

**STATE ELECTION COMMISSION
PUDUCHERRY**

No.1-30(4)/SEC/CE/Dir./2021/ 583

Dated.06.09.2021

DIRECTION

Sub: Ensuring welfare of the polling personnel.

The conduct of civic elections is a complex exercise. An efficient human resource management forms an essential part of the election management planning and execution. The personnel involved in the conduct of elections particularly the polling staff carry out their duty in challenging circumstances. Therefore, the Commission is committed to ensuring provision of basic facilities to enable the polling staff to deliver their work in a hassle free manner.

2. The Commission considers the well-being of the polling personnel to be one of the priority areas of election management. In order to ensure that the welfare of the polling personnel receives adequate attention of the District Election Officers/Regional Election Officers and Returning Officers/Assistant Returning Officers, the Commission directs that the following instructions should be followed without any deviation:

2.1. While preparing the machinery for the conduct of election, the DEO/REO shall identify a nodal officer to coordinate and supervise polling personnel welfare measures. Similarly, each RO/ARO shall identify a nodal officer for the above purpose. The name and designation, and the contact numbers of the nodal officers should also be brought to the notice of the polling personnel drafted for election duty.

2.2 Right from the beginning, enough care shall be taken to ensure that the information regarding training programme, dispatch and reception centre arrangement etc. is conveyed to the polling personnel in a proper and timely manner through the sponsoring authorities.

2.3. The responsibility of the officer/department who/which sponsors the polling personnel is not merely to send the names of the government staff to be used for election duty. As and when the DEO/REO or RO/ARO sends information to be passed on to the polling personnel drafted for training/poll duty, the same information shall be conveyed by the sponsoring authority to all the staff drafted for election with due care.

2.4. Proper arrangement shall be made at the training venue; care should be taken while choosing the venue for the training purpose to ensure that there is proper arrangement of basic amenities. There should be a proper provision for drinking water and toilet facilities at the training venue. There should also be 'help desk' to help the polling personnel when they arrive for training.

2.5. It will be the duty of the sector officers to ensure and take care of the polling personnel deputed to perform their duty at the polling stations assigned to and they are not unduly put to any hardship in the distribution and collection of polling materials.

2.6. The DEO/REO and the RO/ARO shall do an advance exercise well before the election to get the conditions of the polling stations physically verified by the field officials. With some advance intervention, the conditions at the polling stations can be vastly improved.

2.7. The RO/ARO, through the sector officers shall get the physical condition of the polling stations verified well in advance and ensure that provision for basic amenities like tables, chairs, benches, drinking water/toilet, shade for voters etc. are made available. With regard to the power connection, the status of switches/bulbs/fans should be checked. In case of any lacunae, alternative arrangement should be made.

2.8. Proper arrangements must be made through the sector officers for the timely provision of food and refreshments to the polling personnel on the poll day.

2.9. The health care of the polling personnel is another important concern. At the training centres, there should be separate arrangements for providing health care/first aid assistance to the polling personnel. Sector Officers / Assistant Sector Officers shall be sufficiently prepared to arrange for any urgent medical assistance to the polling personnel, if required.

2.10. Once EVMs and other documents are handed over, the polling staff shall be relieved from the duty without any delay. Advance measures should be in place to ensure that transport facility including public bus service etc. is available for them to reach home at the earliest.

3. The Commission desires that the polling personnel facilitation to ensure their well-being should become an integral part of election management and starting from the DEO

down to the SO/ASO, this aspect of the election management shall receive adequate attention.

4. Suitable measures should be taken to avoid large gatherings in all the programs and activities ensuring COVID Appropriate Behaviour. Wearing of face masks, social distancing and use of sanitizers should be compulsorily enforced.

5. The DEOs/REOs and ROs/AROs shall ensure strict compliance of this direction without fail.

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STATE ELECTION COMMISSIONER

To

1. The District Election Officer, Puducherry / Karaikal.
2. The Regional Election Officer, Mahe / Yanam.
3. All Returning Officers / Assistant Returning Officers of Municipality and Commune Panchayat.