

# Candidate Handbook for **GENERAL ELECTION 2020**



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1.	INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1.	Basic qualifications of Members of Parliament .....	1
1.2.	Disqualifications from being Members of Parliament.....	1
1.3.	Additional qualifications for candidates of Group Representation Constituencies .....	1
1.4.	Foreign interference in domestic politics.....	2
2.	FROM ISSUE OF WRIT OF ELECTION TO EVE OF NOMINATION DAY .....	3
2.1.	Documents needed for nomination of candidates.....	3
2.1.1.	How to fill in Nomination Paper (Form 9 or 9A) .....	3
2.1.2.	How to obtain a Political Donation Certificate .....	5
2.1.3.	How to apply for a Certificate from the Malay Community Committee/Indian and Other Minority Communities Committee .....	5
2.2.	Election deposit.....	6
2.3.	Election agents .....	7
2.3.1.	Duties and responsibilities of an election agent .....	8
2.4.	Activities from Writ of Election to Nomination Day .....	9
3.	ON NOMINATION DAY.....	10
3.1.	Nomination Day .....	10
3.1.1.	Safety measures at Nomination Centres.....	10
3.2.	Persons entitled to be present during nomination proceedings ....	11
3.2.1.	Entry into Nomination Place.....	11
3.3.	Unwell candidate can authorise a representative to file nomination papers on his behalf .....	12
3.4.	Delivery of Nomination papers .....	13
3.5.	Multiple candidacy .....	14
3.6.	Persons allowed to inspect Nomination papers .....	14
3.7.	Amending Nomination papers after filing .....	14
3.8.	Making objections to nominations.....	15
3.9.	Withdrawing nominations .....	16
3.10.	Declaring returned candidates if election is uncontested .....	16
3.11.	Declaring nominated candidates if election is contested .....	16
3.12.	Candidates making speeches at Nomination Centres.....	17

3.13.	Nomination-related offences .....	17
3.14.	Choosing symbol and name for election campaigning.....	17
3.15.	Photographs on ballot paper .....	17
3.16.	General advisory .....	18
4.	AFTER CLOSE OF NOMINATIONS TO BEFORE POLLING DAY.....	21
4.1.	Campaigning .....	21
4.2.	Management of personal data under election legislation and other relavant laws .....	22
4.2.1.	Regulatory requirements under the Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) .....	22
4.2.2.	Using information in registers to communicate with electors) .....	23
4.2.3.	Managing personal information collected under the Political Donations Act .....	23
4.3.	Additional airtime on national TV for campaigning .....	23
4.4.	Submission of films for classification.....	24
4.3.1.	Prohibition on Party Political Films (PPFs) .....	25
4.5.	Different forms of election advertising .....	25
4.5.1.	Internet election advertising (IEA).....	26
4.5.1.1.	Non-Permitted forms of IEA.....	26
4.5.1.2.	Declaration of IEA by candidates.....	26
4.5.1.3.	“Published-by” requirement for IEA .....	27
4.5.1.4	Moderator for chat rooms and discussion forums.....	28
4.5.2.	“Published-by” requirement for election advertising not on Internet .....	29
4.5.3.	Posters and banners .....	29
4.5.4.	Other forms of election advertising .....	34
4.5.5.	Excluded election advertising.....	34
4.6.	Election meetings and vehicle processions.....	35
4.6.1.	Perambulating vehicle permits .....	35
4.7.	E-rally livestreams .....	37
4.8.	Persons prohibited from conducting election activities.....	37
4.9.	Opening election offices .....	37
5.	PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES ON COOLING-OFF DAY AND POLLING DAY .....	38
5.1.	Prohibited activities .....	38
5.2.	Exceptions to Prohibitions .....	39

6.	POLLING	
6.1.	Polling in Singapore .....	39
6.1.1.	Safety measures at polling stations (affecting candidates and polling agents).....	39
6.2.	Polling at overseas polling stations .....	39
6.3.	Persons allowed to enter polling stations .....	39
6.3.1.	Forms that must be produced by candidates/polling agents before entering polling stations .....	40
6.4.	Understanding the voting process .....	40
6.5.	Number of polling agents .....	42
6.6.	Observing the process to transport sealed ballot boxes from the polling stations to the counting centres .....	43
6.7.	Things that candidates/polling agents are allowed to do/prohibited from doing .....	43
6.8.	Maintaining secrecy of voting.....	44
7.	COUNTING OF VOTES AND DECLARATION OF ELECTION RESULTS .....	45
7.1.	Counting of votes cast in Singapore.....	45
7.2.	Counting of votes cast overseas.....	45
7.3.	Counting places and principal counting centres .....	46
7.4.	Persons allowed to enter counting centres/principal counting centres .....	46
7.4.1.	Forms that must be produced by candidates/counting agents before entering counting centres.....	46
7.5.	Understanding the counting process .....	47
7.6.	Number of counting agents .....	48
7.7.	Things that the candidates and counting agents are allowed to/prohibited from doing .....	49
7.8.	Recounts.....	49
7.9.	Announcement of results.....	50
7.9.1.	Impact of votes cast overseas.....	50
7.10.	General advisory at polling stations, counting centres and principal counting centres .....	50
8.	CYBERSECURITY .....	51
9.	POST-ELECTION.....	52

9.1.	Application to void an election .....	52
9.2.	Destruction of ballot papers .....	53
9.3.	Post-election activities .....	53
10.	ELECTION FINANCE .....	54
10.1.	Limit on the amount that can be spent.....	54
10.2.	Election expenses generally must be paid by election agent.....	54
10.3.	Personal expenses incurred by candidates .....	55
10.4.	Political party and sub-agents paying election expenses .....	55
10.5.	Requirement to retain bill, receipts, records of payment and written authority to incur election expenses for a specified period .....	56
10.6.	Claims .....	56
10.7.	Returns respecting election expenses and declaration by candidate and election agent.....	56
10.8.	Post-election Donation Report and Post-Donation Declaration .....	57
11.	CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES.....	59
11.1.	Corrupt practices.....	59
11.2.	Illegal practices.....	59
12.	IMPORTANT INFORMATION .....	61
12.1.	Do's and Don'ts for candidates.....	61
ANNEX		
	Annex A - List of Digital Services for Candidates .....	68
	Annex B - List of Nomination Places.....	70
	Annex C - Procedure for Delivery of Speeches.....	71
	Annex D - Examples of Election Expenses .....	72

## **FOREWORD**

This handbook has been prepared by the Elections Department (ELD) to help candidates and aspiring candidates in Parliamentary elections ("candidates") and their agents comply with the law relating to Parliamentary elections. It summarises the roles, obligations and duties of candidates and their agents under the laws governing Parliamentary elections. It is prepared for General Election 2020.

While ELD has tried to provide as much accurate and useful information as possible in this handbook, this publication does not take precedence over the law. This handbook is not legal authority and should not be cited as such in a court of law. Candidates and their agents should therefore read this handbook in conjunction with the relevant legislation.

If candidates and their agents are unsure of their rights or obligations, they should obtain advice from their own political party or seek legal advice from an advocate and solicitor. It is not the function of ELD or the Returning Officer to interpret the law for political parties, candidates or their election agents, or to provide them with legal advice. The Government makes no representations or warranties as to the accuracy, completeness, reliability, timeliness, currency, quality or fitness for any particular purpose of contents of this handbook; and does not accept any responsibility for any result that occurs through any reliance upon the contents of this handbook by any person.

If candidates and their election agents have any questions about this handbook, please approach the staff at ELD. As candidates and election agents often require more technical information than the general public, they should identify themselves as such when communicating with the staff.

Finally, the information contained in this handbook is current as at 23 June 2020. Changes made to the law after that date are not included in this handbook.

ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT  
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

ELD would like to thank the Attorney-General's Chambers for its assistance in developing and vetting this handbook.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Basic qualifications of Members of Parliament**

To be a candidate for election as a Member of Parliament (MP), the person must be –

- a. a citizen of Singapore;
- b. at least 21 years old on Nomination Day;
- c. registered as an elector in any current Register of Electors;
- d. resident in Singapore on Nomination Day;
- e. resident in Singapore for a total period of at least 10 years before Nomination Day; and
- f. sufficiently proficient in English, Malay, Mandarin or Tamil so that he can participate in the proceedings of Parliament.

### **1.2. Disqualifications from being Members of Parliament**

A person is disqualified from being a candidate for election as an MP if, on Nomination Day, the person –

- a. is of unsound mind;
- b. is an undischarged bankrupt;
- c. is the holder of a whole time office in the service of the Government (this includes Civil Servants, whether working in the Government or seconded to work in statutory boards, and persons seconded to work in the Government);
- d. has been convicted of an offence by a Singapore or Malaysian court and sentenced to imprisonment for a term of not less than one year or to a fine of not less than \$2,000 and has not been pardoned;
- e. has voluntarily acquired the citizenship of, or exercised rights of citizenship in, another country or has declared allegiance to another country;
- f. did not file returns respecting election expenses within the time required by law at any previous parliamentary or presidential election; or
- g. is disqualified under the Parliamentary Elections Act (Cap. 218) or Presidential Elections Act (Cap. 240A) on account of having committed one of the election offences.

### **1.3. Additional qualifications for candidates of Group Representation Constituencies**

An electoral division that is declared to be a Group Representation Constituency (GRC) is represented by 3 to 6 MPs, and will be designated as a GRC where one of the MPs must be from the Malay community or a GRC where one of the MPs must be from the Indian or any other minority community.

There are additional qualifications for persons seeking election to be MPs of a GRC –

- a. all persons must either (i) belong to and stand as a group for the same political party; or (ii) be independents standing as a group; and
- b. at least one member of the group must consider himself as belonging to the relevant minority racial community and be accepted as part of the relevant minority racial community as determined by the Malay Community Committee or the Indian and Other Minority Communities Committee.

## **1.4. Foreign interference in domestic politics**

### **Threat of foreign interference**

Foreign interference in elections refers to attempts by foreign actors (countries, agencies, people) to assert influence over elections in a sovereign state. In the last few years, there have been many reports of foreign interference in the elections of other countries. Singapore is not immune, and we need to guard against such nefarious activity. Singapore politics should be decided by Singaporeans alone.

The [Advisory to Political Parties on Threat of Foreign Interference in Elections and Precautionary Measures](#) provides additional information on some of the methods which foreign actors may employ to interfere in elections, and the steps that political parties can take to mitigate the risk of becoming vectors or victims.

### **Precautionary measures**

It is important that all Singaporeans exercise individual vigilance, to safeguard the integrity of our General Election. Political parties too, must play their part. They should enhance their understanding of the threat, improve the digital literacy of their members, and be alert to suspicious behaviours and hidden agendas. In addition, they should:

- Avoid re-tweeting/re-posting or forwarding articles, text messages, memes or social media posts without verifying their provenance and authenticity;
- Monitor their own social media platforms for suspicious or anomalous activity; and
- Abide by the Political Donations Act and its Regulations<sup>1</sup>.

Should any persons or parties suspect that they are the target of a foreign influence campaign, they should make a police report immediately. They should also keep ELD informed.

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<sup>1</sup> Political parties may wish to refer to the Political Donations Handbook prepared by the Registry of Political Donations.



## **2. FROM ISSUE OF WRIT OF ELECTION TO EVE OF NOMINATION DAY**

### **2.1. Documents needed for nomination of candidates**

In order to be validly nominated as a candidate for election in an electoral division, the following documents must be filled up correctly and delivered (in duplicate) and in person<sup>2</sup> to the Returning Officer on time on Nomination Day<sup>3</sup>:

- a. Nomination Paper (Form 9 or 9A), the form of which is statutorily prescribed;  
A person who is seeking election in a single-member constituency (SMC) must use Form 9, whereas those who seek election in a GRC must use Form 9A.
- b. a Political Donation Certificate issued by the Registrar of Political Donations relating to each nominee; and
- c. For those seeking election in a GRC, a certificate from either the Malay Community Committee or the Indian and Other Minority Communities Committee relating to at least one member of the group, depending on the designation of the GRC.

#### **2.1.1. How to fill in Nomination Paper (Form 9 or 9A)**

Do not leave any part of the Nomination Paper blank. You should use English when filling up the Nomination Paper so as to facilitate checking. Fill up the Nomination Paper legibly and use indelible ink as far as possible.

The Nomination Paper has two sections which must be filled up accurately as follows:

##### **Section A**

In Section A of the Nomination Paper, first fill in the nominee's or nominees' names, NRIC numbers, sex and occupation. The name on the Nomination Paper should correspond to the NRIC. Additional names may be accepted if these are supported by a deed poll, religious certificate (e.g. baptism certificate, Muslim conversion certificate, Buddhist certificate), or a

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<sup>2</sup> The Nomination papers of an aspiring candidate may be delivered on his behalf by his authorised representative if the aspiring candidate is unable or unfit to attend in person at the nomination proceedings on Nomination Day (see section 3.3).

<sup>3</sup> The Nomination Paper and all other forms that are to be submitted or used by candidates and election agents in connection with the nomination may be prepared online via Candidate Services on the ELD website. Please see **Annex A** for a list of digital services for candidates. The applications for the Political Donation Certificate and minority community certificate can be submitted online, but all forms/certificates must be submitted in person on Nomination Day. All these forms can also be downloaded and printed from the ELD website before being filled.

statutory declaration that these additional names are reputed names.

For an election in a GRC, where elections are to be held on the basis of a group of such number of candidates fixed by law, the number of nominees in Form 9A must match that number of candidates in the group fixed by law.

In Section A, also fill in the names and NRIC numbers of –

- a. one proposer;
- b. one seconder; and
- c. at least four assentors (up to a maximum of eight assentors).

Every proposer, seconder and assentor must be registered as an elector in the current Register of Electors for the electoral division that the nominee or nominees seek election in. The names on the Nomination Paper should correspond to those in the Register of Electors.

Every proposer, seconder and assentor must also sign in Section A.

Any correction to particulars given under “Details of Nominee” must be initialled by any one of the proposer, seconder or assentors. Any correction to particulars given under “Details of Persons Nominating” must be initialled by the person to whom the change relates.

## **Section B**

In Section B of the Nomination Paper, the nominee or nominees must –

- a. each sign a statement stating that the nominee consents to the nomination;
- b. each declare that the nominee is qualified to be elected as an MP; and
- c. in the case of Form 9A, each declare that the nominee is a member of and is standing for a named political party or that the nominee is an independent.

This statement and declaration must be made before a Justice of the Peace or Commissioner for Oaths.

If a change has to be made to the statement or declaration in Section B after it is made before a Justice of the Peace or Commissioner for Oaths, please ensure that the change is made before a Justice of the Peace or Commissioner for Oaths and so evidenced.

### **2.1.2. How to obtain a Political Donation Certificate**

To apply for the Political Donation Certificate, the applicant must submit a *Pre-election Donation Report* (Form 3) and *Pre-election Declaration* (Form 4)<sup>4</sup> to the Registrar of Political Donations. The application may be made online via Candidate Services or in person<sup>5</sup> after the notice of the Writ of Election is issued but not later than 2 clear days (excluding Sundays and public holidays) before Nomination Day, i.e. not later than 26 June 2020 (Friday).

The reporting period for the Pre-election Donation Report and Pre-election Declaration is 12 months before the date of the declaration.

The Pre-election Donation Report must contain details of –

- every single donation amounting to \$10,000 or more accepted by the applicant during the reporting period; and
- every series of donations from the same permissible donor adding up to \$10,000 or more, accepted during the reporting period.

A Pre-election Declaration must accompany the Pre-election Donation Report. The applicant must declare that the report is true, that the applicant has not received anonymous donations totalling \$5,000 or more or any donations from impermissible donors during the reporting period.

For more details on political donations, candidates and election agents should refer to the Political Donations Act Handbook.

The Registrar will issue the Political Donation Certificates not later than the eve of Nomination Day.

### **2.1.3. How to apply for a certificate from the Malay Community Committee/Indian and Other Minority Communities Committee**

A Certificate certifying whether a person belongs to the Malay community is obtainable from the Malay Community Committee upon application.

A Certificate certifying whether a person belongs to the Indian or other minority community is obtainable from the Indian and Other Minority Communities Committee upon application.

