

INDEX

Preface.....	2
Chapter 1	YOU ARE PART OF A TEAM.....3
Chapter 2	RECEIVING YOUR POLLING MATERIALS.....4
Chapter 3	BEFORE THE POLL.....5
Chapter 4	SETTING UP THE POLLING STATION.....6
Chapter 5	HOW TO CONDUCT THE POLL DUTIES OF POLLING OFFICIALS.....8
Chapter 6	POLLING AGENTS.....13
Chapter 7	OTHER PEOPLE WILL BE WITH YOU AT THE POLLING STATION.....16
Chapter 8	JUST BEFORE STARTING.....19
Chapter 9	OPENING THE POLL.....22
Chapter 10	WHAT IF DEALING WITH SPECIAL SITUATION25
Chapter 11	AT THE END OF POLLING DAY.....29
Chapter 12	COUNTING PROCESS.....32

Preface

A word from the Chairman

“The INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION (IEC) is mandated to conduct all public elections in the Gambia in accordance with Section 43 of the Constitution of the Gambia.

The IEC is glad that you are working with us in this important exercise. We are all part of one team, working together for the same objective.

*Your role as a polling station official is very important. **PLEASE TAKE TIME TO READ THIS HANDBOOK CAREFULLY.** It provides you with valuable information; it reminds you of things taught at the training session; it even discusses points that may not have been mentioned at the training. If you are faced with a situation on polling day and you are not sure of what to do, consult this handbook for the appropriate advice.*

The IEC wishes you a happy polling day, smooth operation of your polling station, and success in this important national exercise.

With my personal best wishes”

*Chairman of the
Independent Electoral Commission*

YOU ARE PART OF A TEAM...

1.1 THESE ARE THE MEMBERS OF THE POLLING TEAM:

Each polling team is composed of a Presiding Officer, an Assistant Presiding Officer a Polling Officer and a Polling Assistant. The Presiding Officer is the head of the team, and the person in charge of the polling station. Each member of the team has different functions, but they are all expected to work together harmoniously. That way, we will be able to have a smooth election day.

1.2 FIND OUT WHO YOUR PARTNERS ARE

It is important to know, before polling day, who you will work with. The Presiding Officer should find out from the Assistant Returning Officer who the other members of his polling team are. The team should meet as soon as possible, and arrange to hold a polling rehearsal. This will make it easier for you to work on Election Day.

1.3 POLLING REHEARSALS:

Arrangements have been made to train all polling personnel in how to run the polling station. The team should meet as soon as possible to practise what they have learned, and discuss their responsibilities. Do this on the day before the poll, preferably at the site of the polling station.

- ❖ Presiding Officers and Assistant Presiding Officers should encourage the Polling Officers and Assistants to read this handbook.

RECEIVING YOUR POLLING MATERIALS...

2.1 CHECK CAREFULLY WHAT YOU ARE GIVEN:

The Assistant Returning Officer will provide the Presiding Officer with all the materials needed to run the polling station.

- ❖ **Review the checklist of polling materials.**
- ❖ Inspect them as soon as you receive them; any problems should be reported to the Assistant Returning Officer immediately.

Do the following, it is very important:

Make sure that all the materials have been received, and in the right quality and quantities.

Count the number of ballot tokens you are given and make sure they are not less than the number of voters indicated in the voter roll of your polling station.

Check to ensure that the bells of the ballot drums are working, and that they produce the same sound;

Make sure that holes on the lid match with those on the ballot drums and are wide enough for the red security seals.

Make sure that the holes for inserting ballot tokens are wide enough;

Ensure that the voter roll you receive is for the polling station you will work at; be sure that the register is complete, without any missing pages.

BEFORE THE POLL...

3.1 INSPECT THE POLLING STATION:

You should visit the site of the polling station the day before polling day. Any difficulties you think you might face should be reported to the Assistant Returning Officer immediately.

3.1 FIND A CONVENIENT WAY TO GET THERE:

You should have a good idea of the route to follow and the time needed to get to the polling station. If any member of the team expects to have difficulty in getting there on time on polling day, he/she should spend the night at the polling station or somewhere nearby.

If you have to stay at or near the polling station, do not forget to ensure the safety of the polling materials.

3.2 ARRIVE EARLY AT THE POLLING STATION:

The Presiding Officer and the team of polling officials should be at the polling station by 7 am (one hour before polling commences). This will give you enough time to prepare the polling station.



