

## **GUIDE FOR POLLING AGENTS OF GENERAL ELECTION 2025**

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### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This guide is prepared by the Elections Department (ELD) for polling agents at General Election 2025. It summarises the role and obligations of polling agents under the Parliamentary Elections Act 1954.
- 1.2 This guide does not take precedence over the law. It is not the legal authority and should not be cited as such in a court of law. Candidates and their agents should therefore read this guide in conjunction with the statute book. If candidates and their agents are unsure of their rights or obligations, they should seek legal advice from an advocate and solicitor. It is not the function of ELD or the Returning Officer to interpret the law for candidates or their agents, or to provide them with legal advice.

### **2 Role of Polling Agents**

- 2.1 The role of a polling agent is to observe that polling at the polling station is carried out in accordance with the law. Polling agents are advised to acquaint themselves with polling procedures and be aware of an election official's legal powers and duties, so as not to cause unnecessary delay or disruption to the polling process. Details on the conduct of polling can be found on ELD website ([https://www.eld.gov.sg/candidate\\_parliamentary\\_polling.html](https://www.eld.gov.sg/candidate_parliamentary_polling.html)).
- 2.2 A polling agent may do the following on Polling Day at the polling station he is assigned to:
  - (a) before the start of poll at 8 am, be present at the polling station to observe the sealing of ballot boxes by election officials;
  - (b) during polling hours, observe the polling process within the polling station; and
  - (c) after the close of poll, witness the sealing of ballot boxes and election materials as well as the packing of election materials into envelopes and bags.
- 2.3 Any person may be appointed as a polling agent, so long as he is not –
  - (a) below 16 years of age;
  - (b) a person who has an order of supervision made against him under the Criminal Law (Temporary Provisions) Act 1955; or
  - (c) a foreigner.

### 3 Number of Polling Agents

3.1 For polling in Singapore, polling agents must be appointed by:

- (a) For Single Member Constituencies (SMCs) – the candidate or his election agent; or
- (b) For Group Representation Constituencies (GRCs) – any candidate in a group of candidates, any election agent of a candidate in the group or the principal election agent for the group.<sup>1</sup>

The number of polling agents that may be admitted to an ordinary polling station in an electoral division is one polling agent per candidate/group of candidates for every 1,000 electors (or part thereof) allotted to vote at the ordinary polling station. See table below for illustration purposes:

No. of Electors Allotted to Vote at An Ordinary Polling Station	No. of Polling Agents per Candidate/Group of Candidates
0 to 1000	1
1001 to 2000	2
2001 to 3000	3
3001 to 4000	4

3.2 For polling overseas, every political party with one or more candidates standing for election, every independent candidate or every group of independent candidates standing for election, may appoint one polling agent to be present at each overseas polling station.<sup>2</sup>

### 4 Admittance to Polling Stations

4.1 When entering an ordinary polling station for the first time, the polling agent must produce to the election official:

- (a) evidence of his appointment in the form of a duly completed and signed *Appointment of Polling Agent* form;
- (b) a duly completed and signed *Oath of Secrecy* form; and

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<sup>1</sup> The candidates, principal election agents or election agents who appointed the polling agents will need to issue the *Appointment of Polling Agent* form to each polling agent that they appoint and provide them with an *Oath of Secrecy* form. The forms can be downloaded from ELD's Candidate Services ([https://www.eld.gov.sg/candidate\\_parliamentary\\_online.html](https://www.eld.gov.sg/candidate_parliamentary_online.html)). Hard copy forms will also be provided to candidates at the end of nomination proceedings on Nomination Day.

<sup>2</sup> The responsible officer of the political party, the independent candidate (whether part of a group of independent candidates or not), or the election agent/principal election agent of the independent candidate or group of independent candidates must submit via an online form the full names (as stated in NRIC) and NRIC numbers of the polling agents appointed at each overseas polling station (if any) to the Returning Officer no later than two clear days before the start of the polls at the overseas polling stations.

- (c) his original NRIC (physical or digital) or valid passport.

For a polling agent at an overseas polling station, only a duly completed and signed *Oath of Secrecy* form and his original NRIC (physical or digital) or valid passport are required to be produced as his appointment as the polling agent at the overseas polling station would have been earlier submitted to the Returning Officer and made known to the election officials at the overseas polling station.