To apply for such a certificate, the applicant must fill up the statutorily prescribed Application Form (Form A) and submit it online via Candidate Services or in person to the relevant

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<sup>4</sup> Set out in the Schedule to the Political Donations Regulations.

<sup>5</sup> A candidate will be able to print his certificate online via Candidate Services.

Committee after the notice of the Writ of Election is issued but not later than 2 clear days (excluding Sunday and public holiday) before Nomination Day, i.e. not later than 26 June 2020 (Friday).

An applicant may submit additional information to support the application. The additional information must be set out in a statutory declaration made by the applicant and not exceed 2 pages. The additional information may include aspects of the applicant's social and cultural life, his involvement in the community, etc. The statutory declaration must be submitted together with the application. A copy of the statutory declaration may be submitted online via Candidate Services together with the application form, but the original copy must be submitted to the ELD in person or by post by the deadline for certificate applications.

The Malay Community Committee and the Indian and Other Minority Communities Committee will issue the relevant certificates not later than the eve of Nomination Day. Successful applicants will be notified via email to print the certificates via Candidate Services.

## **2.2. Election deposit**

An election deposit must be made before 12 noon on Nomination Day. The election deposit is fixed by law as the fixed monthly allowance payable to an elected MP for the month immediately before the date of dissolution of Parliament, rounded to the nearest \$500. The exact amount of the election deposit for an election will be specified in the notice of the Writ of Election issued by the Returning Officer. For General Election 2020, the election deposit amount is \$13,500.

The election deposit must be made by electronic funds transfer<sup>6</sup>, bank draft, or by a cheque that has been certified by the drawee bank as good for payment of the sum stated on it (payable to "Elections Department"), or in such other form or manner as the Returning Officer allows.

A candidate will be deemed to have withdrawn his nomination if no valid election deposit is made by 12 noon on Nomination Day.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to make payment early before Nomination Day. Payments before Nomination Day may be made by electronic funds transfer, or using bank draft or certified cheque at ELD (i.e. no cash payment). A receipt will be issued as proof of payment. For payment by electronic funds transfer, the receipt can be downloaded via Candidate Services to be printed out.

**IMPORTANT:** The receipt must be submitted together with the Nomination papers as evidence of having paid the election deposit.

### **Circumstances under which deposit may be returned**

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<sup>6</sup> For instructions on electronic funds transfer, please refer to the Guide on Electronic Funds Transfer in the Candidate Advisory.

The election deposit will be returned to the candidate or person who made it on the candidate's behalf, if –

- a. the candidate is elected as an MP;
- b. the candidate withdraws his nomination;
- c. the candidate's nomination is successfully objected to and the nomination is invalidated;
- d. the candidate dies before the start of the poll; or
- e. the candidate does not win at the polls but the candidate (or the group of candidates of which he is one in the case of a GRC) garners votes exceeding one-eighth of the total number of votes polled in the electoral division he contested in.

### **2.3. Election agents**

A candidate may lawfully enter into certain contracts or appoint election staff connected with an election, and may not pay amounts due under those contracts except through an election agent. Once the Writ of Election is issued, every person who declares an intention to stand for election shall appoint an election agent to manage and administer his election expenses. A candidate may appoint himself as his election agent.

*Note – The election agent may authorise his candidate's political party or an authorised officer of the party to incur expenses up to a specified amount on his candidate's behalf. In a GRC, the election agent may authorise any number of election agents of other candidates in the same GRC group as his sub-agents to incur expenses on behalf of his candidate.*

The appointment of an election agent can be made online via Candidate Services or in writing by the candidate. Not more than one individual may be appointed as an election agent at any time. The appointment must be made no later than Nomination Day. The name and address of the election agent so appointed must also be submitted to the Returning Officer no later than Nomination Day.

In the case of an election in a GRC, the candidates in the group must also select from among their respective election agents, one election agent to be the principal election agent for the group. The appointment of the principal election agent must be in writing and must be made no later than Nomination Day. The name and address of the principal election agent must also be submitted to the Returning Officer no later than Nomination Day.

Bear in mind that even with the appointment of an election agent, the candidate remains responsible for complying with the law in relation to all campaigning activities. The candidate is responsible for his campaigning activities and it is his duty to take all reasonable steps to prevent the commission of Illegal Practices or Corrupt Practices<sup>7</sup> during election campaigning.

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<sup>7</sup> Where the term "Illegal Practice" or "Corrupt Practice" is used in this handbook, this refers to an illegal practice or corrupt practice as defined in the Parliamentary Elections Act (Cap. 218). See further information under section 10.

### **2.3.1. Duties and responsibilities of an election agent**

The duties and responsibilities of an election agent are summarised below:

#### After close of nominations

- to lodge a copy of the posters and banners online via Candidate Services or in person with the Returning Officer before they are displayed;
- to apply for permits for the use of perambulating vehicles for election campaigning;
- to issue written authority to election workers on behalf of the candidate;
- to submit online via Candidate Services or in person the particulars of election workers and the address(es) of the candidate's election office(s) to the Returning Officer;
- to appoint and issue letters of appointment to the polling agents;
- to appoint and issue letters of appointment to the counting agents;
- to keep an accurate account of all expenses incurred and donations received, and all disputed claims and unpaid claims for payment;
- to receive all contributions (whether loans, advances or donations) for the candidate's election expenses and to pay for all such election expenses;
- to pay all claims for election expenses within the time delimited by law;
- to declare the Internet platforms, online accounts or communication services such as private messaging services that will be used by or on behalf of the candidate to publish the candidate's election advertising;
- to authorise the candidate's political party or an authorised officer of the party to incur expenses up to a specified amount in respect of the conduct or management of the election of the candidate.

#### Post-election

- to submit a return of election expenses to the Returning Officer within 31 days of the day on which the result of the election is published in the Gazette; and
- to submit a *Post-election Donation Report* (Form 6) and *Post-election Declaration* (Form 7)<sup>8</sup> to the Registrar of

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<sup>8</sup> Set out in the Schedule to the Political Donations Regulations.

Political Donations within 31 days of the day on which the result of the election is published in the Gazette.

#### **2.4. Activities from Writ of Election to Nomination Day**

After the Writ of Election is issued and before the campaign period starts<sup>9</sup>, activities such as walkabouts, house-to-house visits, distributing election pamphlets, handouts and newsletters, and publishing of party manifestos and candidates' biographical details will be subject to the applicable election advertising requirements (see section 4.5 below), and any other licenses or permits required from the regulatory authorities. Such activities must also be conducted within the limits of the law.

Political parties and candidates may conduct campaigning activities such as walkabouts, house-to-house visits and the distribution of collaterals. During such activities, they are to take the necessary precautions, e.g. adhering to limits on group size, wearing masks, maintaining safe distancing, keeping all interactions and engagements transient (i.e. of short duration) and minimising physical contact, such as refraining from shaking hands. Candidates and political parties should also ensure that the members of the public they interact with adhere to prevailing safe distancing measures. For detailed guidelines, political parties and candidates can refer to the Advisory To Political Parties And Candidates On Safe Physical Campaigning During General Election 2020, which can be found at ELD website ([www.eld.gov.sg](http://www.eld.gov.sg)).

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<sup>9</sup> The campaign period starts with the closure of the Nomination Place on Nomination Day.

### **3. ON NOMINATION DAY**

#### **3.1. Nomination Day**

Nomination Day for any election is specified in the Writ of Election. The Returning Officer will give the public notice of the date in his Notice of Election.

By law, Nomination Day must be at least five days (not including Sundays or public holidays) and not more than one month after the date of the Writ of Election. For General Election 2020, Nomination Day is 30 Jun 2020 (Tuesday).

The list of Nomination Centres (usually a school) for the respective electoral divisions is at **Annex B**. Nominations open at 11 am and close at 12 noon on Nomination Day. All timings will be according to the official clock in the Nomination Place. Videography and photography within the Nomination Place are strictly prohibited.

The Returning Officer will only allow candidates, their proposers, seconders, assentors, one other person (if any) and accredited media personnel entry into Nomination Centres. They must adhere to prevailing safe distancing measures at all times. Supporters will not be allowed entry and should not gather or loiter in the vicinity of Nomination Centres.

##### **3.1.1. Safety measures at Nomination Centres**

The following measures will be put in place to ensure the safety of all persons on Nomination Day:

- a. Temperature screening to detect persons with fever or respiratory symptoms;
- b. All persons will have to use SafeEntry to check-in/out for contact tracing;
- c. Safe distancing within the Nomination Centre. Candidates and subscribers will stand or sit at least 1m apart when interacting with election officials and other persons.
- d. Requiring all persons to wear masks at all times.
- e. Processing unwell candidate(s) and his team separately. Candidates found to have fever or respiratory symptoms during temperature screening will be directed to a separate area within the Nomination Place for nomination. They and their subscribers can inspect Nomination papers of other candidates at the separate area. Tables and chairs will be cleaned after every team has filed its Nomination papers.
- f. Election officials will be equipped with appropriate protective gear (e.g. surgical masks, disposable gloves, face shields, pocket-sized hand sanitisers) to carry out their duties safely.
- g. Dedicated cleaners will be deployed at all Nomination Centres to ensure a high level of hygiene during the nomination proceedings. After the completion of proceedings, cleaners will thoroughly disinfect the Nomination Centres before returning the premises to their original users.



### 3.2. Persons entitled to be present during nomination proceedings

On Nomination Day for an election in an electoral division, only the following persons will be allowed to enter the Nomination Place (usually, this is located on the premises of a school, such as its hall) for that electoral division:

- the Returning Officer, his staff and any other person authorised by the Returning Officer;
- the nominees seeking to be candidates and their respective proposers, seconders, assentors; and
- one other person appointed in writing by each nominee ("one other person").

#### 3.2.1 Entry into Nomination Place

Entry to the Nomination Place will be granted from 10.30 am. A nominee seeking to be a candidate in an election may be refused entry to the Nomination Place unless he has a Political Donation Certificate and is accompanied by at least 6 others (i.e. his proposer, seconder and at least 4 assentors). In the case of a GRC,

- a. the nominee seeking to be a candidate must belong to a group of persons seeking to be a group of candidates for election in that GRC;
- b. the number of the members of the group must satisfy the number of candidates designated for that GRC;
- c. all the members in the group must belong to the same political party, or must be seeking to stand as a group of independents;
- d. all the members in the group must be present; and
- e. at least one of the members in the group must be certified as belonging to the community designated for that GRC.

**IMPORTANT:** To enter the Nomination Place, candidates must arrive in a complete group (proposer, seconder and at least four assentors) with the necessary certificates. Checks will be conducted at a Holding Area before the Nomination Place to ensure that only candidates who meet the conditions stated above are allowed to enter the Nomination Place. As there are additional checks, candidates are advised to arrive early at the Nomination Centre. Videography and photography within the Holding Area are strictly prohibited.

Subscribers who have fever or displaying acute respiratory infection (ARI) symptoms<sup>10</sup> will be refused entry into the

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<sup>10</sup> Acute respiratory infection symptoms, in the context of COVID-19, include cough, sore throat, runny nose, anosmia (loss of smell), and shortness of breath in severe cases.

Nomination Centre. Candidates should find a replacement for subscribers who are unwell. As candidates are allowed up to 8 assentors, candidates are advised to have additional assentors beyond the 4 required for nomination in case one of his assentors is refused entry because he has fever or display ARI symptoms Nomination Day.

### **3.3. Unwell candidate can authorise a representative to file Nomination papers on his behalf**

The Nomination papers of an aspiring candidate may be delivered on his behalf by his authorised representative if the aspiring candidate is unable or unfit to attend in person at the nomination proceedings on Nomination Day based on the following reasons:

- a) He is issued a COVID-19 Quarantine Order;
- b) He is issued a COVID-19 Stay Order;
- c) He is required under the Stay Order Regulations to not leave his or her residence or place of accommodation;
- d) He is hospitalised for any reason certified by a qualified medical practitioner; or
- e) He is of ill-health, but only if certified in writing by a certified medical practitioner that he is unfit to attend the nomination proceedings in person<sup>11</sup>.

The authorised representative of an aspiring candidate must be a Singapore Citizen who is

- a) A registered elector, i.e. entitled to vote in the electoral division his aspiring candidate is contesting in or another electoral division; and
- b) A Donee under a Power of Attorney<sup>12</sup> by his aspiring candidate, authorising him to represent and act on behalf of the aspiring candidate at nomination proceedings under the Parliamentary Elections Act.

The Nomination papers of an aspiring candidate delivered by an authorised representative must be

- a) Accompanied by:
  - i. A certified copy of the Power of Attorney;

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<sup>11</sup> The aspiring candidate who is hospitalised or of ill-health is issued medical certificate from a medical practitioner who is registered under the Medical Registration Act and has a valid practicing certificate. The medical certificate will also have to certify that the aspiring candidate is unable to personally attend at the Nomination Centre.

<sup>12</sup> The Power of Attorney is a legal document and must fulfil certain legal requirements to be valid for this purpose. The Power of Attorney must expressly authorise the representative to represent and act on behalf of the aspiring candidate at nomination proceedings under the Parliamentary Elections Act. This must include an authorisation to submit Nomination papers and raise objections to the Nomination papers of other candidates. The process will generally take 1-2 days.

- ii. A copy of the COVID-19 Quarantine Order or COVID-19 Stay Order relating to the aspiring candidate, or the certificate stating that he is unfit to attend Nomination Day proceedings from a qualified medical practitioner (as the case may be); and
- b) Delivered in duplicate (see section 3.4), by the authorised representative in person, accompanied by the aspiring candidate's proposer, seconder and at least four assentors, at the Nomination Place between 11 am and 12 noon (both times inclusive) on Nomination Day, and in accordance with other requirements stipulated in the Act.

The authorised representative is allowed to:

- a) Make corrections to his aspiring candidate's Nomination papers;
- b) File objections on Nomination papers of other aspiring candidates contesting in the same electoral division;
- c) Withdraw candidate on behalf of his aspiring candidate; and
- d) Deliver speech on behalf of his candidate at the close of nomination proceedings, if his candidate is successfully nominated.

A GRC candidate or an assentor of the group can double up as a representative of another aspiring candidate of the GRC who happens to be unwell as long as he is in possession of the required Power of Attorney.

### **3.4. Delivery of Nomination papers**

To be nominated as a candidate for election in an electoral division, the nominee must deliver his Nomination Paper (be it Form 9 or 9A) accompanied by the Political Donation Certificate issued to him and, if applicable, the certificate issued by the Malay Community Committee or the Indian and Other Minority Communities Committee, as the case may be. These must be delivered in duplicate. The duplicate copy may be in the form of photocopies of the original.

The Nomination Paper and certificates must be delivered by the nominee in person together with his proposer, seconder and at least four assentors, to the Returning Officer or his staff, at the designated Nomination Centre for that electoral division on Nomination Day.

Nominees seeking candidature must make sure that all the above forms and certificates are delivered between 11 am and 12 noon on Nomination Day at the designated Nomination Centre. All timings shall be based on the time shown on the official clock at the Nomination Centre. If due to some crisis there is a change in the hours of nomination, the Nomination papers must still be delivered within the times specified in the Returning Officer's public notice of such change. Nomination papers that are submitted late are invalid.

To facilitate the election process in the event the election is contested, candidates should also submit the following forms at the Nomination

Place before 12.30 pm on Nomination Day:

- a) *Appointment of Principal Election Agent* form (for GRCs); and
- b) *Names to be Printed on Ballot Paper and Notice Outside Polling Stations* form (see section 3.14)

### **3.5. Multiple candidacy**

**IMPORTANT:** *A person CANNOT be nominated more than once.*

If on Nomination Day for a General Election a person is nominated to be a candidate in more than one electoral division or is nominated more than once in the same electoral division, the person has to withdraw all but one nomination. Withdrawal must be done in person and before 12 noon. Otherwise, at 12 noon, each such nomination is deemed by law to be void, and the person cannot be a candidate.

### **3.6. Persons allowed to inspect Nomination papers**

Nomination papers that are accepted by the Returning Officer or his staff for an election in an electoral division are open to inspection by other candidates contesting in the same electoral division and their respective proposers, seconders, assentors and one other person.