❖ **Wear your official T-Shirt .**

3.3 WHAT TO DO IF A MEMBER OF THE POLLING TEAM IS ABSENT

If the Polling Officer or Polling Assistant is absent, the Presiding Officer can appoint another person to replace him/her.



That person should be a registered voter in the same polling station. He/she should be impartial and competent to perform the job of a Polling Officer. If the Presiding Officer is absent, the Assistant Presiding Officer should act as the Presiding Officer. He/she should appoint a new Polling Officer, since the initial Polling Officer will now act as the Assistant Presiding Officer. All cases of absence of polling staff should be reported to the Assistant Returning Officer, together with the full names and addresses of any persons appointed as substitute polling staff.

SETTING UP THE POLLING STATION...

4.1 WHAT THE POLLING STATION SHOULD LOOK LIKE:

- ❖ When you first arrive at the site of the polling station, you should inspect it carefully. The Presiding Officer may make some modifications in the actual set- up of the polling station

These are some things you should ensure:

4.1.1 Outside the polling station, there is enough space for voters waiting:

- ❖ If necessary, arrange with improvised barriers / ropes for the queue of voters to be orderly channeled to the polling station entrance
- ❖ Pay attention to sun (or rain) exposure, as people may have to queue long time Inside the polling station there is enough space for voters to enter and leave the room freely.

4.1.2 Inside the polling station there is enough space for voters to enter and leave the room freely.

- ❖ You may achieve this by tying some rope to create an entrance and an exit, through the same door of the polling booth.
- ❖ There should **always be enough space for free flow of voters** from the time they enter the polling station to the time they leave, to avoid disorderly movement of people within the polling station.

4.1.3 Polling officials, including the Presiding Officer, are seated in such a way that they are not able to see the voter when he/she is casting his/her ballot; such as to uphold the electoral principle of secrecy of the voting process.

4.1.4 Polling agents are seated in such a way that they can see voters' faces as they enter the polling station. This will allow them to challenge the identity of a voter, if they need to, and to hear the sound produced by the bell as the tokens drop in to any of the ballot drums.

4.1.5 The **area where the ballot drums are kept is well lit** so that voters can easily see the colour, photos and writing on the ballot drums.

4.1.6 No unauthorised materials, slogans relating to the elections or photographs of party leaders or candidates are exhibited inside or outside the polling station. If they are already there, remove them until polling is over. No smoking, cooking or lighting of any fire should take place inside the polling station during the poll.

4.2 ITEMS TO BE DISPLAYED AT THE POLLING STATION:

The materials you will receive from your Assistant Returning Officer include:

4.2.1 Two copies of a notice giving “Directions to Voters”, in English and Arabic; One should be displayed inside and the other outside the polling station

4.2.2 A polling station sign, to be displayed outside the polling station where it can be easily visible by anyone passing by.



4.2.3 An “How to vote” illustration to be displayed inside the polling compartment

DIRECTIONS TO VOTERS

- (1) You may vote for one candidate only.
- (2) Place your ballot token in the ballot box bearing the name and symbol of the candidate for whom you wish to vote.
- (3) When you have recorded your vote, leave the polling station.

ارشادات الى الناخبين :

- (١) يجوز لك التصويت لمرشح واحد فقط .
- (٢) ضع رمز الاقتراع في صندوق الاقتراع الذي يحمل اسم
ترغب التصويت له
- (٣) بعد الادلاء بصوتك تادر بتركز الاقتراع .



❖ Ensure that all of these items are displayed prominently in the appropriate places.

HOW TO CONDUCT THE POLL... DUTIES OF POLLING OFFICIALS

5.1 ASSISTANT RETURNING OFFICER

5.1.1 The Assistant Returning Officer is in charge of an **electoral division**.

- ❖ He/she is usually trained and appointed prior to the other election officials. He/she is to acquaint himself/herself with the electoral division where he/she is posted.

5.1.1 The Assistant Returning Officer is to ensure that the materials for each polling station are timely and effectively delivered intact.

- ❖ Few days before polling (2 to 3 days at most) he/she meets with the Presiding Officer to cross-check all materials delivered to the latter.

5.1.3 The Assistant Returning Officer makes all logistical arrangements for polling, including deployment of polling staff, availability of polling booths, and delivery of polling materials

- ❖ He/she must ensure that the Village Heads are informed of the arrival of the polling team.
- ❖ He/she makes frequent trips before and on Election Day to and from the polling stations to check whether problems have arisen and see how to solve them.

5.1.4 After closure of polling and counting the Assistant Returning Officer must facilitate the transportation of the ballot drums to the collation centre.

