

भारत निर्वाचन आयोग
ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

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Nirvachan Sadan,
Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001.

No. 464/INST-DPS/2013 -EPS

Dated:- 18th March, 2014

To

The Chief Electoral Officers of
All the States and Union Territories.

**Subject: General Election to the Lok Sabha, 2014 – Dignity of Polling Staff –
Regarding.**

Madam / Sir,

In spite of adoption of automation and technology in various activities, the conduct of election in our country primarily requires human intervention at every stage. The personnel involved in the conduct of election shoulder their duty in demanding situations. Therefore, the least that can be done is to treat them with propriety and to provide for certain basic amenities. The need for human resource management in conduct of election can never be over emphasised.

2. Though instructions have been issued over a period of time that cover almost all the major concerns and aspects of human resource management, the Commission has observed with great concern that still there are gaps in actual implementation of these instructions. The Commission desires that facilitation of the polling personnel should be an integral part of election management plan. Starting from the top level in the field to the last Polling Personnel, the well-being of personnel related to conduct of election should receive adequate attention.

3. In continuation of the Commission's instructions issued vide its letters listed in Annexure-I on the subject mentioned against each, the following instructions on appropriate treatment of personnel engaged in conduct of election shall be followed strictly:

Nodal Officer

While preparing the district machinery for the conduct of election, the District Election Officer shall identify a senior officer as the Nodal Officer to coordinate and supervise polling personnel welfare measures on the lines of a District Welfare Officer, wherever prevalent. Similarly, each Returning Officer shall identify a Nodal Officer for the above purpose. The name and designation, office and residential address, telephone numbers including mobile number and e-mail ID of the nodal officer shall be mentioned in the district / constituency election management plan. The contact numbers should also be brought to the notice of the polling personnel drafted for election duty.

Seniority

The Commission has been receiving representations regarding assigning of election duty without due consideration to the Seniority of personnel drawn from different Departments/ Organisations. There were litigations filed in this regard by few aggrieved personnel in the past and directions of various Courts are also available in the matter. The Commission desires that while assigning election duties to various officials, their seniority should be taken into account and it should be ensured that a senior official is not put on duty under an official who is junior to him/ her. The existing instructions in the matter are explanatory and should be implemented in letter and spirit without any deviation.

Dispatch Centre & Receiving Centre Arrangement

The Commission is greatly concerned with chaotic situation at the dispatch centres and receiving centres that remains a persistent problem. The dispatch centres for issuing polling material and reception centres for polled election materials shall be managed efficiently and professionally by senior officials. Arrangements for health care and refreshment should be made without disturbing the distribution and receiving of election materials. The polling personnel shall not be held up unnecessarily at the reception centre after they have handed over all polling material. 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 their home, at the earliest.

Food & Civic Amenities

The polling personnel should not be put into difficulty for lack of provision in remote areas for getting their food. An exercise shall be undertaken through Sector Officers as to how such problems can be sorted out. It is relevant to note that it may not be desirable on the part of polling personnel to venture out for the sake of getting food in remote locations. It is also undesirable to avail the local hospitality as that may lead to complaints. In some States there is a practice of providing a Gr.-IV staff in the polling team who cooks food and serves the polling party. The DEO shall review the situation and ensure that proper alternative arrangements are made depending on the local conditions and limitations.

Health Care

The health care of the polling personnel is another important concern. At the training centre as well as in dispatch / reception centres, there should be separate arrangements for providing health care/first-aid assistance to the polling personnel. Medical staff/para-medical staff shall be stationed in those locations to be available in case of any requirement.

Every polling party shall be supplied with oral rehydration salts for their own use as well as for any voter needing the same due to heat-stroke. A hand-bill on 'Do's and Don'ts' in case of heat stroke may be prepared **and supplied to each of the polling parties**. A small First-Aid kit containing basic medicines with user instructions should be provided to each polling party. In this regard, the DEO should prepare a standard list of medicine and user instructions in consultation with the District Chief Medical Officer, in English/ Hindi/ Regional Languages as the case may be, for the benefit of polling personnel.

The DEO shall requisition the services of para-medical staff from the offices of the Chief District Medical Officers and one such Para Medical Staff member shall accompany every mobile Patrol Unit and Sector Officer in their vehicles along with essential heat-stroke medicines. Such mobile patrol units shall touch every polling station once in every hour so that instant medical assistance would be available to any voter needing such help besides the first aid facilities given to the polling parties.

Transportation

A senior officer should supervise the arrangement made for providing transport vehicles for the travel of the polling personnel. The movement of the polling personnel/security forces shall be tracked closely and a confirmatory report should be obtained through Sector Officer on the safe arrival of the polling personnel at the polling stations.

Payments

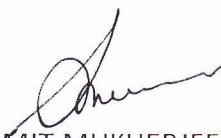
Arrangements for prompt payment of remuneration etc. should be made by all DEOs. Apart from this, the system of making ex-gratia / compensation payment in case of an unfortunate event of injury or death of polling personnel requires prompt disposal. Computerized data-base of Polling Personnel may be updated with the Savings Bank Account Numbers of all Polling Personnel, in this regard.

Exemption

The Commission has exempted certain offices / institutions for the purposes of election duty in view of the essential nature of duties / services discharged by the institutions. Further, physically challenged persons are not to be deployed for polling duty. There are guidelines to engage female employees for polling duty. Engagement of child labour in election related work is strictly not acceptable. These instructions should be kept in view at all times to avoid violation of relevant Acts enacted for this purpose.

Please acknowledge receipt of the letter.

Yours faithfully,


(SUMIT MUKHERJEE)
SECRETARY

Annexure-I

464/INST/2008/EPS	12.09.2008	HR Issues in the Polling Personnel Management.
576/3/2004/JS-II	09.08.2004	Assigning election duties - Seniority of officials to be taken into consideration.
458/4/96/PS-IV/Vol-II	22.07.1996	Provision of Minimum Facilities to Pregnant Women Polling Personnel During Poll.
464/INST/2008/EPS	11.02.2009	General Election to Lok Sabha, 2009 - Drafting of Teachers / Women / Pregnant Women as Polling Personnel.
464/INST/2008/EPS	23.12.2008	Drafting of Physically Challenged Personnel for Election Duty.
464/Inst./2004-PLN-I	06.03.2004	General Election to Lok Sabha, 2004 - Deployment of Officers and Staff.
464/INST/2008-EPS	26.12.2008	General Election to Lok Sabha, 2009 - Deployment of Officers and Staff.
464/INST/2004-PLN-I	24.03.2004	-- Requisitions of Staff and Vehicles.
464/Inst/2005/PLN-I	13.04.2005	Exemption from Election Duty.
464/INS/2007-PLN-I	11.12.2007	Exemption from Election Duty.
464/INST/2009/EPS	1.05.2009	Engagement of Child Labour in the Election Process.
464/INST/2009/EPS	9.01.2009	Fixing of Uniform Rate of Remuneration for Payment to Staff Deployed on Poll / Counting Duty and for Provision of Minimum Facilities.
218/4/96/PLN-IV	9.02.1996	Payment of 100% TA / DA as Advance to Persons Put on Election Duty.
218/6/2009/EPS	17.02.2009	Payment of Ex-gratia Compensation to the Families of Polling Personnel Who Die or Sustain Injuries While on Election Duty.
464/INST/2013-EPS	18.10.2013	Payment of Ex-gratia Compensation to the Families of Polling Personnel Who Die or Sustain Injuries While on Election Duty.