### **3.7. Amending Nomination papers after filing**

Before 12 noon on Nomination Day, candidates may be given the opportunity by the Returning Officer or his staff to correct any error or omission which is discovered on the Nomination Paper (Form 9 or 9A) they have delivered. The Nomination Paper may be then amended and then be re-delivered to the Returning Officer or his staff in attendance at the Nomination Centre for the relevant electoral division before 12 noon, otherwise the nomination is invalidated.

As long as the persons or places specified in the Nomination Paper are identifiable<sup>13</sup>, omissions or inaccuracies will not invalidate the Nomination Paper.

However, substituting a different person as the candidate, proposer, seconder or assessor is not permitted. In such a case, a fresh Nomination Paper must be delivered.

**IMPORTANT:** It is advisable for candidates to submit their nomination papers well before 12 noon to allow time for errors or omissions to be corrected. It is also important to note that even if the Nomination Paper for a group of candidates is defective only in relation to a single member of the group, the nomination of the entire group could be invalid and rejected.

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<sup>13</sup> For example, "Choa Chu Kang" is written as "Chua Chu Kang"; "Bedok" is written as "Bedek"; "SXXXXXXXXH" is written as "SXXXXXXXXK".

### **3.8. Making objections to nominations**

Objections to the Nomination papers of a candidate/group of candidates delivered for an electoral division may be made in person by any rival candidate for the same electoral division or any of their proposers, seconders, assentors or one other person. The Returning Officer may also raise objections.

Objections must be made in writing, signed by the objector and made between 11 am and 12.30 pm on Nomination Day.

Objections must be based on the permitted grounds of objection under the law and must state the specific ground for the objection.

#### **Grounds of Objections**

The grounds of objections to Nomination papers are limited to those stated in section 30(1) of the Parliamentary Elections Act, and they are as follows:

- a. the description of the candidate is insufficient to identify the candidate. For example, the Nomination Paper contains multiple errors in the particulars of the candidate or leaves his occupation blank;
- b. the Nomination papers do not comply with or were not delivered in accordance with the Parliamentary Elections Act. For example –
  - i. the Nomination Paper (Form 9 or 9A) is not signed by the candidate(s);
  - ii. the Nomination Paper is not signed by the proposer or seconder or has less than four assentors;
  - iii. the particulars of the proposer, seconder or any one of the assentors are incorrect in that they are not on the Register of Electors for the electoral division the candidate (or group of candidates) intends to stand in;
  - iv. the Nomination Paper is not accompanied by a Political Donation Certificate for each candidate;
  - v. the Nomination papers are not delivered by the candidate(s) in person, together with the proposer, seconder and at least four assentors; or
  - vi. the statutory declaration in the Nomination Paper is not properly completed.
- c. it is apparent from the contents of the Nomination Paper that the candidate is not capable of being elected as an MP. For example, the Nomination Paper states the nominee's occupation as "Civil Servant"; and
- d. the provisions of section 27A or 28 of the Parliamentary Elections Act have not been observed. For example –
  - i. if the electoral division is a GRC, the Nomination papers are not accompanied by a certificate of the Malay Community Committee or the Indian and Other Minority Communities Committee, as the case may be;

- ii. the Nomination papers are not accompanied by the required election deposit; or
- iii. the Nomination Paper (Form 9A) contains a number of nominees fewer or more than the number of candidates in the group as required under the law for that GRC.

The Returning Officer or his staff in attendance at the Nomination Centre will decide whether to allow or disallow an objection. If the objection is allowed, the nomination objected to becomes invalid.

If the Returning Officer or his staff in attendance disallows an objection, his decision is final and conclusive.

To prevent their nominations from being successfully objected to, candidates should complete their Nomination Paper carefully and double-check that all required documents are complete and present.

### **3.9. Withdrawing nominations**

A candidate can withdraw his nomination for election in any electoral division any time before nominations close at 12 noon on Nomination Day. This also applies to a group of candidates. After that time, a nomination cannot be withdrawn.

To withdraw the nomination for election in any electoral division, the person or persons nominated must appear in person and file a written notice of withdrawal with the Returning Officer or his staff present at the Nomination Centre.

### **3.10. Declaring returned candidates if election is uncontested**

If the number of candidates nominated in an electoral division is no greater than the number of MPs to be elected for that electoral division, the Returning Officer or his staff present at the Nomination Centre for that electoral division will declare each of those candidates to be duly elected as MPs for that electoral division. A poll will not be held in that electoral division. The Returning Officer may make this declaration at 12 noon on Nomination Day if at that time, only one candidate or one group of candidates stands nominated for an electoral division. Otherwise, the declaration will be made after 12.30 pm.

### **3.11. Declaring nominated candidates if election is contested**

If the number of candidates nominated in an electoral division is greater than the number of MPs to be elected for that electoral division, the Returning Officer will declare each of those candidates to be duly nominated and prepare to conduct a poll for that electoral division.

The Returning Officer will issue to every candidate the following documents:

- a) Permit to display posters and banners in public places within the electoral division that the candidate (or group of candidates) is contesting in;

- b) Poster and banner official stamps; and
- c) Lists of polling stations and serial numbers of electors.

### **3.12. Candidates making speeches at Nomination Centres**

Candidates of both contested and uncontested electoral divisions may be given a chance by the Returning Officer to make speeches at the close of nomination proceedings, in accordance with conditions set by the Returning Officer.

Each candidate (or group of candidates) may be accompanied by 2 other persons from his subscriber group for the delivery of his speech. Each candidate for SMC is allowed 1 minute to make his speech. Each group of candidates for GRC is allowed 3 minutes to make its speech. (See **Annex C** for more details on the Procedures on the Delivery of Speeches by Candidates). Non-candidates will not be allowed by the Returning Officer to make speeches, except in the case of the authorised representative of an unwell candidate.

The national broadcaster will broadcast the nomination result announcements and candidates' Thank-you speeches.

### **3.13. Nomination-related offences**

The following acts, which may be committed in and around a Nomination Centre on Nomination Day, are offences:

- a. forging any Nomination Paper;
- b. dishonestly defacing or destroying any Nomination Paper;
- c. delivering a forged Nomination Paper knowing it to be forged;
- d. making any false statement of the withdrawal of any candidate; and
- e. illegal hawking of magazines, newsletters, books, etc.

### **3.14. Choosing symbol and name for election campaigning**

A candidate will need a symbol and to establish the name which he will use at the polls. Both are also essential for campaigning.

The choice of symbol and name must be determined before 12.30 pm on Nomination Day, if the election is contested.

A candidate or group of candidates will be allotted a political party's symbol only if the candidate is a member, or the candidates in the group are members of that political party and is or are standing for that party at the election. Otherwise, the candidate or group should select a symbol from the list which is drawn up by the Returning Officer and published in the Gazette before Nomination Day.

If a candidate or group of candidates wishes to use their own symbol, they will need to apply to the Returning Officer in writing and provide the design of the symbol in dimensions of 3.5 cm x 2.5 cm, and accompanied by a short description of the symbol, in English, of no more than five words.

The symbol allotted to or selected by the candidate or group will be printed on the ballot paper opposite the candidate's or group of candidates' names on the ballot paper.

The candidate's name on his Nomination Paper<sup>14</sup> will be printed on the ballot paper. If a candidate wishes to omit part(s) of his name in the Nomination Paper and/or replace part(s) of his names by initial, he can do so by filling a form called 'Names To Be Printed on Ballot Paper and Notice Outside Polling Stations' and submitting it online via Candidate Services or in person to the Returning Officer's staff before 12.30 pm on Nomination Day. In the same form, the candidate may also indicate his preference on how his name should appear in Chinese, Malay and/or Tamil on the notice displayed outside polling stations.

Take note that the names of candidates on the ballot papers are arranged alphabetically in English in the order of their surnames. If there are two or more candidates with the same surnames, then their names will be arranged alphabetically in the order of their other names.

In the case of a GRC, the names of the candidates in each group will first be arranged alphabetically in English in the order of their surnames or, if there are two or more candidates in the group with the same surname, of their other names. The surname of the first candidate in each group will then determine the order that the contesting groups will appear on the ballot paper; the arrangement will again be alphabetical in English.

### **3.15. Photographs on ballot paper**

Candidates should submit their photographs by 2 pm on Nomination Day and in conformance with the specifications stipulated by the Returning Officer for inclusion in the ballot paper. Otherwise, the space on the ballot paper for the candidate's photograph will state "No photo"<sup>15</sup>.

The photograph of the candidate must allow voters to recognise the candidate for voting purposes and shall –

- a. be in black and white;
- b. be 400 pixels (width) by 514 pixels (height), and the file size should be about 2MB in JPEG ('jpg' extension) format;
- c. be in sharp focus and clear with no ink marks or creases;
- d. have a plain white background or, in the case where the candidate's

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<sup>14</sup> Additional names in the Nomination Paper may be accepted if these are in the NRIC or are supported by a deed poll, religious certificate (e.g. baptism certificate, Muslim conversion certificate, Buddhist certificate), or a statutory declaration that these additional names are reputed names.

<sup>15</sup> For GRCs, the photographs of the candidates in a group will be placed left to right in the order in which the names of the candidates appear on the ballot paper. If some but not all the candidates in the group submit their photograph, the ballot paper will contain the photographs of those candidates in the group who have submitted their photograph. "No photo" will be indicated in the designated space for the photograph of the candidate(s) in that group who did not submit a photograph.



hair, hat or head covering is white, a plain light grey background;

- e. be taken with uniform lighting and not show any flash reflection or shadow on the candidate's face or any uneven bright spots or red eyes;
- f. be taken recently;
- g. show the candidate alone with no other persons visible;
- h. show the candidate facing the camera, and if the candidate wears any glasses or other optical aid, show the candidate with no reflection off the glasses;
- i. clearly show both edges of the candidate's face and the top of the candidate's shoulder;
- j. not show the candidate wearing any hat or other head covering, other than a hat or other head covering which the candidate habitually wears for religious reasons or due to custom; and if any such hat or other head covering is worn, the photograph must still be a full frontal view of the candidate's head and shoulders, showing the candidate's facial features in its entirety and showing clearly both edges of the candidate's face; and
- k. not show the candidate wearing any attire, hat or other covering which bears any symbol which is of any racial or religious significance.

Candidates are advised to submit their photographs early. Candidates may submit their photographs online via Candidate Services or in person after the issuance of Writ of Election. For submissions in person, the photograph should be submitted in softcopy stored in a USB flash drive or CD-ROM (both not returnable to the candidates). The filename of the photograph should be in this format: <<*NRIC number of candidate*>> separated by a hyphen <<*name of candidate*>>, e.g. *S1234567A-Goh Kok Goi.jpg*. Where multiple photographs are submitted together, the photograph of each candidate must be saved as separate files.

Candidates may also utilise the photo booth which will be set up at the Nomination Centre on Nomination Day if they are not able to submit their photographs in advance.

### **3.16. General Advisory**

#### Parking and security arrangements at Nomination Centres

Candidates are reminded that parking will not be allowed at Nomination Centres. Drop-off and pick-up points will be designated for each Nomination Centre. Security measures and security checks will be conducted in and around the Nomination Centres. To ensure that their Nomination papers are submitted in time, candidates are advised to come early for nomination. Candidates and their subscribers (i.e. seconder, proposer, assentors and one other person) are not to bring sharp object(s), flammable liquids or gas, bulky items or big bags.

Candidates and their subscribers (i.e. seconder, proposer, assentors and one other person)

- a. The use of handphones, video and photo-taking devices and smoking are strictly prohibited within the Nomination Place and Holding Area;
- b. Any speeches other than those delivered by candidates with the Returning Officer's approval will not be allowed at Nomination Centres;
- c. Candidates are not allowed to hold press conferences at the Nomination Centre; and
- d. To ensure public safety, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) are not permitted to be flown at Nomination Centres.

## **4. AFTER CLOSE OF NOMINATIONS TO BEFORE POLLING DAY**

### **4.1. Campaigning**

The campaign period commences from the close of nomination on Nomination Day and ends with the start of the eve of Polling Day ("Cooling-off Day"). Candidates may generally engage in the following activities during the campaign period, subject to their obtaining the relevant licences or permits from other regulatory authorities and within the limits prescribed by law:

- a. conduct walkabouts and house-to-house visits;
- b. distribute pamphlets, handouts, newsletters etc;
- c. display posters and banners;
- d. use private vehicles (motorised or otherwise) for election advertising purposes e.g. fitted with loudspeakers and/or adorned with elections-related posters and banners;<sup>16</sup> and
- e. advertise on the Internet.

In view of the COVID-19 situation, ELD strongly encourages political parties and candidates to plan for modes of campaigning that do not involve physical group gatherings. As at past elections, campaigning activities on television and the Internet can take place, in accordance with guidelines for such activities. Political parties and candidates can also continue to make use of posters, banners and printed campaign materials to reach out to voters.

Political parties and candidates conducting campaigning activities such as walkabouts, house-to-house visits and the distribution of collaterals are to take the necessary precautions, e.g. adhering to limits on group size, wearing masks, maintaining safe distancing, keeping all interactions and engagements transient (i.e. of short duration) and minimising physical contact, such as refraining from shaking hands. Candidates and political parties should also ensure that the members of the public they interact with adhere to prevailing safe distancing measures. For detailed guidelines, political parties and candidates can refer to the Advisory To Political Parties And Candidates On Safe Physical Campaigning During General Election 2020, which will be published on ELD website.

No Police permits will be granted for any election meetings (indoors or outdoors) as large group gathering are not allowed under the prevailing MOH safe distancing guidelines. There will be more airtime on national free-to-air TV channels for political parties and candidates (see section 4.3).

Candidates should conduct election campaigning in a responsible and dignified manner that befits the seriousness of the election process. Candidates should steer away from negative campaigning practices based on hate and denigration of opposing candidates. Candidates should also not make false statements, for example, unfounded allegations of corruption or commission of criminal offences, or statements that may

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<sup>16</sup> Details on the application of Police permits to use a perambulating vehicle can be found in section 4.6.

cause racial or religious tensions or affect social cohesion. As the outcome of Singapore's elections is for Singaporeans to decide, candidates should ensure that their election campaign is free from foreign influence.

#### **4.2. Management of personal data under election legislation and other relevant laws**

##### **4.2.1 Regulatory requirements under the Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA)**

Candidates who collect, use or disclose the personal data of individuals must comply with the provisions under the PDPA ("Data Protection Provisions"). Candidates are responsible for ensuring that their election agents, staff and volunteers also comply with the Data Protection Provisions. Candidates should conduct the necessary training for them and put in place specific policies and procedures appropriate for their operations, to ensure the proper handling of personal data.

The obligations under the Data Protection Provisions relate primarily to Consent, Purpose Limitation, Notification, Access and Correction, Accuracy, Protection, Retention Limitation, Transfer Limitation and Accountability. Some key obligations are highlighted below:

- a. Ensure that individuals are notified of the purposes of the collection, use or disclosure of their personal data, and that consent is obtained from the individuals for such collection, use or disclosure. For instance, a candidate who wishes to take a photograph of individuals at election campaign activities in a private location will need to obtain the individuals' consent;
- b. Implement reasonable security arrangements to protect personal data in their possession or under their control in order to prevent any unauthorised access, collection, use, disclosure, copying, modification, disposal or similar risks. These may include technical measures such as encrypting personal data to prevent unauthorised access, as well as physical measures such as the proper shredding of confidential documents. As good practice, candidates should avoid leaving personalised election mailers bearing electors' personal data on the doors or gates of their houses, but instead slot them into the letterboxes or under the doors of their houses; and
- c. Cease to retain documents containing personal data when there is no business or legal purpose to retain it. Personal data must not be kept indefinitely or "just in case" it may be needed for other purposes that have not been notified to the individuals.

Candidates who send any message to Singapore telephone numbers, the sole purpose of which is for election campaigning, are not prevented from doing so by the Do Not

Call Provisions under the PDPA, so long as it does not offer to supply, offer, advertise or promote a good or service.

Candidates are encouraged to refer to the Advisory Guidelines on Application of PDPA to Election Activities at [www.pdpc.gov.sg](http://www.pdpc.gov.sg).