5.1.5 The Assistant Returning Officer presides over the collation of results.

- He/she takes the results to the collation centre after counting.

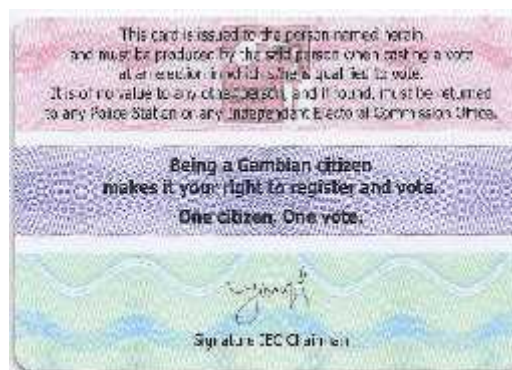
5.1.6 The Assistant Returning Officer ensures that all Presiding Officers return all the materials given to them before payment is affected.

5.2 POLLING ASSISTANT (QUEUE CONTROLLER)

Outside the Polling Station

When there is more than one polling station at one place you have

- 5.2.1 A Polling Assistant who is in charge of **directing voters** to the right Polling Station.
- 5.2.2 The Polling Assistant checks the voter card, verifies which Polling Station the voter is allocated to and indicates to him/her which queue to join.



5.2.3

Inside the Polling Station

These are the voting procedures to be followed, and the duties to be performed by each polling official (in the order that the voters meet them):

5.3 ASSISTANT PRESIDING OFFICER

- 5.3.1 When a voter enters a polling station, he/she will first go to the Assistant Presiding Officer (APO), who will be in charge of the **voter roll**. The voter should have his card ready.

The Assistant Presiding Officer will first check the details in the register of voters.

Check the register carefully, so that voters are not turned away unnecessarily

Then, if the Assistant Presiding Officer is satisfied:

That the **voter card is genuine**



About the **identity of the voter**, and that the voter is allocated to the **right polling station**

The Assistant Presiding Officer will **tick in the box**.

The voter will now proceed to the Polling Officer

5.3.2 If the Assistant Presiding Officer doubts that the voter's card is genuine or is not convinced about the identity of the voter, he/she should refer the voter to the Presiding Officer.

5.3.3 With the exception of those who have been issued with the relevant **duty certificate by the IEC, (valid only for Presidential Election)** no person whose name is not on the voter roll for a polling station should be allowed to vote.

5.4 POLLING OFFICER

5.4.1 Polling Officer will be in charge of the **indelible ink**

The Polling Officer will apply indelible ink on the finger (pointing finger) of the left hand of the voter

Ensure that the ink spreads to the place where the Skin meets the root of the nail.

A clear mark should be left on the finger.

The voter will then move to the Presiding Officer.



5.4.2 If a voter has applied any oil or greasy substance on his/her finger (so as to neutralize the indelible ink to be put on his/her finger), the oil or greasy substance should be wiped off before putting the indelible ink on the finger.

5.4.3 If a voter does not have a forefinger on his/her left hand, put the ink on any of the remaining fingers on the left hand, starting with the finger next to the forefinger.

5.4.4 If a voter has no finger on his/her left hand, the ink should be put on one of the fingers on the right hand starting from the forefinger.

5.4.5 If a voter has no finger on either hand, apply the ink on the extremity (stump) of his/her left or right hand.

5.5 SECOND POLLING OFFICER (For Local Government Elections only)

5.5.1 The Second Polling Officer will be issuing out tokens to voters for the second vote taking place during Local Government Elections.

5.5.2 This is done for an election that is being conducted for Mayors and Councillors

5.6 PRESIDING OFFICER

5.6.1 The Presiding Officer is in charge of the polling station and is responsible for the smooth conduct of the polling exercise at the polling station.

5.6.2 Specifically, the Presiding Officer is in charge of ballot tokens.

The Presiding Officer will first of all check the voter's finger to ensure that the indelible ink has a mark on the finger.

If the ink mark has been wiped off or is not clear, the voter should be sent back to the Polling Officer, for the indelible ink to be reapplied.

When the Presiding Officer is satisfied with the mark, he/she should inform the voter **that only the ballot token is to be put into the ballot drum**, and not any other item.

The Presiding Officer will ensure that the voter has voted by listening to the sound produced by the bell of the ballot drum, as it is hit by the ballot token.

Before polling ensure that bells in all drums are producing similar sound.

Then, the voter shall leave the voting compartment.



