Before the casting of postal ballots is started the empty facilitation ballot box will be opened and shown to all present. The facilitation ballot box will then be sealed by the officer in-charge of the Facilitation Center. Every voter shall cast his or her postal ballot in the Facilitation Ballot Box after marking it and sealing it in the envelopes as described above. This facilitation ballot box will be kept only on the second / subsequent training days at the respective training venues only.

- j) **Sorting of postal ballots** - After all postal ballots for the day have been cast, the box will be opened by the officer in-charge of the Facilitation Center in the presence of the representatives of political parties. All the postal ballots will be taken out of the box and the empty box will be shown to the said representatives of political parties. The postal ballot envelopes will be sorted Assembly Constituency wise and the total number of postal ballot envelopes received for each Assembly Constituency will be entered in a **Statement in FORMAT-1** to be maintained for this purpose at the facilitation center. Representatives of political parties present will be requested to put their signatures on the register and will be given a copy of the relevant pages of the register. All postal ballot envelopes for one Assembly Constituency will be kept in a large envelope meant for that Assembly Constituency. The name of the Facilitation Centre, the date of Facilitation and the number of postal ballots contained therein will be clearly written on this envelope. The number and name of the Assembly Constituency for which the envelope is meant will also be clearly written on the envelope. This envelope will then be sent to the Returning officer of the concerned Assembly Constituency along with a copy of the relevant Statement in Format-1 through special messenger appointed for this purpose not below the rank of Deputy Tahsildar.

- k) **Videography of the postal balloting process** - The entire process of postal balloting will be videographed.

**It should be noted that once a postal ballot paper is issued to a voter on election duty, he/she can vote only through the Postal Ballot even if the official is exempted / not deployed on election duty.**

11. **Monitoring of the process of Postal Balloting at Facilitation Centers** - The officer in-charge of the Facilitation Center will prepare a **return in FORMAT-2** on every day when facilitation of postal ballots is done at the facilitation center and will send it to the DEO. The DEO of every district will compile the return in FORMAT-2 for his district every day till the



facilitation for postal ballots is over in the district, for the postal ballots cast in the facilitation centers of his district. A copy of this return will be sent every day to the Chief Electoral Officer. CEO will compile the returns of the entire State in FORMAT-2 and will send a copy of the compiled FORMAT-2 to the Commission every day till the facilitation of postal ballots is over in the State. Chief Electoral Officer will also send a copy of return in FORMAT-2 every day to all recognized political parties.

12. **Storage of Postal Ballots received by the Returning Officer** - Returning Officer of the concerned Assembly Constituency shall keep the envelope containing postal ballots along with the copy of the relevant statement in Format-1 in a special strong room made especially for this purpose.

13. On the day of dispatch of polling parties also a steel trunk (facilitation ballot box) shall be kept at the dispatch center so that any election duty official who did not cast vote at the training session can drop the envelope containing the postal ballot in such facilitation ballot box. After all the parties have left, this facilitation ballot box will be opened and sorted constituency wise and sent to the respective ROs in sealed envelopes in the same manner as explained above. Candidates should be informed in advance about this activity so that if they want to depute any representative they may do so.

14. If any voter did not cast vote at the facilitation centre / dispatch centre then he can vote only by post. No drop box facility shall be available in the office of the ROs.

15. **Receipt of Postal Ballots by Post-**

- a) **Arrangement to be made with Postal Department** - For receiving back postal ballots by post, the Chief Electoral Officer will make an arrangement with the Postal Department and ask them to nominate one post office for each Parliamentary/Assembly Constituency which will deliver postal ballots every day to the respective Returning Officer. The time of delivery will be fixed at **3 PM every day** at the office of the Returning Officer, except for the counting day when the time for delivery will be before 8 AM or such other time fixed for commencement of counting, at the counting center for that Assembly Constituency. The list of counting centers and the addresses of ROs offices will be communicated in writing to the Postal Department by the CEO.
- b) **Political Parties and Candidates to be present at the time of receipt of postal ballots by post** - All recognized political parties and contesting candidates will be informed in writing that they or their representatives may remain present at the time



of delivery of postal ballots by the post office. A pass should be issued to the nominated postal department employee to enter the counting center on counting day for this purpose.