#### **4.2.2 Using information in registers to communicate with electors**

Candidates may purchase a copy of the Registers of Electors and use the information recorded in the registers only for communicating with electors. The information must not be used for commercial purposes. Candidates may therefore collect, use or disclose information in the registers without obtaining consent under the PDPA to the extent that such collection, use or disclosure is for the purpose of communicating with electors in accordance with the relevant laws. Candidates may also disclose information recorded in the registers to relevant persons such as their election agents provided such persons give their written acknowledgement that they are bound by the same restrictions on the use of information in the registers.

#### **4.2.3 Managing personal information collected under the Political Donations Act**

Candidates are required under the Political Donations Act to collect the full names, NRIC numbers and addresses of the individual donors from whom they have received political donations. Candidates may therefore collect, use or disclose such information, without obtaining consent under the PDPA, for the purpose of complying with the requirements under the Political Donations Act.

### **4.3. Additional airtime on national TV for campaigning**

In view of the COVID-19 situation, in lieu of physical rallies, there will be more airtime on national free-to-air TV channels for political parties and candidates. The provisions for campaigning on national TV are:

- a) Two Party Political Broadcasts (PPBs)<sup>17</sup>, as per General Election 2015, but these will be aired on 19 TV and radio channels<sup>18</sup>, up from 13 in 2015<sup>19</sup>; and
- b) Constituency Political Broadcasts (CPBs) on the national broadcaster Mediacorp's Channel 5:
  - i. Each candidate contesting in a SMC will be given 3 minutes of airtime on national TV. Candidates can choose to speak in any of the four official languages.
  - ii. Each group of candidates contesting in a GRC will be given 12 minutes or 15 minutes respectively, depending on whether it is a 4- or 5-member GRC. Parties can decide whether one or more members of the GRC team should speak during the allotted time for that GRC. Likewise, they can choose to speak in any of the four official languages.

The CPBs are special, one-off arrangements in view of the COVID-19 situation.

#### **4.4. Submission of films for classification**

Candidates (or groups of candidates) who intend to distribute or publicly exhibit films must submit them to the Info-communications Media Development Authority (IMDA) for classification. Applications can be made during office hours at the following address:

Info-communications Media Development Authority  
10 Pasir Panjang Road, #03-01  
Mapletree Business City  
Singapore 117438

Applicants submitting films for classification should check and ensure the technical quality of the films. The format should be compatible with commonly-available players such as thumb-drives, DVDs or Blu-Ray discs.

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<sup>17</sup> Party Political Broadcasts (PPBs) refer to free broadcast airtime for political parties to share their campaigning messages with the voters during the campaign period. During General Election 2015, eight political parties that fielded at least six candidates were allocated between 2.5 minutes and 13 minutes of broadcast airtime to make statements in the four official languages across 13 TV and radio channels.

<sup>18</sup> The TV channels are Channel 5, CNA, Channel 8, Channel U, Suria and Vasantham. The radio stations are CNA938, Capital 95.8 FM, Warna 94.2FM, Oli 96.8FM, Safra Power 98, Jia 88.3 FM, UFM 100.3 (as per 2015), and six additional radio channels: One FM 91.3, Kiss 92 FM, Class 95 FM, Gold 90.5 FM, Money FM 89.3 and 96.3 Hao FM.

<sup>19</sup> Eligibility for these broadcasts is determined by the number of candidates fielded by a recognised political party under a recognised party symbol. Since the 1980 General Election, political parties that field at least six candidates under a recognised party symbol are eligible for air-time. Independents and a political party fielding fewer than six candidates under the same recognised party symbol are not eligible for the Broadcasts.

All films submitted before the issue of Writ of Election will be evaluated before Nomination Day. Films submitted after the issue of writ of election will be cleared within three working days.

Where clarifications are required on the films, the applicant must respond to IMDA within the timeframe communicated by IMDA in order for the film to be processed expeditiously.

Films that are only posted online need not be submitted for classification, but the content should comply with the Internet Code of Practice.

#### **4.4.1. Prohibition on Party Political Films (PPFs)**

Candidates are reminded that the making, distribution and exhibition of party political films (PPFs) are disallowed. PPFs include films which are made by any person and directed towards any political end in Singapore, such as those intended or likely to affect voting in any election in Singapore. In using film as a platform to conduct political discourse, candidates should respect the need to keep politics rational and grounded on facts.

Candidates should ensure that films are factual and objective, and do not dramatise and/or present an inaccurate account. The following will not be considered PPFs:

- a. Live recordings of events held in accordance with the law;
- b. Anniversary and commemorative videos of political parties;
- c. Factual documentaries, biographies or autobiographies;
- d. Manifestos of political parties produced by or on behalf of a political party;
- e. Candidate's (or group of candidates') declaration of policies or ideology produced by or on behalf of the candidate (or group of candidates); and
- f. Films made solely for the purpose of reporting of news by a licensed broadcasting service.

Candidates are advised to refer to sections 2(2) and 2(3) of the Films Act for further details on what does or does not constitute a PPF.

#### **4.5. Different forms of election advertising**

The following set of rules govern the forms of election advertising that are published or distributed after the issue of the Writ of Election and before Cooling-off Day.

#### **4.5.1. Internet election advertising (IEA)**

##### **4.5.1.1. Non-Permitted forms of IEA**

Candidates may only publish IEA in the manner set out in Regulation 4(1) in the Parliamentary Elections (Election Advertising) Regulations and no others. This includes, but is not limited to, making the IEA available on a website and making it available through a social networking service.

For the avoidance of doubt, candidates and election agents are not permitted to publish any of the following on the Internet:

- a. results of an election survey within the meaning of section 78C of the Parliamentary Elections Act;
- b. results of an exit poll within the meaning of section 78D of the Parliamentary Elections Act on Polling Day before the close of all polling stations;
- c. any appeal to the public or a section of the public to make any donation the acceptance of which is unlawful under the Political Donations Act;
- d. any facility enabling the public to search for election advertising which cannot be published under the Parliamentary Elections (Election Advertising) Regulations; and
- e. any PPF within the meaning of the Films Act or any film where its publication on the Internet constitutes the distribution or exhibition of which is contrary to the provisions of that Act.

If any of the non-permitted forms of IEA is published during the election period, the Returning Officer may require the candidate or election agent concerned to take down the material from the Internet. Such publication and the failure to comply with the Returning Officer's take-down notice is an offence.

##### **4.5.1.2. Declaration of IEA by candidates**

Election advertising may only be published on the Internet (whether on an Internet platform or using communication services such as private messaging services) during the campaign period of an election if a declaration by the candidate is submitted to the Returning Officer. Every duly nominated candidate is required to declare to the Returning Officer the particulars of every Internet election advertising platform, online account and communication services (e.g. websites, blogs, social network services, MMS, SMS, private messaging services) on which election advertising is or will be published by or on his behalf during the campaign period, which starts with the close of nomination proceedings on 30 June 2020 and ends on 8 July 2020 (before the eve of Polling Day).



The first declaration must be submitted to the Returning Officer via the candidates' electronic portal on the ELD website within 12 hours after the start of the campaign period. Thereafter, a declaration must be submitted to the Returning Officer at any time before the election advertising is so published during the campaign period by or on the candidate's behalf on any new platform. These declarations must set out sufficient particulars of every Internet platform or online account to allow the Returning Officer to access that platform or online account. In cases where access to the Internet platform or online account requires a password or some other precondition, there should be sufficient particulars to allow the Returning Officer to identify the proprietor or operator of the Internet platform or online account. These declarations are put up on the ELD website for public access. In the case of a communications service, there should be sufficient particulars to allow the Returning Officer to identify and contact the publisher of the election advertising.

Candidates must submit their declarations online via Candidate Services.

With regard to paid IEA (i.e. IEA for which money is received for its publication on an Internet platform), the declaration must also state additional information such as the type of services used (e.g. advertisement on a social media platform, blog advertorial within a website); the publisher of the paid IEA; the period that the paid IEA will appear; whether money was received for the placement of the paid IEA from the candidate, his election agent, his political party or any other person. Declarations must be submitted via the Candidate Services.

If candidates are using third party campaigners to publish paid IEA and such acts constitute the conduct of election activity, candidates or their election agents would need to authorise them by filling out Form 22 or 23 (details at section 4.6) under the Parliamentary Elections Act respectively, before they are allowed to publish paid IEA. Candidates who are returned unopposed and are declared elected need not submit any such declaration.

If undeclared IEA is published during the campaign period on an Internet platform or using a communication service, the Returning Officer may require the candidate concerned to take down the non-compliant material from the Internet or rectify the situation by submitting a declaration. Failure to comply with the Returning Officer's take-down notice or instruction to submit a declaration is an offence. The Returning Officer may also direct the removal of illegal paid IEA.

#### **4.5.1.3. "Published-by" requirement for IEA**

All election advertising published on any website and/or sent by electronic means (including social networking services,

SMS, email or messages in chat rooms)<sup>20</sup> during the election period must bear conspicuously the relevant particulars, i.e. the name(s) of (i) the publisher of the election advertising and (ii) every person for whom or at whose direction the election advertising is published in the following manner:

- a. On the first opening page of the website containing any election advertising; and
- b. On the page first displayed for every sub-directory of the website if the relevant particulars of the election advertising in the sub-directory are not the same as those on the first opening page of that website.

The relevant particulars must also be displayed conspicuously on every election advertising sent –

- a. by electronic transmission (including facsimile transmission);
- b. by or through a micro-blog, a social networking service, an electronic media application, an SMS service or an MMS service;
- c. by an electronic mail;
- d. as a web log entry; or
- e. as a message in a chat room, in a discussion forum, or on any other Internet platform.

If candidates or political parties use paid IEA, they are to state on their paid IEA that it was paid for by them, their political party or an authorised third party campaigner. This can be by means of using words like “sponsored by” or “paid for by” on the IEA.

Where the publisher of any election advertising or the person for whom or at whose direction any election advertising is published is an unincorporated association or society, it is sufficient to state the name of the association or society, as the case may be.

#### **4.5.1.4. Moderator for chat rooms and discussion forums**

A candidate or political party which maintains a chat room or discussion forum must ensure that there is a moderator for each of such chat room or discussion forum. The moderator must –

- a. keep a full record of all the messages (including text, visual images and audio) sent to the chatroom or discussion forum during the election period; and
- b. immediately remove any materials when directed by the Returning Officer.

Information or data related to the chat rooms and discussion forums must be kept by the candidate or his political party

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<sup>20</sup> This does not apply to Singaporean citizens who are not candidates or election agents, and who do so on their own accord without payment.

and furnished to the Returning Officer as and when the Returning Officer requires.

Chat rooms and discussion forums that are maintained on the candidate's or political party's behalf must not contain anything that is against public interest, public order or racial harmony, or offends good taste or decency. The candidate or political party shall exercise due diligence to ensure that these chat rooms and discussion forums do not contain such content, or content that is prohibited under any other written law.

***\*Please check regulations 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the Parliamentary Elections (Election Advertising) Regulations for more details on the regulations governing IEA.***

#### **4.5.2. "Published-by" requirement for election advertising not on Internet**

For all election advertising that is published in print form, the name of the printer, publisher and the person at whose direction or for whom the election advertising is published must appear –

- on the face of the printed document if it is a single sided document; or
- on the first or last page of the printed document if the document has more than one side.

The sample format for printing the "published-by" requirement is as shown:

<p>Printed by: [name of the person or company whose equipment is being used to print the material]</p> <p>Published by: [name of person who publishes (i.e. makes available to the general public) the material or causes the material to be published]</p> <p>Published for: [name of the candidate (or group of candidates) or political party at whose direction or for whom the material is published]</p>
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\* In cases where the information on "Published by" and "Published for" is already clearly stated on the face of the printed election advertising, the "Published by" and "Published for" fields need not be filled up.

#### **4.5.3. Posters and banners**

The display of posters and banners advertising relating to a candidate or group of candidates during the campaign period must comply with the conditions listed in the Returning Officer's permit for such display of posters and banners.

Posters and banners must only be written, printed, drawn or otherwise similarly depicted on paper, plastic, cardboard, cloth

or other similar medium. All other types of posters and banners are not authorised to be displayed under the permit.

At the end of nomination proceedings, the Returning Officer will issue to the candidate or his election agent a permit authorising the display of posters and banners in public places within the electoral division where the candidate is contesting in.

Posters and banners may take the form of a small or large printed election advertising.

The permit will specify the maximum number and size of small and large printed election advertising (whether in the form of a poster or a banner) allowed to be displayed in public places within the electoral division and may contain certain conditions restricting the type of printed election advertising authorised to be displayed, and the place at and manner in which they may be displayed.

The formulae to compute the maximum number of small and large printed election advertising is as follows:

Number of small printed election advertising allowed	1 small printed election advertising to every 50 electors in the register (rounded to nearest 100)  Subject to minimum of: 500 per SMC 2,000 per 4-MP GRC 2,500 per 5-MP GRC
Number of large printed election advertising allowed	1 large printed election advertising to every 4000 electors in the register (rounded to nearest whole number)  Subject to minimum of: 6 per SMC 25 per 4-MP GRC 31 per 5-MP GRC

### **Size and characteristics of authorised posters and banners**

A copy of each of the posters and a detailed diagram or drawing of each of the banners must be lodged with the Returning Officer before they are displayed by the candidate or his election agent. This may be done online via Candidate Services or in person.

A political party<sup>21</sup> may lodge on its candidates' behalf an

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<sup>21</sup> Political parties can lodge the election poster or banner to be displayed across constituencies by sending a soft copy of the image of the poster or banner to [candidates@eld.gov.sg](mailto:candidates@eld.gov.sg), indicating the specific electoral divisions that the poster/banner that will be displayed in.

election poster or banner promoting the party which is to be displayed by its candidates in 2 or more constituencies. With this change, the party's candidates will not need to separately lodge the same election poster and banner with the Returning Officer.

All posters and banners displayed, including party-wide posters and banners and party flags, must bear the official stamp issued by the Returning Officer identifying them as either a small or large printed election advertising.

Small printed election advertising refers to posters and banners that can fit within a rectangular area of 1.75m by 1.2m. Large printed election advertising refers to banners that cannot fit within a rectangular area of 1.75m by 1.2m but can fit within a rectangular area of 9m by 1.2m.

Multiple small printed election advertising can be displayed next or close to each other to form a large printed election advertising, provided that they fit within a rectangular area of 9m by 1.2m. In addition, each small printed election advertising that forms a large printed election advertising must also be affixed with a stamp bearing the official mark of the Returning Officer.

The symbol allotted to or selected by a candidate or group of candidates is to be clearly displayed on the posters or banners relating to the candidate or group of candidates to avoid ambiguity or confusion to the voter.

All election posters and banners must not breach any provisions of the Parliamentary Elections Act and any other written law (e.g. poster must not contain persons prohibited from taking part in election activities under section 83(1) of the Parliamentary Elections Act, and must not contain illegal content such as seditious materials or materials that may cause alarm and distress).

### **Where and how posters and banners may be displayed**

In general, campaign posters (mounted on plywood or cardboard) and banners may be hung on street lamp posts and trees along public roads. Do not nail or paste posters and banners onto any surface. Do not inscribe election advertising on any road, footpath, building, vehicle, vessel or hoarding.

The display of posters and banners must not obscure the view of other posters and banners already displayed.

Posters and banners, as well as logos or symbols of political parties (including posters and flags displayed at political party premises), are not allowed to be displayed within a radius of 50 metres from a polling station. For ease of compliance, candidates may refer to the maps showing the 50-metre prohibition zones using Candidate Services on ELD website. Logos, symbols or images affiliated with candidates and

political parties (e.g. party flags displayed externally at party offices, town council banners with candidates' photos, etc), and which are within the 50-metre radius should also be covered up to avoid allegations of undue influence.