- 5.6.3** If the Presiding Officer thinks that a voter has not put the token in any of the drums, he/she should take the voter back to the voting compartment to check whether the ballot token has fallen on the floor or has been left in some other place. If so, the Presiding Officer should remind the voter to place the token in the drum of his/her choice
- 5.6.4** If the Presiding Officer notices at any time (or if someone brings it to his notice) that **a ballot token is lying on the floor or is placed somewhere else inside the voting compartment (polling booth)**, and the voter who did so has already left the polling station, he/she should keep the token with the other unused tokens.
- In such a case, the Presiding Officer should make a note on this in the ballot token account (part of a form which you will fill at the end of the day).
 - This becomes an **invalid vote**.
- 5.6.5** The Presiding Officer may delegate some of his/her functions to the Assistant Presiding Officer. This does not relieve the Presiding Officer of his responsibility as the person in overall charge of the polling station.

POLLING AGENTS...

6.1 IDENTIFICATION OF POLLING AGENTS (or PARTY AGENTS)

➤ Do remember that polling agents have an important role to play in the polling exercise.

6.1.1 The polling agents function is to see that things are done correctly at the polling station; if they see anything wrong, they can report on it.

6.1.2 Every candidate may appoint two polling agents for each polling station.

6.1.3 Only one of them (for each candidate) can sit inside the polling station at a time.

6.1.4 Polling agents must arrive early. They have been advised to reach the polling station at least an hour before the start of the poll in order to witness the preparation of the polling station. You should not repeat any preparatory procedures because of any late comer.

6.1.5 However, note that the law does not specify any time limit for polling agents to arrive at a polling station;

➤ Therefore even if a polling agent arrives late he/she should be allowed to come in and participate in the remaining proceedings.

➤ A polling agent must produce his/her Letter of appointment. It must be shown to the Presiding Officer.

6.1.6 The letter should be signed by the candidate or his or her representative who appointed him/her as an Agent.

6.1.7 A specific form has been made available by the IEC to candidates for that purpose.

6.1.8 The submitted letter should be compared with the copy received from the Assistant Returning Officer (as Part of the materials in the kit).

6.1.9 All appointment letters are to be retained by the Presiding Officer and sent back to the Assistant Returning Officer with the other election materials upon completion of the polling exercise.

6.1.10 The Presiding Officer should confirm the polling agent's identity with his/her voting card or another suitable identity document.

- The polling agent should then take the Oath of secrecy by signing the Oath Form.
- The Presiding Officer should give him/her a badge which is to be worn by the polling agent whilst on duty.
- When the second polling agent of the candidate reports to the polling station, repeat the same procedure.
- But, only one of them can sit in the polling station at a time.

The Presiding Officer may **allow a polling agent to vote if the polling agent has a valid voter card for the constituency** but is not on the Voter Roll for the polling station where he is on duty.

- But verify that he/she has not voted before!

6.2. DUTIES OF POLLING AGENTS

6.2.1 A polling agent has the right to do the following at a polling station to which he/she is assigned:

*** Observe all polling proceedings**

- But a polling agent cannot go inside the voting compartment (polling booth) while a voter is there.
- He/she is not allowed to handle voters' cards, but he/she may check voter's details on his/her copy of the voter roll as names and numbers are called out.
- A polling agent can note down the serial numbers of all the security seals used on the ballot drums. He/she can challenge the identity of a voter, if he/she believes that the person is voting with another person's card what is called impersonation He /She can call the Presiding Officer's attention if he/she believes that a voter has taken out a ballot token from the voting compartment.
- Sign the "Close of Polls Report" form and Counting Form when they have been completed by the Presiding Officer. They also receive a copy of the signed Counting Form.

6.2.2 No polling official should do or say anything which may be interpreted as favouring any candidate and/or party.

- You must cooperate with the polling agents! They are an important part of the process; But **do not allow polling agents to take over the running of the polling station!** Remember that the Presiding Officer is in charge of the polling station.
- He/she should maintain control at all times. He / She should not let polling agents to intervening and/or disturbing the voting process.

OTHER PEOPLE WILL BE WITH YOU AT THE POLLING STATION...

7.1 WHO ELSE CAN OBSERVE THE VOTING?

7.1.1 On polling day, besides voters and polling officials, the following individuals are authorized to be in the Polling Station and **observe the voting process**:

- IEC Commissioners
- Other officials from the IEC.
- Special guests of the IEC.
- Observers from observer groups accredited by the IEC.