- c) **Procedure on receiving postal ballots by post** - The postal ballots delivered by the post office will be counted in the presence of the political party representatives and candidate representatives and an acknowledgement of the number of postal ballots received will be given to the post office. A copy of this acknowledgement shall be kept in the record of the RO. The number of postal ballots received will be entered in the **daily return in FORMAT-3** by the RO. The entire process will be videographed.
- d) **Storage of postal ballots received by post** - The Returning Officer will keep all postal ballots received from the post office every day in a separate envelope for that day and write on the envelope the date and words - "**Postal Ballots Received by Post**". He will keep this envelope also in the strong room for postal ballots every day after the post has been received.
- e) **Monitoring of postal ballots received by post** - Returning Officer will prepare a return of the Postal Ballots received from facilitation centers in **Statement-3** every day till he stops receiving postal ballots from facilitation centers. He will also enter the number of postal ballots received by post in the return on Statement-3 till the day of counting. He will send a copy of the return in FORMAT-3 to the Chief Electoral Officer every day through the DEO of the District. He will also send a copy of the return in FORMAT-3 to all the candidates of his Constituency. The Chief Electoral Officer will compile the information of the State in FORMAT-3 every day and will send a copy to the Commission. The CEO will also send a copy of the compiled FORMAT-3 to all recognized political parties.

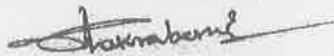
16. **Sending postal ballots to the place of counting where counting is not done at RO headquarter** - In those cases where the counting is done at a place other than the RO headquarters, the postal ballots for the **Parliamentary/Assembly Constituency** will be transferred to another strong room for the postal ballots for the concerned **Parliamentary/Assembly Constituency** at the counting centers, one day before the day of counting. For this purpose, the RO shall inform in writing to the candidates the time at which this will be done. The strong room for postal ballots shall be opened in the presence of the candidates or their representatives present. All postal ballots will then be kept in a large steel box which will be sealed in the presence of candidates and their representatives. This box will then be carried under guard of armed CPF to the strong room for postal ballots at the

counting center. Candidates and their representatives shall be allowed to follow the vehicle carrying postal ballots. The box containing postal ballots will then be kept in the strong room for postal ballots at the counting center in the presence of the candidates and their representatives. Strong room will then be sealed and signatures of candidates and their representatives shall be taken as proof of their presence. Candidates and their representatives shall be allowed to keep watch on the strong room for which they will be provided reasonable facilities by the DEO. The whole process will be video graphed. On the day of the counting, the returning officer will open the strong room and bring all postal ballots and copies of the relevant pages of registers received from the facilitation centers to the table where the postal ballots will be counted.

17. **Tallying of postal ballot numbers before counting** - The envelopes received from facilitation centers will be opened one by one and the number of postal ballots found in each envelope will be tallied with the numbers mentioned in the copies of relevant pages of the registers received from the facilitation center. The result of such tallying will be shown to the candidates and their election agents before the counting of postal ballots. Similarly, the register of postal ballots received by post shall also be shown to the candidates and their election agents.

18. The Commission has directed that these instructions should be brought to the notice of all concerned immediately. A copy of this letter should be immediately given to all the recognized political parties by the Chief Electoral Officer at the State level and by the District Election Officers at the district level. A copy of this letter should also be given to all the contesting candidates by the Returning Officer after the last date of withdrawal.

Yours faithfully,

  
(Ashish Chakraborty)  
Secretary

**Format -1**

Statement regarding Postal Ballots cast at Facilitation Center

Name of State \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of District \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Facilitation Center \_\_\_\_\_  
Name & designation of  
Officer-in-charge \_\_\_\_\_

S.No.	Date	No. & Name of the Parliamentary /Assembly constituency	Total Number of postal ballots cast
Total for the Date			
Cumulative Total Till Date			

## Format -2

District-wise Statement of Postal Ballots Cast at Facilitation Centers within the district

*(To be prepared on each day facilitation is provided)*

Name of State \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of District \_\_\_\_\_

No. & Name of Parliamentary/Assembly Constituency(ies) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of facilitation \_\_\_\_\_

S.No.	Name of Facilitation Center	Total Number of postal ballots cast for the Parliamentary / Assembly Constituency	On Date	Till Date
Total for District				
Total for State				

### Format -3

#### Statement of Postal Ballots Received by RO (Summary)

Name of State \_\_\_\_\_

Name of District \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

S.No.	No. and Name of PC/ AC	Number of Postal Ballots received by messenger Facilitation Centers		Number of Postal ballots received by Post			Total Postal Ballots Received (Including by special messenger from facilitation centers and by post)	
				From voters (Envelop colour yellow)	For voters on duty and others	For election		
		Received on Date	Received cumulative till date	Received on Date	Received on Date	Received cumulative till date	Received on Date	Received cumulative till date
Total for the constituency								