Candidates and their election agents should not display posters and banners for the purposes of election campaigning at/on any of the following objects and structures or things:

Places where campaign posters and banners are prohibited

- Trains
- Public Service Vehicles (PSV) (e.g. buses, taxis, private-hire vehicles) other than a PSV hired for the sole purpose of conveyance of candidates during a campaign period
- Bus interchanges/ shelters
- Vehicular bridges
- Railings
- Central median dividers
- Traffic islands
- Expressways
- Traffic sign boards
- Traffic bollards
- ERP gantries
- Public infrastructure and their ancillary structures (e.g. entrance & exit structures to rapid transit system stations and underpasses, Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) viaduct columns, and kiosks)
- The vicinity of the boundary of airports and airbases
- Carpark sign poles
- Property belonging to Public Utilities Board (PUB), Info-communications Media Development Authority (IMDA), and any electricity, gas, public telecommunication or public postal licensee
- Stalls within a hawker centre, food centre or market
- Premises within any Community Centre/Club and Residents' Committee (RC)
- Water catchment areas, public parks and open spaces, nature reserves, water bodies, along coastlines and on vacant land
- Premises within any Ministry of Education (MOE), Sport Singapore, People's Association (PA) property (e.g. school and stadium fences)
- Government-owned buildings

**Disclaimer:** The prohibited list is non-exhaustive and includes mainly public properties. Candidates and election agents are advised to obtain owner's consent for places (e.g. property owned by private establishments) not listed here.

Posters and banners must also not infringe any safety requirements, including the following:

- Must not cause any obstruction to pedestrian movement and traffic view of oncoming vehicles if placed near junctions.
- Must have a height clearance of at least 2.2 metres when placed on lamp posts on/near footpaths and at least 0.6 metres away from the road kerb.
- Must not obstruct any other existing banners, traffic signs, cameras or any other related road infrastructure.

For posters and banners in breach of the regulations:

- a. ELD's contractor will contact candidates or their election agents as part of their investigations on posters or banners suspected to be in breach. In the event of a breach, candidates or election agents are required to remove the poster or banner within 3 hours of receiving the call. An email with a case number will be sent to the candidate/election agent to log the case.
- b. After the rectification, candidate or election agent are to send a geo-tagged photo of the poster/banner in question to the ELD contractor for documentation and to close the case. The geo-tagged photo should be taken less than 5m from the poster/banner and should contain location information (location on map, coordinates and address) where the poster/banner was removed.
- c. For the first instance of breach, a warning letter will be sent to the candidate and his election agent by email. From the second instance of the same breach onwards, more serious action (e.g. offer of composition) will be taken. ELD will also recover the cost to remove the poster or banner in breach (see below).

### **Removal of posters and banners**

Posters and banners must be removed after Polling Day and the failure to do so is an offence. Candidates or their election agents have to ensure that all of their posters and banners are taken down within the specified period stated in the Returning Officer's permit and properly disposed of after the election.

The Returning Officer or any person so authorised by him or any police officer in uniform may remove unauthorised posters and banners. For such removal, the candidates will be required to bear the expenses to remove the election posters or banners in breach of the rules. The amount to be borne for each removal<sup>22</sup> of election poster or banner is S\$50. The candidates will be informed of the total cost that is to be recovered from them for all of such removals, after Polling

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<sup>22</sup> The enforcement of the rules to display posters and banners will be handled by ELD's contractor, AETOS. They will check on complaints and remove posters and banners that breach the rules. The amount of \$50 per removal is derived from manpower costs, transport and logistics costs, etc, on a cost-recovery basis.

Day<sup>23</sup>. This cost must be included in the candidates' election expenses.

#### **4.5.4. Other forms of election advertising**

If candidates wish to publish election advertising using other means, such as a television broadcast, newspapers, magazines or periodical, or advertise in any public place, they have to seek authorisation from the Returning Officer.

#### **4.5.5. Excluded election advertising**

The following items are not considered election advertising. The display or distribution of these items do not need authorisation from the Returning Officer and do not need to comply with the "published-by" requirements:

- a. Buttons;
- b. Badges
- c. Pens;
- d. Pencils;
- e. Balloons;
- f. Diaries or calendars on paper or paperboard;
- g. Key chains;
- h. T-shirts or other articles of apparel;
- i. Articles in the nature of dress or clothing accessories, such as lapel pins, ties, scarves, caps or hats;
- j. Cleansing tissue paper or paper napkins cut to size and contained in retail packets or packages;
- k. Miniature flags and pennants;
- l. Soft toys;
- m. Umbrellas;
- n. Inflatable objects;
- o. Any other portable object or article (not being a decalcomania or any other adhesive label) –
  - a. the value of which is less than S\$10; and
  - b. which can fit into a space measuring 10 centimetres by 10 centimetres by 10 centimetres

Please note that the items above should not contain or display any false statement of fact about a candidate, group of candidates or political party, or any content that can reasonably be regarded as intended to adversely affect the

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<sup>23</sup> Within 9 days after the campaign period, ELD will send to the candidate/election agent an email Notice which will include details on the total amount payable to ELD, and the deadline for the payment. Upon payment, ELD will issue a receipt stating the total amount paid.



electoral success or standing of a candidate, group of candidates or political party.

#### **4.6. Election meetings and vehicle processions**

As large group gatherings are not allowed under the prevailing MOH guidelines for Phase 2 of the reopening post Circuit Breaker, no Police permits will be granted for any election meetings, including rallies and gatherings at Assembly Centres on Counting Night for supporters to wait for election results.

ELD strongly encourages political parties and candidates to plan for modes of campaigning that do not involve physical group gatherings. As at past elections, campaigning activities on television and the Internet can take place, in accordance with the guidelines for such activities. Political parties and candidates can also continue to make use of posters, banners and printed campaign materials to reach out to voters. Candidates must apply for a permit from the Police before they can use a perambulating vehicle (motorised or otherwise) fitted with loudspeakers or display elections-related posters and banners on any public road.

Candidates may use perambulating vehicles for campaigning, but they will not be permitted to speak or livestream or broadcast music or videos from the vehicle.

##### **4.6.1. Perambulating vehicle permits**

Political parties and candidates who wish to use perambulating vehicles must apply for a permit, ideally online, via the Singapore Police Force website [www.police.gov.sg/e-services](http://www.police.gov.sg/e-services). Applications may be submitted anytime from 2 pm on Nomination Day, till 12 noon on the eve of Cooling-off Day. Once the application is processed, the Police Elections Permit Office (PEPO) will inform the applicant of the outcome, via email. The applicant will be required to acknowledge the permit conditions online, before the approved permit is issued, via email. There is no need for the applicant to visit PEPO in person. Online applications that are received after the close of PEPO's operating hours on any given day, will be processed the next day, during PEPO's operating hours.

Election agents or candidates who wish to apply for a permit in person at PEPO may make an appointment with PEPO, by calling 1800-2203370. In-person appointments will only be granted during PEPO's operating hours, and only if the applicant faces genuine difficulties in submitting the application online.

PEPO is located on the second level of the Police Cantonment Complex (391 New Bridge Road, Singapore 088762). PEPO will only operate from Nomination Day to the eve of Cooling Off Day. PEPO will operate from 8.30 am to 2.30 pm daily during this period, except on Nomination Day, when it will operate from 2 pm to 4 pm. Candidates and election agents

may call the PEPO hotline at 1800-2203370, for Police permit-related enquiries.

Members of the public (including candidates and their agents) who submit permit applications in person will be subject to security and health checks prior to entry into the Police Cantonment Complex. They may also have to exchange ID documents for security passes. As public parking is not available at the Police Cantonment Complex, candidates and their agents are advised to park their vehicles at parking facilities outside the Complex.

Any cancellation of or amendment to the submitted permit application should be made known to PEPO at the earliest opportunity.

#### **4.7. E-rally Livestreams**

In lieu of physical rallies, candidates have the option of holding e-rally livestreams. To facilitate the livestreams, the Government will provide venues that candidates can apply and use for live streaming at specific timeslots throughout the day during the campaign period. These venues will be equipped with Internet connectivity. They will be provided at a subsidised rate, and their use should be limited to the e-rally livestreams, and not for other recordings or purposes.

Candidates should ensure that the Internet platforms that the e-rallies are streamed on meet the relevant requirements, e.g. these platforms must have been declared to the Returning Officer. Similar to physical rallies, beyond the basic technical setup furnished onsite at the recording venues, candidates are expected to make their own arrangements for filming and live streaming at the site and ensure the successful delivery of their own livestreams. Use of the subsidised venues above is entirely optional. Candidates may campaign via live streaming outside of the provided venues and timeslots.

#### **4.8. Persons prohibited from conducting election activities**

The following persons are prohibited by law from taking part in any election activity<sup>24</sup>:

- a. a student attending a primary or secondary school<sup>25</sup>;
- b. a person who has an order of supervision made against him under the Criminal Law (Temporary Provisions) Act;
- c. an undischarged bankrupt; and
- d. a non-citizen of Singapore<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> Election activity also includes an activity that is done for the purpose of prejudicing the electoral prospects of other political parties, candidates or groups of candidates.

<sup>25</sup> E.g. appearing in videos or taking part in other activities to promote a political party.

<sup>26</sup> This includes engaging non-citizens in work such as developing campaigning strategies, creating campaign materials, promoting outreach to voters, etc.

This is regardless of their relationship with the candidate.

Anyone conducting any election activity, whether online, offline or both, including publishing paid IEA for or on behalf of a candidate, must first be in possession of a written authority (Form 22 and 23<sup>27</sup>) signed by the candidate or his election agent authorising him to conduct election activity. This can include candidates who have been returned unopposed on Nomination Day and declared elected, but who wish to assist the other party members who are candidates at the contested elections.

Authorisation to conduct election activity shall be issued only on or after the Nomination Day. Particulars of all written authorities issued by a candidate and his election agent must be sent to the Returning Officer (online via Candidate Services or in person), who shall on receipt forward a copy of those particulars to the Commissioner of Police.

Workers who are Singapore Permanent Residents or work-pass holders do not need written authorisation to conduct election activity if they carry out the following types of manual work which is the subject of a contract for services between a candidate (or his election agent) and a person authorised to conduct election activities such as putting up election posters and banners, and taking them down.

#### **4.9. Opening election offices**

Each candidate or his election agent may open one election office per polling district in the electoral division that the candidate is contesting in, but such an office must be outside a radius of 200 metres of any polling station in that electoral division.

The address of every such election office must be registered (online via Candidate Services or in person) with the Returning Officer by the candidate or his election agent before Polling Day.

It is an offence to open or maintain an office at or near a polling station for the purpose of influencing the voters' decisions when casting their votes.

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<sup>27</sup> Set out in the Schedule to the Parliamentary Elections Act

## **5. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES ON COOLING-OFF DAY AND POLLING DAY**

During Cooling-off Day and Polling Day, campaigning is banned and election advertising must not be published. This campaign silence period is to let voters reflect rationally on various issues raised at an election before going to the polls.

### **5.1. Prohibited Activities**

The following acts are not allowed on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day:

- Publication and display of election advertising, including IEA not already lawfully displayed or published<sup>28</sup>;
- Canvassing (e.g. house-to-house visits, visiting homes and workplaces of voters for election purposes);
- Wearing badges/symbols, using, carrying or displaying campaign propaganda (only the candidate is allowed to wear the party badge or a replica of the symbol allotted to him); and
- Holding e-rally livestreams.

Candidates should therefore refrain from visiting electors or attending public events within their electoral divisions on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day. However, attending religious ceremonies or worship services, or attending functions in the course of work or employment would still be permissible.

### **5.2. Exceptions to Prohibitions**

There are some exceptions to the prohibition of campaign activities on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day:

- Party political broadcasts on television;
- Reports in the newspapers, on radio and television relating to election matters;
- Approved posters and banners that were already up, and lawful IEA that was already in place before the start of Cooling-off Day;
- Books previously scheduled for publication;
- The transmission of personal political views by an individual to another individual, on a non-commercial basis, using the Internet, telephone or electronic means; and
- Candidates may continue to wear party logos/badges indicating his affiliation with a political party or a replica of the symbol allotted to him or to the group of candidates to which he belongs under.

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<sup>28</sup> However, the deliberate widening of the reach of paid IEA on Cooling-off Day (even paid IEA that was lawfully published or displayed on the Internet before Cooling-off Day and is unchanged) is not permitted.

## **6. POLLING**

### **6.1. Polling in Singapore**

Voting in Singapore starts at 8 am and ends at 8 pm at all polling stations.

An elector must cast his vote in person and only at the polling station to which he has been assigned.

#### **6.1.1. Safety measures at polling stations (affecting candidates and polling agents)**

The following measures will be in place for candidates and polling agents at polling stations to ensure the safe and smooth conduct of polling:

- a. Temperature screening of candidates and polling agents wishing to enter the polling station. Anyone detected with fever or respiratory symptoms will be refused entry.
- b. Contact tracing: Polling agents and candidates have to use SafeEntry to check-in/out for contact tracing.
- c. Safe distancing: The seating area for election officials and polling agents will be spaced out to keep each person at least 1 metre apart.

### **6.2. Polling at overseas polling stations**

Only persons who have successfully registered themselves as overseas electors may cast their votes at designated overseas polling stations. Once they are registered as overseas electors, they may cast their votes either at the overseas polling station allotted to them or at the polling station located in their allotted electoral divisions in Singapore, but not at both for the same election.

The hours of poll at overseas polling stations will span from four to twelve hours and may be extended beyond twelve hours when necessary. However, an overseas poll must close not later than the close of poll on Polling Day in Singapore.

### **6.3. Persons allowed to enter polling stations**

Unless granted permission by the Returning Officer, the only persons allowed to enter a polling station on Polling Day are:

- the Returning Officer;
- police officers on duty at the polling station and other election staff officially deployed at the polling station;
- voters assigned to vote at the polling station;
- the candidates contesting at the election in that electoral division; and
- the authorised polling agents for that polling station not exceeding

the maximum number and whose names have been notified to the presiding officer (see sections 6.3.1 and 6.5).

#### **6.3.1. Forms that must be produced by candidates/polling agents before entering polling stations**

Polling agents are allowed to enter a polling station on condition that the election agent has informed the presiding officers in writing of the names of the polling agents who are to be stationed at the polling station. If polling agents at the polling station are to change in the course of Polling Day, all the new or substitute names have to be provided to the presiding officer in writing. There is no requirement for the election agent to send a list of names of polling agents to ELD.

Every polling agent must therefore produce a *Form of Oath of Secrecy and an Appointment of Polling Agent*, both duly completed and signed, and his original NRIC or passport to the presiding officer at the main entrance before entering the polling station. After checking, the presiding officer will keep the *Form of Oath of Secrecy and the Appointment of Polling Agent*.

#### **6.4. Understanding the voting process**

The role of polling agents is to observe that polling is carried out in accordance with the law. Hence, it is important that candidates and polling agents are clear with the polling procedures and are aware of a presiding officer's legal powers and duties, so as not to cause unnecessary delay or disruption to the polling process and not to prevent the conduct of free and fair elections according to the law.

Ballot boxes are sealed before the start of poll in such a way that ballot papers cannot be taken out without having to break the tamper-proof seals. At the end of poll, the slits through which marked ballot papers are dropped into the ballot boxes are sealed to ensure that nothing else can be dropped into them.

Each person whose name is on a Register of Electors is entitled to one ballot paper and has only one vote. A voter must also cast his vote in person; no proxy voting is permitted.

To that end, before delivering a ballot paper to a voter, it is the duty of the presiding officer to –

- a. authenticate the identity of the voter standing in front of the presiding officer, by checking the voter's poll card and personal identification document (only the NRIC, passport, or identity cards issued by the Singapore Armed Forces, Singapore Police Force and the Singapore Civil Defence Force are acceptable) <sup>29</sup>;

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<sup>29</sup> eRegistration equipment will be used at polling stations in Singapore and selected overseas polling stations. Voters will be asked to scan their own personal identification document for registration.

- b. ensure that he is a registered elector and to indicate that the voter is given a ballot paper to vote;
- c. check that the ballot paper is authentic, i.e. it bears the official mark on it;
- d. write the voter's serial number on the counterfoil of the ballot paper;
- e. call out the particulars of the voter according to the register;
- f. fold the ballot paper in half; and
- g. hand the ballot paper to the voter, and ask the voter to retrieve his poll card and personal identification document. The voter will use a self-inking "X" pen or his own pen to indicate his choice of vote on the ballot paper clearly and easily.

If the presiding officer ascertains from the Polling Station Register that the voter is registered as an overseas elector, the presiding officer takes one more additional step before handing the ballot paper to the voter; the presiding officer will ask the voter to declare that he has not already cast a vote overseas by signing a statutory form. The presiding officer will proceed to issue the voter with a ballot paper only after the declaration is made.

No ballot paper will be given if the voter's name does not appear in the Register of Electors for that polling station.