In case of overcrowding, the Presiding Officer will regulate the presence of observers to maintain order at the Polling Station.

The Presiding Officer must establish a schedule allowing Observers equal access to the Polling Station.

- One polling agent representing each candidate
- Journalists from Media Houses.

However each journalist can be accompanied by a photographer or an operator.

7.1.2 All persons authorized to be in the Polling Station must wear identification badges indicating their identity.

7.2 DOMESTIC & INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS

An Observer has the right to:

Be in the Polling Station at any time on polling day

Observe all stages of the voting process without violating the secrecy of the vote.

Participate in checking the ballot drum before it is sealed and record seal numbers.

Observe ballot token issuance and voter's verification without disturbing the voting process.

Observe the completion of close of Poll Report and Counting Form

Address the Presiding Officer about issues relating to polling procedures

Attend and observe the counting and collation process.

Observers must **display their badges at** all times in the Polling Stations and Counting Centres.



7.2.2 An observer is not allowed to:

Interfere with or obstruct the functions of the Polling Officials.

Observe a voter casting a ballot token in the voting compartment.

Influence a voter's choice.

Campaign for any candidate and/or party in any way.

Communicate with voters at any time inside the Polling Station.

Issue complaints.

An observer may draw the attention of the Presiding Officer on irregularities but should not make any open statement.

7.2.3 The Presiding Officer has the right to instruct observers to cease any action, which is a misuse of an observer's rights.

7.2.4 The Presiding Officer may remove an offender from the Polling Station for ignoring such an instruction.

7.3 MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES

7.3.1 Only Media representatives accredited by the IEC may observe polling in the Polling Station.

7.3.2 The number of journalists allowed in the Polling Station is at the discretion of the Presiding Officer.

7.3.3 It is not allowed to film or photograph a voter casting a ballot token in the voting compartment (polling booth).

But taking photos at the Polling Station is allowed as long as it doesn't disturb the voting process.

7.3.4 The Media is not allowed to interview any voter, polling agent, observer and/or polling staff at the Polling Station during the polling, except the Presiding Officer.



JUST BEFORE STARTING...

8.1 THE OATHS:

8.1.1 When first reaching the polling station the Presiding Officer, the Assistant Presiding Officer and the Polling Officer (and if applicable, the Second Polling Officer) should subscribe to the Oath for Due Execution of Office and the Oath of Secrecy.

8.1.2 They are contained on a form, which is to be signed by each polling official.

8.1.3 The Presiding Officer should forward signed copies of the oaths to the Assistant Returning Officer along with other documents.

8.1.4 Polling agents should also subscribe to the Oath of Secrecy

8.2 PREPARING THE BALLOT DRUMS:

8.2.1 There will be **one drum for each candidate**.
The body of each drum is painted in the colour of the candidate or candidate's party.

8.2.2 Notification of candidates' colour is provided by the IEC.

8.2.3 The Presiding Officer may begin preparing the drums an hour before the start of voting.

What to do:

Open the drums, and show that they are empty to the people present at the polling station;

Put about three inches of saw dust or sand inside each drum;



The polling materials will include two labels for each ballot drum.

Complete both labels and place one inside the drum and sellotape the other to the outside; Seal the drums, using four coloured security seals on each drum.

During polling day, you should check periodically to make sure that the photographs and symbols, on the ballot drum have not been destroyed or removed.

8.3 SEALING THE DRUMS:

This is how to seal a drum:

Close the drum with the lid; the four holes on the lid and on the drum must match.

Insert a seal in each pair of holes and secure them as shown here.

Make sure that the seals are secured as tightly as possible.

You may tie two pieces of wire on opposite sides of the drums as extra security;

Write down the numbers on the security Seals used, and allow the polling agents to write them down too.

Repeat the process for the other drums.

Attach the photographs and symbols for each candidate on his/her ballot drum with sellotape.

One photograph should be attached to the body of the drum and the other to the lid.

Place the drums inside the voting compartment or room in the alphabetical order of the candidates' Surnames.



Keep the drums as close as possible, in such a way that no body can say that you have given preference to any of the drums.

If possible, the drums should be tied together by their handles to prevent any drum from being rotated (this would prevent voters From seeing the candidates' photographs).

Now the drums are ready for polling. .



OPENING THE POLL... MAINTAIN PEACEFUL CLIMATE IN AND AROUND THE POLLING STATION.