No person, except a presiding officer acting for a purpose authorised by the law (i.e. explaining the method of voting or assisting a voter incapacitated by blindness or other physical causes to vote), is allowed to communicate or attempt to communicate with any voter after the voter has received a ballot paper and before the voter has placed it in a ballot box.

A tendered ballot paper (which is blue) will be issued to a person to cast his vote if the person insists on voting even after the presiding officer has explained that according to the Polling Station Register, the person has already voted (i.e. the voter's attendance to vote has already been recorded in the electronic copy of the Polling Station Register of that polling station earlier during Polling Day). Before a tendered ballot paper is given, the person has to first make a declaration as to his identity by signing a statutory form.

If a voter claims that he has made a mistake on the first ballot paper given to him or that he has accidentally spoilt it, the presiding officer may issue the voter another ballot paper. The presiding officer has to take back the spoilt ballot paper and mark "CANCELLED" on it before sealing it in an envelope.

#### Legal powers of presiding officers during voting

The presiding officer or any other person authorised by him may explain the method of voting to a voter who requested him to explain. Polling agents may listen in if they wish to.

The presiding officer may, only on the request of a voter, help the voter to mark his ballot paper if the voter is blind or unable to mark the ballot paper as a result of his physical disability. The presiding officer will mark

the ballot paper according to the voter's directions and then place the ballot paper in the ballot box. No polling agents are allowed to be present when the presiding officer is helping the voter to mark the ballot paper. This is to ensure secrecy in voting. Every presiding officer is under oath to keep the voter's ballot a secret.

If a presiding officer notices that a voter is taking an unusually long time at the polling booth, the presiding officer may also take such steps as are necessary to expedite the process.

#### **6.5. Number of polling agents**

For polling in Singapore, the number of polling agents that may be admitted to a polling station for an electoral division is 1 polling agent per candidate/group of candidates for every 1,000 voters (or part thereof) allotted to vote at a polling station.

For polling overseas, every political party with candidate(s) standing for election and every independent candidate or group of independent candidates may appoint one polling agent to be present at each overseas polling station, regardless of the number of polling places in the overseas polling station. The appointment should be made by a responsible officer of the political party or the election agent/principal election agent of the independent candidate or group of candidates. The polling agents should preferably be appointed from among persons who are registered as an overseas elector to vote at that overseas polling station. The name and appointment of the polling agent in any overseas polling station must be given in writing to the Returning Officer no later than two clear days before the start of poll at that overseas polling station by a responsible officer of the political party or the election agent/principal election agent of the independent candidate or group of candidates.

#### **6.6. Observing the process to transport sealed ballot boxes from the polling stations to the counting centres**

The candidate or his polling agents may observe the process to transport the sealed ballot boxes from the polling stations to the counting centres.

For polling stations that are co-located with or near the counting centres, the candidate or his polling agent may accompany the sealed ballot boxes when they are carried by presiding officers from the polling station to the counting centre. For each polling station, only one person per candidate (or group of candidates in the case of a GRC) will be allowed to participate.

Where a vehicle is used to transport the sealed ballot boxes from the polling stations to the counting centres, the candidate or his polling agent may board the vehicle, provided that he informs the presiding officer at the polling station in advance and completes and signs an *Indemnity Form* before 6 pm on Polling Day. He should be present and ready to board the vehicle after the ballot boxes are sealed and not delay the transportation process. The vehicle will not wait for the candidate or polling agent who is late even if he has submitted his *Indemnity Form* earlier. For each vehicle, only one person per candidate (or group of candidates in the case of a GRC) will be allowed to participate. If there is already one polling agent representing the candidate (or group of



candidates) on the vehicle, any other polling agent representing the same candidate (or group of candidates) will not be allowed to board. Candidates will be notified in advance of the sequence of the polling stations that the vehicle serves.

#### **6.7. Things that candidates/polling agents are allowed to do/prohibited from doing**

Bear in mind that voting is compulsory. As such, it is an offence for candidates and polling agents to dissuade someone from giving his vote at an election.

Candidates and polling agents must wear their official identification tags at all times while in any polling station. However, only the candidate will be allowed to wear party logos when visiting polling stations in the electoral division he seeks election.

The sealing of ballot boxes at the opening of the poll and at the close of the poll may be witnessed by candidates and their polling agents, but the attendance of the candidate and/or his polling agent at these proceedings is not compulsory under the law. In order to ensure that polling and counting start on time without delay, presiding officers can and will proceed with the sealing even if the candidates or their polling agents are absent. Hence, candidates and polling agents should take note of the time that the sealing of ballot boxes will take place (i.e. 7.50 am before the start of poll and 8 pm at the close of poll). They must be punctual if they wish to observe the sealing of the ballot boxes.

Polling agents who want to keep track as to who has voted should pay close attention when presiding officers are reading out the particulars of the voters. Polling agents are not allowed to compare their copies of the registers against the presiding officers' Polling Station Registers to confirm the voters who have/have not voted.

A polling agent who needs to leave his place at the polling station must leave his own copy of the Register of Electors at that polling station. This is to ensure that any information as to the name or number on the Register of Electors of any voter who has or has not been given a ballot paper or voted at that station is not divulged.

A candidate or a polling agent authorised to be in attendance at a polling station may, before the poll closes, ask a presiding officer for the total number of voters who have voted at the polling station. However, the presiding officer has the discretion to decide whether he can accede to the request for information; the presiding officer will try his best to answer but his priority under the law remains the continuous and orderly conduct of the poll at the polling station.

At the close of poll, candidates and their polling agents may observe the packing of election materials into envelopes and affix their seals or sign on the envelopes if they wish to do so. They may also affix their seals or sign on the ballot boxes after the presiding officers have completed sealing of the ballot boxes at the close of poll. However, candidates and their polling agents must be careful not to paste over the Returning Officer's seals or damage the Returning Officer's seals in the process.

## **6.8. Maintaining secrecy of voting**

Candidates and polling agents who are present at a polling station must maintain secrecy of voting at all times. They have to take their oaths of secrecy and must give their completed forms to the presiding officer before entering the polling station, i.e. candidates and polling agents have to approach a Justice of the Peace or Commissioner for Oaths beforehand. In order to allow election officials to focus on the conduct of polling, they will not assist to administer oaths of secrecy for candidates and polling agents.

It is important to bear in mind that before the poll closes, everyone is prohibited (except for purposes authorised by law) from communicating to any person any information as to the name or number on the Register of Electors of any voter who has or has not been given a ballot paper or voted at that station, or as to the official mark.

Maintaining secrecy in voting at the polling station also means that no person shall try to find out, or to communicate to any person, which candidate a voter in the station is about to vote or has voted for, or the number on the back of the ballot paper given to any voter at the polling station.

The use of handphones, video- and photo-taking devices and smoking are strictly prohibited within a polling station.

## **7. COUNTING OF VOTES AND DECLARATION OF ELECTION RESULTS**

### **7.1. Counting of votes cast in Singapore**

Counting of votes cast in Singapore is conducted immediately after the close of the poll in Singapore. This usually takes place on the night of Polling Day and may continue into the early hours of the next day.

Votes cast in Singapore at a poll for an electoral division may be counted at a single counting place, or at several counting places and then added together at a single principal counting place/centre.

Counting agents and candidates who wish to observe counting of votes at counting centres must be physically well. Counting agents and candidates are to take note of and comply with the following measures:

- a. Do not turn up at the counting centre if they are unwell. Counting agents and candidates who have fever will not be allowed into the counting centre;
- b. Counting agents and candidates will have to use SafeEntry to check-in/out for contract tracing;
- c. Wear a mask at all times when inside the counting centre; and
- d. Maintain safe distancing within the counting centre.

Immediately after the close of polls, the slits on the ballot boxes through which ballot papers are dropped into the boxes are sealed up. Together with other election documents, the ballot boxes are brought to the assigned counting places for counting of the votes.

Counting will start as soon as all the ballot boxes which are designated for counting at the same counting place have been received.

### **7.2. Counting of votes cast overseas**

All ballot papers cast in overseas polling stations must be sent back to Singapore for counting within 10 days after Polling Day. In addition, the Returning Officer may extend time by another 7 days for the sealed ballot boxes from any overseas polling stations to reach Singapore if two conditions are fulfilled. First, where the total number of overseas electors is material to the election outcome. Second, where the Returning Officer is satisfied that any of such ballot boxes are not likely to reach Singapore within the initial 10-day period. The Returning Officer will designate a place or places where the counting of overseas votes takes place. Candidates and their counting agents may be present during the counting.

Counting will usually be conducted at one central location after mixing the votes from all overseas polling stations. The rules relating to the counting, recounting and rejection of votes cast locally are generally applicable to votes cast overseas (with slight modifications: see section 7.9.1).

After all counting is completed, the ballot papers and other election

materials from these overseas polling stations will also be sealed up in the same manner as those cast and used locally.

### **7.3. Counting places and principal counting centres**

Counting of votes for each electoral division may be done at one or more counting places. Each counting place will be designated to count the votes cast at one or more polling stations. The counting place may or may not be a polling station, and need not be within the electoral division the votes for which are to be counted.

Usually, four to six of such counting places are grouped together in a single venue. This venue is commonly referred to as a counting centre. The address of each counting place will be announced through Gazette notification by the Returning Officer at least two clear days before Polling Day.

If an electoral division has more than one counting place, the Returning Officer will also designate a principal counting place (which may or may not be a counting place for that electoral division) where the votes counted at every counting place for the electoral division will be added or tallied up. Individual count of votes done at each counting place will be transmitted to the principal counting place where votes cast in favour of each candidate (or group of candidates) contesting in that electoral division are added up to obtain the total number of votes cast for each candidate (or group of candidates).

### **7.4. Persons allowed to enter counting centres/principal counting centres**

Without the Returning Officer's permission, no persons other than the following are entitled to be present during counting of votes at a counting centre:

- the Returning Officer and other persons appointed by the Returning Officer to assist him at the counting centre;
- candidates contesting in the electoral division the votes of which are to be counted at that counting centre; and
- not more than one counting agent per counting place representing each candidate or group of candidates.

At the principal counting centre, in addition to the Returning Officer and such other officers and staff appointed by him to assist him in adding the votes, candidates and their election agents or, where the votes to be added relate to a group of candidates, the candidates in the group and their principal election agents may also be present at the addition of votes.

If a principal counting place is also a counting place where a counting agent is stationed, then he may also be present at the addition of votes.

#### **7.4.1. Forms that must be produced by candidates/counting agents before entering counting centres**

Every counting agent must produce a *Form of Oath of Secrecy*

*and a Letter of Appointment of Counting Agent* (EC 18/EC 125), both duly completed and signed, and his NRIC or passport at the main entrance before entering the counting place. Candidates and their election agents or principal election agents (as the case may be) will also need to produce a duly completed and signed *Form of Oath of Secrecy* (EC 18).

## **7.5. Understanding the counting process**

At each counting centre, candidates and counting agents may observe the pre-count testing of counting machines to be used for verification. At each counting place, the counting of the votes must begin as soon as all the ballot boxes containing the ballot papers to be counted at that counting place are received. Although candidates and their counting agents are allowed to observe the counting process, the counting will not be halted just because candidates or their counting agents are not present.

Candidates and counting agents who are present will be invited to inspect the ballot boxes before they are opened for counting. When the ballot boxes are opened, the Assistant Returning Officer and his counting assistants shall pour the ballot papers out of the boxes onto the counting table. All the ballot papers will then be mixed together before sorting between candidates or groups of candidates begins.

During the counting process, the Assistant Returning Officer will conduct a sample count to obtain an early indication of the possible outcome of the election in an electoral division, and to help election officials check against the final count result.

While the backs of ballot papers are necessarily exposed to some extent when the folded ballot papers are opened, the Assistant Returning Officer and his staff will, throughout sorting and counting, keep the ballot papers with their faces upwards, and take all precautions for preventing any person from seeing the numbers printed on the back of the ballot papers. During sorting or counting, no one should attempt to read the number printed at the back of each ballot paper. Any attempt at the count to do so is an offence.

The sorting and counting process must be carried out continuously<sup>30</sup>, so candidates and their counting agents should avoid interrupting the process.

Tendered votes will not be counted at this time. They will only be sorted according to the candidate or group of candidates they support and then sealed.

### Legal powers of Assistant Returning Officers

During the count, the functions of the Assistant Returning Officer in charge of a counting place are focused on determining whether a ballot paper should be rejected or counted.

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<sup>30</sup> Election officials at counting centres will take scheduled breaks every 90 minutes for washing of hands to maintain personal hygiene.

Under the law, the following ballot papers must be rejected:

- a. a ballot paper which does not bear the complete official mark for the authentication of ballot papers or is not initialled by the presiding officer;
- b. a ballot paper on which votes are given for more than one candidate or group of candidates;
- c. a ballot paper on which anything is written or marked by which the voter can be identified e.g. a voter signs or writes his name or NRIC number;
- d. a ballot paper which is unmarked; and
- e. a ballot paper which is void for uncertainty.

As the ballot paper shall clearly demarcate the area within which a voter must mark his vote for a candidate, Assistant Returning Officers are required under the law to only consider the marks made by voters within the demarcated area on ballot papers. If a voter makes a mark outside of the demarcated area, the Assistant Returning Officer must disregard that mark when determining whether the voter has given his vote to any candidate.

A ballot paper on which the vote is marked otherwise than by means of a cross or by more than one marking will not be treated as void if the intention of the voter as to which candidate he wishes to give the vote to is clear, and the way the paper is marked does not of itself identify the voter.

The Assistant Returning Officer indicates his decision to reject any ballot paper as invalid by endorsing the word "REJECTED" on the ballot paper. Before doing so, the Assistant Returning Officer must show the ballot paper to candidates or their counting agents who are present at the counting place and hear their views. The decision of the Assistant Returning Officer whether any ballot paper shall be rejected is final.

When counting is completed at a counting place, the Assistant Returning Officer will orally announce the number of votes given to each candidate (or group of candidates) and his counting agents who are present at the counting place. If there is a principal counting place, the Assistant Returning Officer shall transmit by any available means the results of the counting of votes at the counting place, as well as dispatch/deliver the sealed certified record of counting, to the principal counting place for tallying of votes.

#### **7.6. Number of counting agents**

For counting of votes cast in Singapore, each candidate or group of candidates may appoint only one counting agent to observe the counting at each counting place. There can be more than one counting place in a counting centre.

For counting of votes cast overseas, each candidate or group of candidates may appoint only one counting agent to observe the counting.

### **7.7. Things that the candidates and counting agents are allowed to do/prohibited from doing**

Candidates and counting agents must wear their official identification tags at all time. Candidates and their counting agents may observe the counting process from behind the yellow demarcation line. However, they should not interfere with the counting process. They should at no time attempt to read the number printed on the back of a ballot paper.

Before rejecting a ballot paper which is unmarked or does not show clearly the intention of the voter, the Assistant Returning Officer at each counting place will show the ballot paper to candidates and their counting agents (if present). Candidates and counting agents may give their views on the ballot paper in question, but the decision of the Assistant Returning Officer on the validity of the ballot paper is final.

When all the ballot papers at the counting place have been counted, the Assistant Returning Officer will announce the result over the table. The ballot papers and other election materials will then be sealed up in ballot boxes if no recount of the votes cast is to be conducted. Candidates and their counting agents may affix their seals or sign on these boxes, if they so desire. But they should be careful not to paste over the Returning Officer's seals or damage the Returning Officer's seals in the process.

The use of handphones, video- and photo-taking devices in the hall where counting takes place is prohibited to safeguard the secrecy of the vote. Candidates and their counting agents may however use their devices outside the hall. Smoking is not allowed in the counting centre or principal counting centre.

### **7.8. Recounts**

The Returning Officer must conduct one (and only one) recount of the votes if the difference between the number of votes cast in favour of the candidate/group of candidates with the most votes and the number of votes cast in favour of any other candidate is equal to or less than 2% of the total number of votes cast (excluding rejected votes and tendered votes) at the election.

During the recount, all valid votes cast for the electoral division are recounted. No recounting of overseas votes will be conducted if the overseas votes have no impact on the election outcome (i.e. the Returning Officer has already declared the candidate or group of candidates to whom the greatest number of votes is given to be elected on Polling Day).