9.1 AT 08.00 START ATTENDING TO THE VOTERS

- 9.1.1 According to the Elections Act (as amended), polling should commence at 8am. All the preliminary work should be completed by then.
- 9.1.2 Ask the Police Officer(s) at the entrance to allow two or three voters into the polling station at a time.
- 9.1.3 Other voters should stand in the queue outside.
- 9.1.4 Ask the Police Officer (s) to tell them to keep their voters' cards ready.
- 9.1.5 Candidates, voters who are unwell, female voters bearing babies, and persons in uniform, may be given priority over other voters in the queue.
- 9.1.6 If for any reason, the preliminaries are not over, admit 3 or 4 voters at that time (8 o'clock); the other members of the team should attend to them while the Presiding Officer completes the preliminaries.
- 9.1.7 If polling cannot commence at 8 am, this should not be taken as a reason to extend polling beyond 5 pm.

YOUR ATTITUDE IS IMPORTANT:

You should **be polite, tactful, firm and impartial**; these are your most important safeguards against any breach of peace.

The correct attitude will earn you the respect of the public.

9.2 PERSONS ENTITLED TO ENTER THE POLLING STATION:

9.2.1 Apart from the voters allocated to the polling station, the following persons can be admitted within a polling station:

- Candidates;
- Polling agents;
- Persons authorised in writing by the IEC;
- Infant children in the company of voters;
- A companion of a blind or infirm voter who cannot move without assistance;
- Domestic and International Observers
- The Media;

9.2.2 Except when they come to cast their votes, no police, military or other security personnel should be allowed to enter the polling station.

9.2.3 When they are entering for the purpose of voting, police, military or other **security personnel should not be allowed to enter with their arms.**

9.2.4 The Police Officer (s) on duty at the polling station should enter the polling station only if invited by the Presiding Officer to remove or arrest a person or for maintenance of law and order inside the polling station.

9.3 WHAT IS PROHIBITED BY LAW ON POLLING DAY:

9.3.1 Under the Elections Act the following activities should not take place on election day:

- Holding public meetings, processions or demonstrations;
- Making speeches or announcements in a public place; most particularly at a polling station;
- Using a loudspeaker, loud hailer or other instrument of public address;
- Drumming or singing in a public place;
- Displaying a flag, banner or slogan in any public place;
- Canvassing (asking people to vote for a particular candidate);
- Ringling a bell or making any sound resembling that of a bell within five hundred metres radius of a polling station;
- Riding or parking a bicycle within five hundred metres radius of a polling station;
- Selling or distributing alcoholic drinks;
- Arriving at a polling station in a state of inebriation (drunkenness);

Forming groups around polling stations, except joining the queue to cast a ballot;
Entering a polling station armed; and
Carrying out any other activity which may disturb the normal voting process

Ensure that nobody engages in the above listed prohibited activities, and if they do, ask them to stop.

If they persist, call on the police to help maintain order at the polling station.

You should be very firm in maintaining calm in and around the polling station; but you should **order arrests only in very extreme cases**.

If you do order an arrest, prepare a written report addressed to the police, and send a copy to your Assistant Returning Officer.

WHAT IF... DEALING WITH SPECIAL SITUATIONS

10.1 A VOTER NEEDS ASSISTANCE!

- 1011** If the Presiding Officer perceives that a voter is unable to recognise the ballot drums or is not in a position to cast his/her vote without assistance (due to blindness or other physical infirmity), he/she or any other member of the polling team may accompany the voter into the voting compartment and assist him/her to cast his/her vote.
- 1012** If the voter comes to the polling station with a **companion**, the companion may be allowed to go inside the voting compartment along with the voter to assist him to cast his vote.
- 1013** A polling agent may act as the companion for an infirm or blind voter.
- 1014** The same person should not be allowed to accompany more than one voter.

You should remind a companion who casts a vote on behalf of a blind or disabled person of the need to maintain the secrecy of the vote.

The Presiding Officer should make a record in his/her notebook of voters whose votes have been cast by companions.

10.2 A VOTER DOES NOT HAVE HIS/HER CARD!

- 1021** If a voter is unable to show you his/her voting card, he/she should **NOT** be allowed to vote.

Politely but firmly drive the voter out of the polling station.

Do not start arguing, just abide by the rules.

10.3 A VOTER'S CARD IS DAMAGED!

10.3.1 If a voter comes to the polling station with a mutilated card, the Assistant Presiding Officer should check if it is still possible to identify the voter despite the mutilation.