If the overseas votes have an impact on the election results, i.e. the number of overseas votes has brought the margin of difference of total number of votes (sum of local and overseas votes) cast between the two candidates or groups of candidates with the highest number of votes within the 2% margin, only one recount of the overseas votes will be conducted.

## **7.9. Announcement of results**

When counting is completed for all the votes cast at an electoral division (including the recount, if any), the Group Assistant Returning Officer at the principal counting place for that electoral division will tally the number of votes given to each candidate (or group of candidates) for that electoral division based on the records of counting received. Once this is ascertained, the Group Assistant Returning Officer will announce the number of votes given to each candidate (or group of candidates) to the candidates and their principal election agents/counting agents who are present at the principal counting place. The Returning Officer will announce the result for the electoral division concerned and declare the candidate or, as the case may be, the group of candidates elected to the mass media for dissemination to the public.

### **7.9.1. Impact of votes cast overseas**

If the total number of overseas electors entitled to vote at the election is less than the difference between the candidates (or groups of candidates) with the two highest numbers of votes, the Returning Officer will declare the candidate (or group of candidates) with the highest number of votes to be elected.

If the total number of overseas electors is equal to or more than the difference between the top two candidates (or groups of candidates), then the Returning Officer will announce the votes cast locally for each candidate (or group of candidates), and the date and venue at which the ballot papers cast overseas will be counted.

## **7.10. General advisory at polling stations, counting centres and principal counting centres**

### Parking and security arrangements

Candidates are reminded that no parking will be allowed at polling stations, counting centres and principal counting centres unless the vehicle has the appropriate ELD label. Within each closed polling station, there will be special drop-off points for vehicles conveying the sick, infirmed or disabled persons. Drivers can approach the election officials or police officers on duty for assistance and direction. Police will put in place security measures in and around polling stations, counting centres and principal counting centres. Security checks will also be conducted at the polling stations, counting centres and principal counting centres. Candidates, Polling and Counting Agents are advised not to bring sharp object(s), flammable liquids or gas, bulky items or big bags.

In general, candidates and voters are advised to take public transport or walk to the Polling Stations. They should also not loiter around the vicinity of the Polling Stations without valid reasons.

### Election passes

Candidates, polling agents and counting agents may keep their election passes after the election is over.



## 8. CYBERSECURITY

- 8.1. In recent years, there have been reports of threat actors launching cyber-attacks during elections and compromising Information Technology (IT) systems used by political parties and candidates in an attempt to disrupt the election process in various countries. The same may happen during our General Election.
- 8.2. Candidates and political parties are responsible for their own cybersecurity, and need to strengthen their cybersecurity posture, and take precautionary measures to protect their assets and online presence. This includes all **IT infrastructure including any smartphone, computer and computing device, online and social media assets, as well as data storage and management.**
- 8.3. Candidates and political parties should:
- Appoint someone to take charge of their political party's cybersecurity matters.
  - Consider appointing a professional cybersecurity vendor to review and manage the cybersecurity posture for their party, as well as to deal with any cybersecurity incident.
- 8.4. If candidates and political parties suspect their account(s) or system(s) have been compromised or misused, they should lodge a police report immediately, and also keep ELD informed.
- 8.5. To resolve the issue:
- Contact the relevant email or social media service providers for issues related to your email or social media accounts; and
  - Contact your appointed cybersecurity vendor if there is any issue with your IT infrastructure.
- 8.6. Candidates and political parties may refer to CSA's Advisory to Political Parties on Cybersecurity Risks and Precautionary Measures which can be found at ELD website. The advisory provides information on some of the potential cyber threats and good practices that political parties and candidates can take to manage and mitigate the risks.

## **9. POST-ELECTION**

### **9.1. Application to void an election**

Applications to void an election in any electoral division, of a candidate as an MP, may be made under section 90 of the Parliamentary Elections Act. Such applications are to be heard by an Election Judge, who may be the Chief Justice or a Judge of the Supreme Court as nominated by the Chief Justice.

The election of the candidate may be declared void if the Election Judge is satisfied –

- a. that by reason of general bribery, general treating, or general intimidation, or other misconduct, or other circumstances, whether similar to those before enumerated or not, the majority of electors were or may have been prevented from electing the candidate or group of candidates whom they preferred;
- b. non-compliance with the provisions of the Parliamentary Elections Act relating to elections, if it appears that the election was not conducted in accordance with the principles laid down in those provisions and that the non-compliance affected the result of the election;
- c. that a Corrupt Practice or Illegal Practice was committed in connection with the election by the candidate or with his knowledge or consent or by any agent of the candidate;
- d. that the candidate personally engaged a person as his election agent, or as a canvasser or agent, knowing that the person had, within 7 years prior to the engagement, been convicted or found guilty of a corrupt practice by a District Court or by the report of an Election Judge; or
- e. that the candidate was at the time of his election a person disqualified for election as MP.

The application to void an election may be made only by –

- any person who had voted at the election or had a right to vote at the election;
- a person who claims to have had a right to be returned or elected at the election; or
- a person alleging himself to have been a candidate at the election.

The application to void an election must usually be made within 21 days after the date of publication of the final election results for that electoral division in the Government Gazette.

The Election Judge may, on hearing the application decide that –

- a. the election is void;
- b. the return of a person elected was undue;

- c. a candidate was duly elected and ought to have been returned;  
or
- d. a scrutiny be held if the seat is claimed for an unsuccessful candidate on the ground that he or the group of candidates to whom he belongs had a majority of lawful votes.

However, this does not include questioning the decisions made by the Assistant Returning Officers in the adjudication of votes.

When the trial for the application is concluded, the Election Judge determines the outcome of the application and informs the President as to how he has determined the application. If the case so requires, the President will order the holding of an election in the electoral division concerned within one month of the determination.

## **9.2. Destruction of ballot papers**

After the count, all ballot papers and their counterfoils will be sealed in the Supreme Court vault for six months, after which all the ballot papers and other election documents are destroyed. During those six months, these documents can only be retrieved by court order. The court will issue such an order only if it is satisfied that a vote has been fraudulently cast and the result of the election may be affected as a result. Our courts have issued no such order since elections have been held here since 1948.

## **9.3. Post-election activities**

As large group gatherings are not allowed in Phase 2 of Post Circuit Breaker, Police will not grant permits for Thank-you vehicular processions after Polling Day. This is because such processions tend to attract crowds. Unlike campaigning activities, they are not critical to the campaigning process.

## 10. ELECTION FINANCE

### 10.1. Limit on the amount that can be spent

To ensure a level-playing field and to prevent 'money politics', the law imposes a ceiling on the amount that may be incurred by way of election expenses.

Election expenses means expenses incurred, whether before, during or after the election by a candidate or his election agent on account of or in respect of the conduct or management of the election of the candidate, but not the following expenses:

- any expenditure incurred by the candidate for his personal expenses; and
- any fee paid to the election agent not exceeding \$500.

The maximum spending limit for election expenses is currently \$4.00 for every elector on the Register of Electors for the electoral division that the candidate is seeking election to be an MP.

If a candidate is contesting as part of a group of candidates in a GRC, the maximum spending limit per candidate in the group is determined as follows:

Maximum spending limit per candidate	
<b>SMC</b>	$(\$4.00 \times E)$
<b>4-member GRC</b>	$(\$4.00 \times E) \div 4$
<b>5-member GRC</b>	$(\$4.00 \times E) \div 5$

Where E is the total number of electors in the Register of Electors for the electoral division

Spending in excess of the maximum spending limit is an Illegal Practice.

### 10.2. Election expenses generally must be paid by election agent

In general, payments for election expenses can only be made by or through a candidate's election agent. Accordingly, even though a candidate may be permitted to enter into a contract whereby election expenses are incurred, the candidate cannot pay those expenses unless he is his own election agent.

Furthermore, all gifts, loans, advances or deposits provided by any person for any election expenses must be paid to the candidate or his election agent and not otherwise.

These restrictions have been imposed by law to prevent loopholes in the control over spending on election expenses. No person other than the election agent can make payment, and the election agent cannot plead ignorance of what payments have been made by others.

There are, however, a number of exceptions to this restriction:

- a. any payments made by the Returning Officer;
- b. any payments which are made by the candidate for personal expenses incurred by him on account of or in connection with or incidental to the election up to \$1,000;
- c. any payments which are made by the candidate in respect of claims for election expenses sent in late, or disputed claims for election expenses, pursuant to a court order;
- d. any expenses for stationery, postage, telephonic communication (or any other similar means of communication) and other petty expenses which are paid by a person authorised in writing by the election agent;
- e. any expenses which are paid by the candidate's political party in accordance with the authorisation of the candidate's election agent in writing; and
- f. any sum disbursed by any person out of his own money for any small expense legally incurred by himself, if the sum is not repaid to him.

A candidate should therefore ensure that the election agent he appoints is involved in all budgeting and financial decisions related to the campaign and is consulted before electoral campaign expenses are incurred.

A candidate should also ensure that only the election agent or a person authorised in writing by the election agent incurs campaign expenses.

A candidate must ensure that all money received for election purposes is turned over to the election agent for deposit.

### **10.3. Personal expenses incurred by candidates**

A candidate may pay for personal expenses incurred as a result of the election, such as travelling and accommodation expenses up to \$1,000. The balance unpaid can be the subject of a claim by the candidate against the election agent, which must be made within 14 days of the publication of the election results in the Government Gazette.

### **10.4. Political party and sub-agents paying election expenses**

Election expenses incurred for a candidate can be paid by the candidate's political party, or an authorised officer of the party, in accordance with the written authorisation of the candidate's election agent. The authorisation can set limits as to the amount and type of expenses that can be paid for.

An election agent of any candidate standing as part of a group in a GRC may authorise, in writing, any of the election agents of the other candidates in the same group to act on his behalf as sub-agent to incur election expenses on the candidate's behalf.

Any expenses paid by political parties and GRC sub-agents should be included in the candidates' election expenses returns. Expenditure to implement cybersecurity measures would not be considered election expenses. Expenses incurred by political parties or candidates to respond to cyber-attacks are also not considered as election expenses to be included in the candidates' election expenses returns. Similarly, expenses to procure sanitisation/safe distancing products and services need not be included in candidates' returns of election expenses, unless such items are given out to members of the public as part of candidates' campaigning efforts.

It is the election agent's responsibility to ensure that all particulars and supporting documents relating to election expenses are collected and preserved for the purposes of the return on election expenses that the election agent has to submit to the Returning Officer after the election. This includes supporting documents relating to any expenses paid by political parties and GRC sub-agents.

#### **10.5. Requirement to retain bill, receipts, records of payment and written authority to incur election expenses for a specified period**

Each payment made in relation to election expenses has to be vouched for by a receipt and a bill stating the particulars. Bills and receipts are not necessary if the payment does not exceed \$10 or where a receipt is not obtainable by nature of the payment, such as travel by rail or postage. Where the expenses are incurred by a person so authorised on behalf of the election agent, the written authority from the election agent shall also accompany the payment.

Candidates and election agents do not need to submit supporting documents, such as bills and receipts, or the written authority from an election agent to incur expenses, when submitting their returns on election expenses to the Returning Officer. However, candidates and election agents are required to keep the supporting documents for the return on election expenses for a period of one year after notice of the return is published. During this one-year period, the Returning Officer may require the candidate or the election agent, or both of them, to furnish any supporting document or any other information relating to the return. Failure to comply with the Returning Officer's instruction constitutes an Illegal Practice.

#### **10.6. Claims**

All claims have to be sent to the election agent within 14 days of the date of publication of the election results in the Government Gazette. In general, all payments must be made by the election agents within 28 days of the afore-mentioned date.

#### **10.7. Returns respecting election expenses and declaration by candidate and election agent**

The election agents of all candidates who contest in a General Election must submit a *Return Respecting Election Expenses and Declaration by*

*Candidate and Election agent* (Form 19<sup>31</sup>) to the Returning Officer within 31 days after the day on which the result of the election is published in the Gazette. These returns are required to ensure accountability and transparency in the candidates' campaign finance. The returns may be submitted online via Candidate Services or in person.

The election agent is required to provide a summary of all expenditure according to the following categories:

- a. Election advertising expenses:
  - For print election advertising
  - For Internet election advertising
  - For other non-print election advertising
- b. Election meeting expenses<sup>32</sup>
  - For rallies
  - For assembly centres
- c. Transport expenses
- d. Office rental and office supplies expenses
- e. Allowances for election agent, polling agent(s) and counting agent(s)
- f. Other expenses
- g. Personal expenses of candidate

Candidates are to note that the amount of expenses incurred on paid IEA is to be clearly stated. Expenses for "print election advertising" refer to expenses incurred which are related to print election advertising such as the printing of posters, manpower to put up posters. Expenses for "Internet election advertising" refer to expenses related to paid IEA, such as payment for social media sponsored posts and website banner ads. Expenses for "other non-print election advertising" refer to expenses related to the hosting or designing of a party/candidate website, etc. (See **Annex D** for more examples).

The returns will be made available for public inspection for six months.

### **10.8. Post-election Donation Report and Post-election Declaration**

A candidate and his election agent must also submit a *Post-election Donation Report* and *Post-Election Declaration* (Forms 6 & 7)<sup>33</sup> to the Registrar of Political Donations at the same time as the returns of elections expenses. The reporting period to be covered by the Post-

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<sup>31</sup> The previous *Return Respecting Election Expenses and Declarations by Candidate and Election Agent* have been streamlined into a single new Form 19 for General Election 2020.

<sup>32</sup> These will not be applicable for General Election 2020 as no Police permits will be granted for any election meetings, including rallies and gatherings at Assembly Centres on Counting Night.

<sup>33</sup> Set out in the Schedule to the Political Donations Regulations.

election Donation Report begins on the date of the candidate's *Pre-election Declaration* and ends on the date of the candidate's *Post-election Declaration*. The forms must reach the Registrar of Political Donations within 31 days after the publication of the statement of the poll.

As the details of donations would have been set out in the *Return of Election Expenses* form, the *Post-election Donation Report* and *Post-election Declaration* requires disclosure only of details of any single donation accepted in the reporting period amounting to \$10,000 or more, and any series of donations from the same permissible donor adding up to \$10,000 or more, accepted during the reporting period. Together with the *Post-election Donation Report*, candidates must declare that they have not received any anonymous donation totaling \$5,000 or more. For more details on political donations, candidates and election agents should read the Political Donations Act 2000 Handbook, Part III of the Political Donations Act and the Political Donations Regulations.



## **11. CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES**

### **11.1. Corrupt Practices**

A person convicted of a Corrupt Practice under the Parliamentary Elections Act will not be allowed to do the following things for seven years from the date of his conviction:

- a. register as an elector;
- b. vote at an election;
- c. be elected as the President or an MP; and
- d. be appointed as an election agent.

If he is convicted while he is an MP, he will have to vacate his office immediately from the date of his conviction.

The following acts constitute Corrupt Practices under the Parliamentary Elections Act:

- a. aiding, abetting, advising or getting hold of a person to cast the vote in the name of someone else (personation);
- b. treating, undue influence or bribery as defined in the Parliamentary Elections Act;
- c. during the period beginning from the day the Writ of Election is issued for an election and ending on the start of Polling Day at the election, publish any election advertising (in print, Internet or otherwise) which does not bear the names of its printer (as the case may be), its publisher and the person for whom the election advertising is published (see the “published-by” requirements in sections 4.5.1.3 and 4.5.2 of this handbook);
- d. make or publish, before or during any election, for the purpose of affecting the return of any candidate, any false statement of fact in relation to the personal character or conduct of the candidate;
- e. make or publish, before or during any election, for the purpose of promoting or procuring the election of any candidate, any false statement of the withdrawal of any other candidate at the election; or
- f. being a candidate or election agent, knowingly make the declaration as to election expenses falsely.

### **11.2. Illegal Practices**

A person convicted of an Illegal Practice under the Parliamentary Elections Act will not be allowed to do the following things for three years from the date of his conviction:

- a. register as an elector;
- b. vote at an election; and
- c. be elected as the President or an MP.

If he is convicted while he is an MP, he will have to vacate his office immediately from the date of his conviction.

It is an Illegal Practice for candidates to spend more than the maximum amount allowable under the law. But take note that this amount does not include candidates' personal expenses or fees paid to their election agents that amount to \$500 or less.