10.3.2 If the card number and the voter's photograph and name are clear, the voter should be allowed to vote.

10.3.3 If the card is so damaged to prevent reading the data, the voter should not be allowed to vote.

10.4 THERE ARE ERRORS ON A CARD!

10.4.1 If there are minor clerical errors (such as a misspelled name, address or wrong registration number) on a valid voting card or on the voter roll, if you are able to establish the voter's identity and are convinced he/she is the person whose name(s) are in the alphabetical voter roll, allow the voter to vote.

10.5 A VOTER IS "MUSA"!

10.5.1 Someone may try to use another person's card; this is called **impersonation**.

10.5.2 A polling agent may challenge the identity of such a person, before he/she leaves the polling station.

10.5.3 If the polling agent undertakes in writing to substantiate this in court, and if the Presiding Officer is convinced that he/she is not the same person he/she claimed to be, he/she shall not permit the person to vote, if he/she had not already done so, the Presiding Officer may order the voter's arrest.

The Presiding Officer shall send a report on the matter to the Assistant Returning Officer for onward transmission to the IEC.

10.5.4 If the Presiding Officer is not convinced that the person has committed the offence of impersonation, he/she shall permit him/her to vote, but he/she shall write the words "*protested against for impersonation*" against the name of the person in the voter roll.

10.5.5 The Presiding Officer shall write a note against the name of any person in the voter roll, who is prevented or allowed to vote under these circumstances.

10.5.6 If a polling agent objects to any of the above actions of the Presiding Officer, this should also be recorded in the Presiding Officer's notebook (and/or the voter roll).

10.6 FRAUDULENT VOTING!

- 10.6.1** A voter may be seen taking the ballot token out of the voting compartment. If a polling agent declares this to the Presiding Officer before the voter concerned has left the polling station, and the agent undertakes to substantiate this in court, the Presiding Officer should order the arrest of that person.
- 10.6.2** The Presiding Officer should question the person; if he/she is then satisfied that the voter took the token out without any intention to defraud, he/she may allow the voter to vote or to leave the polling station without voting, as the voter wishes.
- 10.6.3** If such a voter is not allowed to vote an entry should be made in the voter roll against his/her name that he/she was not allowed to vote.

When such a person is not allowed to vote, the ballot token should be taken back and kept along with the unused ballot tokens.

- 10.6.4** If the Presiding Officer is convinced, after questioning him/her, that the voter was trying to defraud, he/she may order a Police Officer to arrest him/her and also make a written report to the Police with a copy to the Assistant Returning Officer.

10.7 A VOTER REFUSES TO VOTE!

- 10.7.1** If a voter receives the ballot token and then decides not to vote, the token should be taken back from him/her and an entry made against his/her name in the voter roll that he/she refused to vote.

The ballot token should be taken back and kept along with the unused ballot tokens.

10.8 VOTING AT A DIFFERENT POLLING STATION!

- 10.8.1** Many people will be working at Polling Stations different from the ones at which they are expected to vote.
- 10.8.2** In this case, if they are employed at a Polling Station within their constituency, they may be given an Election Duty Certificate allowing them to vote (Only during Presidential Election).
- 10.8.3** If any members of the polling team, uniformed personnel on election duty working under the command of the Inspector General of Police, or polling agents have such a certificate, they should cast their vote at that polling station.

The names of such persons and other details should be entered at the end of the voter roll relating to that polling station.

Presiding Officers will be provided in advance with the details of election officers and polling agents who have been given Election Duty Certificates.

Advance information may not be available in the case of police officers.

10.9 POLLING CANNOT CONTINUE!

10.9.1 Violence might erupt around your Polling Station; or there may be a heavy storm. If polling is obstructed or interrupted by natural or man-made calamities, the Presiding Officer should announce postponement or adjournment of the poll.

10.9.2 A passing shower or wind will not be sufficient cause for postponement or adjournment of the poll.

10.9.3 If polling cannot continue the Presiding Officer should immediately report such unfortunate circumstances to the Assistant Returning Officer, who will inform the IEC through the Returning Officer of that Constituency.

Do your best to notify without delay the IEC.

10.9.4 The **mouth of the ballot drums shall be sealed if voting is being adjourned.**

10.9.4 In the case of an adjournment, the seal numbers shall be noted down by the Presiding Officer and the agents until the resumption of the poll.

AT THE END OF THE POLLING DAY...

11.1 CLOSING THE POLL

11.1.1 5.00 pm is the time stipulated for closing the polls.

Voting should continue until such a time as all voters in the queue have been allowed to vote.

Do not allow late comers to enter the queue after 5.00 pm

11.1.2 If all the voters allocated to the polling station have voted before 5 pm, the Presiding Officer may close the poll earlier than the scheduled time.

11.2 SEALING THE BALLOT DRUMS

11.2.1 Once the Presiding Officer has closed the poll, the polling team should **seal ALL the ballot drums** to prevent any more tokens being put into them (for this purpose, use coloured seals only).

This will involve closing the hole through which tokens are inserted with the white rectangular seal and coloured seals provided.

Takenote of the numbers of the coloured seals used. Polling agents are also allowed to write down these numbers.



11.3 COUNTING UNUSED BALLOT TOKENS

1131 The next thing to do is to **count the number of unused ballot tokens**.

1132 Write the number on a piece of paper together with the polling station identification number (label supplied) and then place it inside the bag containing the unused ballot tokens.

Do not forget to secure the bag with string or sellotape.

1133 Attach another label with the identification number of the polling station to the neck of the bag.



The sealed bag is to be placed inside the equipment box.

1134 The Presiding Officer should then complete the “Close of Poll Report” form.

1135 When completed, the Presiding Officer and candidates’ polling agents should sign the “Close of Poll Report” form.

1136 The “Close of Poll Report” form, Oath Forms, Election Duty Certificates, the Voter Roll, the Presiding Officer’s Notebook and Counting Form are to be sealed in the envelope.

1137 The envelope is to be sealed, and the Presiding Officer and the polling agents are to **sign their names over the sealed edges** of the envelope.

The sealed edges of the envelope and the signatures are then to be covered with sellotape.

11.3.8 Complete the form "List of Equipment for Polling Station", after indicating all remaining items, which you will hand over to the Assistant Returning Officer.

Sign the form and place it into the box.

Seal the equipment box with padlock.

Write the name of the constituency and the name and identification number of the polling station clearly on the envelope.

Pack all other materials into the equipment box.

11.4 EQUIPMENT AND POLLING MATERIAL RETRIEVAL

11.4.1 Any other polling station equipment not delivered to the Regional Electoral Office shall be returned to the IEC in accordance with the instructions of the Assistant Returning Officer

11.4.2 Prior to receiving their fees, Presiding Officers will be required to check the returned polling equipment and materials in the presence of the Assistant Returning Officer.

Remember that you may be charged for any losses of equipment

COUNTING PROCESS... COUNTING ON-THE-SPOT

12.1.1 The counting of votes will be done at the polling station immediately after polls close

12.1.2 The people to be allowed in the counting centre include:

IEC officials

Regional Authorities, such as Governors, National Assembly Members, Mayors / Chairpersons, Seyfolu and Alakalolu (should not come with a big delegation)

Two polling/ counting agents per Candidate

Accredited domestic and international observers

Accredited media practitioners (one per media house)

Security personnel (on duty at the polling/counting centre)

Candidates if they so wish.

No other person should be allowed in the polling station/counting centre unless duly authorized by the IEC.

12.2 Counting begins with:

Presiding officer reads out the Ballot Token Account and polling time.

Polling/Counting agents cross-check seals numbers with their notes before seals are broken by the Presiding officer.

- The Presiding Officer breaks the seals, pours the tokens onto the sieve and filters them.
- Presiding Officer arranges the tokens on the counting tray
- Presiding Officer shows the filled counting tray to:
- Polling/counting agents and/or
- Domestic / International Observers present.
- Showing of the counting tray should be done one after the other.
- Presiding Officer records votes polled by each candidate on the **Counting Form**.
- Presiding Officer returns counted tokens in their respective ballot drums
- Presiding Officer reseals the ballot drums supported by binding wires
- Polling/Counting agents **may** escort the Assistant Returning Officer and Presiding Officer to the collation centre at their own cost.
- The Collation Centre will then collate polling station results
- The Collation centre shall add up all the polling station results in the constituency before handing it over to the Regional Electoral Officer.



Proper care must always be maintained when results are being tabulated to ensure that all figures are correct.

Polling/counting agents shall sign the close of poll report.



12.4.4 Recording Officers record votes polled by each candidates on the result form



Results

TRANSMISSION OF RESULTS

12.5.1 The results are then transmitted by the Assistant Returning Officer to the **Collation Centre** in a sealed envelope.

12.5.2 The Regional Electoral Office will then verify, certify and fax the results to the IEC Headquarters for announcement by the Chairman over Gambia Radio Television Services (GRTS).

proper care must always be maintained when results are being tabulated to ensure that all figures are correct.

NOTES