It is also an Illegal Practice to expend on the following acts for the purpose of swaying the voters' choice of candidate (or group of candidates):

- a. convey voters to and from the poll whether by means of hiring any form of transport or otherwise;
- b. pay any elector or voter to use a house, land, building or premises for the exhibition of an address, bill or notice; or
- c. pay any elector or voter to exhibit an address, bill or notice.

No one is allowed to let, lend, employ, hire, borrow or use a vehicle for the transportation of electors or voters to or from the polling station, except when the vehicle is used to transport himself or his immediate family members to and from the polling station.

Election agents may also commit an Illegal Practice if they do not follow the law relating to (a) claims and payments; and (b) returns and declarations, for election expenses. In relation to (a), they should not make any payment to a claim if the claim is made to them after 14 days from the date of publication of the election results in the Government Gazette. They should also ensure that if a claim is made legally, the payment must be made with 28 days of the afore-mentioned date.

## 12. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### 12.1. Do's and Don'ts for Candidates

This list is not exhaustive.

DO's	DON'TS
PRE-NOMINATION	
Do familiarise yourself with the law on parliamentary elections.	Do not consider yourself divested of all responsibility for complying with election law by appointing an election agent.
<p>Do apply early to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Registrar of Political Donations for a Political Donation Certificate; and</li> <li>the Malay Community Committee or the Indian and Other Minority Communities Committee if you intend to stand for election in a GRC.</li> </ul>	<p>Do not wait until the two days before Nomination Day to apply to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Registrar of Political Donations for a Political Donation Certificate; and</li> <li>the Malay Community Committee or the Indian and Other Minority Communities Committee if you intend to stand for election in a GRC.</li> </ul>
<p>Do fill up your name and particulars, and ensure that the names and particulars of your proposer, seconder and assentors in the current Registers of Electors are filled up correctly in Form 9 or 9A. All forms should be filled in English and all fields should be completed (by filling in and/or crossing out the relevant portions).</p> <p>Make sure the proposer, seconder and assentors are all registered voters in the electoral division which you seek election in.</p>	Do not leave any blanks in Form 9 or 9A, including any part that requires a signature.
Do ensure that you consent to being a candidate and make the	Do not make a false declaration regarding your qualifications to

DO's	DON'TS
<p>declarations required under Section B in Form 9 or 9A before a Commissioner for Oaths of a Justice of the Peace.</p>	<p>stand for election as an MP. In the case of an election in a GRC, do not make a false declaration as to which party you are standing for or as to whether you are an independent candidate.</p>
NOMINATION DAY	
<p>Do ensure that you have your nomination papers and the required number of proposer, seconder and assentors to gain entry into the Nomination Place.</p> <p>Do appoint an authorised representative with Power of Attorney, if you are unwell and not able to turn up at the Nomination Place</p>	<p>Do not go to the Nomination Centre with any proposer, seconder and assentor who is unwell. The unwell person will not be allowed to enter the Nomination Centre.</p>
<p>Do present your nomination papers together with the Political Donation Certificate and (in the case of an election in a GRC) the Certificate(s) from the Malay Community Committee or the Indian and Other Minority Communities Committee personally to the Returning Officer at the designated place of nomination on Nomination Day for that election. Do deliver all the requisite documents in duplicate. Do bring along your NRIC or passport.</p>	<p>Do not forget to be accompanied by your proposer, seconder and at least four assentors named in your nomination paper.</p> <p>Do not forget to bring along your NRIC or passport when you deliver your nomination papers and other certificates in duplicate at the place of nomination on Nomination Day for that election.</p>
<p>Do remember to pay the election deposit in full before 12 noon of Nomination Day. Do remember to submit the receipt issued as proof of payment.</p>	<p>Do not issue a personal cheque or cash to pay the election deposit; the acceptable modes of payment are electronic funds transfer, certified cheques and bank drafts.</p>
CAMPAIGNING PERIOD	
<p>Do campaign in a responsible and dignified manner that befits the seriousness of the election process.</p>	<p>Do not engage in negative campaigning based on hate and denigration of opposing candidates.</p>

DO's	DON'TS
	Do not make false statements, false allegations of corruption or commission of criminal offences, or statements that may cause racial or religious tensions or affect social cohesion.
<p>Do appoint an election agent before any campaign contributions are accepted, or any election expenses are incurred.</p> <p>Do ensure that proper accounts of the election expenses are maintained and make sure that your election agent understands his role and obligations.</p>	<p>Do not allow anyone other than the following persons to incur your electoral campaign expenses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Election agent;</li> <li>• Political party (or authorised officer of the party) for whom you are standing for election (with written authorisation from your election agent); and</li> <li>• Election agents of other candidates in the same GRC group (with written authorisation from the candidate's election agent).</li> </ul>
Do submit a copy of each type of poster and a design of each banner to the Returning Officer before causing them to be displayed.	Do not allow the display of small or large printed election advertising in excess of the maximum numbers specified in the permit issued by the Returning Officer.
<p>Do ensure that every poster and banner displayed (including those on the perambulating vehicles) is affixed a stamp bearing the official mark of the Returning Officer.</p> <p>Do remove all posters and banners within the period specified by the Returning Officer after Polling Day.</p>	<p>Do not display posters and banners within a radius of 50 metres of any polling station.</p> <p>Do not remove or deface the posters and banners displayed by other parties and candidates.</p>
Do submit to the Returning Officer the particulars of everyone whom you or your election agent has authorised in writing to conduct election activity.	Do not issue the written authority to conduct election activity until the end of Nomination Day proceedings.

<b>DO's</b>	<b>DON'TS</b>
<p>Do register your election office or offices with the Returning Officer before Polling Day.</p>	<p>Do not set up your election office within a radius of 200 metres of any polling station.</p> <p>Do not set up more than one election office for each polling district in the electoral division that you are contesting in.</p>
<p>Do declare to the Returning Officer all IEAs (whether on an Internet platform or using communication services such as private messaging services)–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) within 12 hours after the start of the campaign period; and</li> <li>b) in advance before any Internet election advertising is published after those 12 hours.</li> </ul> <p>Do declare to the Returning Officer if the IEA is paid IEA, and if so, provide further information such as the particulars of the publisher of the paid IEA, the period that the paid IEA will appear for, and the source of funding for the paid IEA (i.e. whether money was received from the candidate or his election agent, his political party or any other person).</p>	<p>Do not omit the necessary information in your declaration to the Returning Officer (i.e. sufficient particulars to allow access to the Internet platform or online account; identify the person who owns or operates the Internet platform or online account; or identify and contact the publisher).</p>
<p>Do apply for a Police procession permit if you or your party members and election workers wish to use goods vehicles fitted with audio broadcasters and/or elections related posters and banners for campaigning purposes.</p>	<p>Do not engage in election activities that involve large group gatherings as they are not allowed under the prevailing MOH guidelines. Given the prevailing guidelines, no Police permits will be granted for any election meetings, including rallies and gatherings at Assembly Centres on Counting Night for supporters</p>

DO's	DON'TS
	to wait for election results.
Do ensure that your polling agents, counting agents or other supporters do not wear, carry or display any badge, symbol, flag, advertisement, poster and placard as political propaganda on the eve of Polling Day and Polling Day.	Do not canvass for votes, distribute election advertising or undertake any campaigning activities on eve of Polling Day and Polling Day.
Do ensure that your election agent appoints your polling agents early and notifies the presiding officers in writing of the particulars of polling agents who will be present at that polling station.	Do not allow more polling agents prescribed for any local polling station, or more than one polling agent per overseas polling station, to be appointed.
POLLING DAY	
Do remember to complete the <i>Form of Oath of Secrecy</i> and bring it with you when you visit the first polling station in the electoral division that you are standing in.	Do not breach the requirements on secrecy of the ballot. This is an essential part of our democracy.
Do comply and ensure that your polling agents comply with all reasonable requests made by election officials in the polling station to ensure smooth and orderly poll.	Do not interfere with the work of the polling officials or any aspect of the polling process.  Do not use threats, intimidation, deception or fraud to persuade voters to vote in a particular way.
Do be present at the polling station at 7.45 am before polling begins, and at 8 pm at the close of polling, if you and your polling agent wish to witness the sealing of the ballot boxes.	Do not communicate to any person the name or number on the Register of Electors of any elector who has or has not voted at the polling station.  Your polling agents must not take their copies of Register of Electors with them when they leave the polling stations.

DO's	DON'TS
BALLOT BOX TRANSPORTATION	
<p>Do submit the <i>Indemnity</i> Form in advance if you are boarding the vehicle.</p> <p>Do decide in advance the person who will be boarding the vehicle.</p> <p>Do observe the rules stated in the <i>Indemnity</i> Form.</p>	<p>Do not touch the sealed ballot box.</p> <p>Do not smoke, eat or drink on-board the vehicle.</p> <p>Do not use any photography, audio or videography equipment while onboard the vehicle.</p>
COUNTING	
<p>Do appoint your counting agents well ahead in time. You may appoint one counting agent at every counting place in the electoral division you are contesting in to observe the proceedings of the count. For counting of votes cast overseas, you may appoint one counting agent to observe the counting.</p>	<p>Do not forget to issue the written authority to the persons acting as your counting agent. Without this form, the election officials can refuse permission for a counting agent to enter the counting centre.</p> <p>Do not touch the ballot papers during the counting of votes. Do not attempt to read the serial number printed at the back of each ballot paper at any time.</p>
POST-ELECTION	
<p>Remove all posters and banners after Polling Day. This must be done within the period specified in the Returning Officer's permit.</p>	
<p>Do submit a return respecting election expenses and declaration by candidate and election agent to the Returning Officer within 31 days after the date of publication of the election results in the Gazette.</p>	<p>Do not make payment for claims and election expenses later than 28 days after the date of publication of the election results in the Government Gazette.</p>



<b>DO's</b>	<b>DON'TS</b>
<p>Do submit a Post-election Donation Report and Post-election Declaration to the Registrar of Political Donations within 31 days after the date of publication of the election results in the Gazette.</p>	<p>Do not accept contributions from impermissible sources, and, in the 12 months before the election, do not accept anonymous donations totaling \$5,000 or more.</p>

## LIST OF DIGITAL SERVICES FOR CANDIDATES



ELECTIONS  
DEPARTMENT  
SINGAPORE

# Digital Services for Candidates

## Before Nomination Day

Can be  
prepared by  
election agent  
or candidate

Can be  
submitted by  
election agent  
or candidate

Must be  
submitted by  
candidate

Appoint election agent

—

—



Apply Political Donation Certificate



—



Apply minority community certificate  
(for GRC)



—



Pay election deposit

—



—

Submit photograph for ballot paper



—



Submit name for ballot paper (Optional)



—



## After Nomination Day

Can be submitted or downloaded by  
election agent or candidate

Declare Internet election advertising platforms



Lodge a copy of poster or banner



Submit list of persons authorised to conduct election  
activity



Submit election office address



Access map showing 50m poster and banner prohibition  
zone around polling stations & bus sequence for ballot  
box delivery from polling stations to counting centres



Register to witness counting of overseas ballot papers



Submit election expenses returns



Election agent must declare first before  
sending to candidate to declare and submit

Submit post-election donation report and  
declaration



Election agent must declare first before  
sending to candidate to declare and submit

Register to witness destruction of ballot boxes  
(6 months after election)





ELECTIONS  
DEPARTMENT  
SINGAPORE

# Other Services for Candidates

## Draft & Print

Can be prepared by  
election agent or  
candidate

### Prepare Nomination Paper

Up to 4 versions of the Nomination Paper can be drafted and saved. Nomination Papers do not have to be completely filled up. System auto-checks for whether the names of the proposer, seconder and assentors are in the relevant Register of Electors when the electoral division is specified.



Only candidate can  
submit at Nomination Centre  
in person

### Prepare form to appoint one other person



Only candidate can  
submit at Nomination Centre  
in person

### Prepare form to appoint principal election agent (for GRC)



Only candidate can  
submit at Nomination Centre  
in person

**LIST OF NOMINATION PLACES**

<i>Nomination Place (Nomination Centre)</i>	<i>Electoral Division</i>
1. Bendemeer Primary School School Hall Building 91 Bendemeer Road Singapore 339948	Bishan-Toa Payoh Jalan Besar Radin Mas Tanjong Pagar
2. Chongfu School School Hall Building 170 Yishun Avenue 6 Singapore 768959	Kebun Baru Marsiling-Yew Tee Nee Soon Sembawang
3. Deyi Secondary School School Hall Building 1 Ang Mo Kio Street 42 Singapore 569277	Aljunied Ang Mo Kio Marymount Yio Chu Kang
4. Jurong Pioneer Junior College School Hall Building 21 Teck Whye Walk Singapore 688258	Chua Chu Kang Hong Kah North Pioneer
5. Kong Hwa School School Hall Building 350 Guillemard Road Singapore 399772	MacPherson Marine Parade Mountbatten Potong Pasir
6. Methodist Girls' School School Hall Building 11 Blackmore Drive Singapore 599986	Bukit Panjang Holland-Bukit Timah
7. Nan Hua High School School Hall Building 41 Clementi Avenue 1 Singapore 129956	Bukit Batok Jurong West Coast Yuhua
8. Poi Ching School School Hall Building 21 Tampines Street 71 Singapore 529067	Hougang Tampines
9. St. Anthony's Canossian Primary School School Hall Building 1602 Bedok North Avenue 4 Singapore 469701	East Coast Pasir Ris-Punggol Punggol West Sengkang

**PROCEDURE FOR DELIVERY OF SPEECHES BY CANDIDATES  
AT NOMINATION CENTRES**

1. After the close of nominations, candidates will be given time to address their supporters using the public address system provided by the Group Assistant Returning Officer (GARO) at the designated announcement area outside the nomination place.
2. Each candidate (or group of candidates) may be accompanied by 2 other persons from the subscriber group (i.e. Proposer, Seconder, Assentors and One Other Person named by the candidate in writing) for the delivery of the speech. Each candidate for SMC is allowed 1 minute to make his speech. Each group of candidates for GRC is allowed 3 minutes to make its speech. Non-candidates will not be allowed to make speeches.
3. There is no limit to the number of candidates from a GRC team who can speak, as long as the team keeps within the three-minute time limit. The three minutes starts as soon as the first candidate in the GRC team starts speaking, and includes time taken for handover to other candidates in the group.
4. Ten seconds before the allotted time ends, the speaker will be alerted by two bell chimes. Once the time is up, the public address system will be faded off.
5. The process for the delivery of speeches will be as follows:
  - (a) Upon the close of nominations (after 12 noon for uncontested electoral divisions and after 12.30 pm for contested electoral divisions respectively), the GARO will invite the candidates to the announcement area. Each SMC candidate or group of GRC candidates may be accompanied by two other persons from the subscriber group to the announcement area.
  - (b) The GARO will first announce the nomination results of the SMCs, in alphabetical order of the electoral division names, followed by the nomination results of the GRCs, also in alphabetical order of the electoral division names.
  - (c) After the announcement for every electoral division, the GARO will hand the microphone to the candidates for their speeches. For contested electoral division, the order of delivery will be based on the alphabetical order<sup>34</sup> of their political party names. Independent candidates will be the last to speak, in alphabetical order of their surnames.
  - (d) After the last candidate has completed his speech, the GARO will take over the microphone and announce the nomination results of the next electoral division, until all electoral divisions have been covered.

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<sup>34</sup> Articles such as "The" appearing at the beginning of the party names will be disregarded in determining the order of delivery.

**EXAMPLES OF ELECTION EXPENSES**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>For print election advertising</b>	Design and production of posters/banners/party flags, vehicular wraps for perambulating vehicles, distribution of flyers, rental of vehicles for putting up posters and banners, etc.
<b>For Internet election advertising</b>	Paid Internet election advertising, such as payment for social media sponsored posts, website banner ads
<b>For other non-print election advertising</b>	Hosting or designing of party/candidate website
<b>Transport expenses</b>	Rental of perambulating vehicles, rental of buses to ferry helpers/supporters
<b>Other expenses</b>	Food and refreshment, purchase of Registers of Electors and electoral division maps

## **CANDIDATE HANDBOOK FOR GENERAL ELECTION 2020**

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