*Note: The Appointment of Polling Agent and Oath of Secrecy forms must bear the original signatures of the candidate, principal election agent (for GRC) or election agent and Justice of the Peace or Commissioner for Oaths respectively, photocopies will not be accepted. Candidates and polling agents must take their oath of secrecy (i.e. before a Justice of the Peace or Commissioner for Oaths beforehand) and must give their duly completed and signed forms to the election official before entering the first ordinary polling station. In order to allow election officials to focus on the conduct of polling, they will not assist to administer the oath of secrecy for candidates and polling agents.*

- 4.2 After checking the documents mentioned above, the election official will retain the polling agent's *Appointment of Polling Agent* and *Oath of Secrecy* forms (or the *Oath of Secrecy* form for the polling agent appointed at an overseas polling station) and issue him a Polling Agent Pass and a Polling Agent Re-entry Card (bearing the polling agent's name and NRIC number, the polling station's name, the election official's signature and a sticker to acknowledge that he has submitted his *Oath of Secrecy* form) before admitting him into the polling station. The polling agent must wear the Polling Agent Pass conspicuously at all times while he is in the polling station (whether ordinary or overseas).
- 4.3 If the polling agent leaves the ordinary or overseas polling station, he must return the Polling Agent Pass to the election official but is allowed to retain the Polling Agent Re-entry Card.
- 4.4 For re-entry into the same ordinary or overseas polling station, the polling agent is only required to produce the Polling Agent Re-entry Card with his original NRIC (physical or digital) or valid passport to the election official. After checking, the election official will issue the polling agent with a Polling Agent Pass for admittance into the ordinary or overseas polling station.
- 4.5 If the polling agent seeks to enter another ordinary polling station to observe the polling process there, he must submit a new duly completed and signed *Appointment of Polling Agent* form as the appointment is specific to a polling station. He must also show his Polling Agent Re-entry Card (i.e. the one issued by the election official at the first polling station he visited) to the election official at that ordinary polling station. The polling agent does not need to submit another *Oath of Secrecy* form. With a valid Polling Agent Re-entry Card (with acknowledgement sticker), it would mean that the polling agent had previously submitted a duly completed and signed *Oath of Secrecy* form.

## **5 Observing Process to Transport Sealed Ballot Boxes from Ordinary Polling Stations to Counting Centres**

- 5.1 A candidate or his polling agent may board the vehicle transporting the sealed ballot boxes from the ordinary polling stations to the counting centres of the electoral division that the candidate/group of candidates is contesting in, provided he had submitted a duly completed and signed *Indemnity* form to the election officials at the ordinary polling station he wishes to board the vehicle from, before 6 pm on Polling Day.<sup>3</sup>
- 5.2 The vehicle assigned to transport the sealed ballot boxes of up to six ordinary polling stations to the counting centre, is typically a 40-seater bus. If there is already one polling agent representing a candidate/group of candidates on board the vehicle, the other polling agents representing the same candidate/group of candidates at subsequent ordinary polling stations will not be allowed to board the vehicle. The polling agents of the same candidate/group of candidates will need to decide among themselves on the one who is to board the vehicle, in consultation with their candidate(s), principal election agent or election agent, as need be. The candidate has priority over his polling agent to board the vehicle.<sup>4</sup>

*Note: The polling agent 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 polling agent who is late even if he has submitted his Indemnity Form earlier.*

## **6 Do's and Don'ts at Polling Stations<sup>5</sup>**

- 6.1 The list of do's and don'ts for polling agents below is not exhaustive:
- (a) Candidates and polling agents must comply with the instructions of the election officials and must not behave in a manner which may cause unnecessary delay or disruption to the polling process, failing which, the election official is empowered to evict the candidate or polling agent from the polling station.
  - (b) Polling agents should be properly attired. Polling agents dressed in singlets, shorts, slippers or other inappropriate attire will not be allowed into the polling station. They must also not wear, use, carry or display campaign propaganda (including his candidate's symbol or a replica of the symbol).

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<sup>3</sup> For ordinary polling stations that are co-located with or near the counting centres, the polling agent may accompany the sealed ballot boxes when the election officials transport them (on foot) from the ordinary polling station to the counting centre.

<sup>4</sup> The assignment of buses and bus routes for the respective ordinary polling stations will be available for download via the Candidate Services after Nomination Day. Candidates can refer to them for planning purposes.

<sup>5</sup> For Section 6, unless otherwise stated, where "polling station" is mentioned, it refers to both ordinary polling stations and overseas polling stations.

- (c) Candidates and polling agents are advised not to bring sharp objects, flammable liquids or gas, weapons or replica of weapons, bulky items or big bags into the polling stations. The use of handphones, video and photo-taking devices in the polling station is prohibited to safeguard voting secrecy.
- (d) 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.
- (e) Candidates and polling agents must wear their election passes at all times while in any polling station. Only candidates are allowed to wear their symbols or political party logos when visiting the polling stations in the electoral divisions where they seek election.
- (f) 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 their attendance at these proceedings is not compulsory under the law. In order to ensure that polling and counting start on time, election officials will proceed with the sealing of ballot boxes 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. 10 minutes before the start of the poll, and at the close of the poll). They must be punctual if they wish to observe the sealing of the ballot boxes.
- (g) Polling agents, who want to keep track as to who has voted, should pay close attention when election officials are reading out the particulars of the voters. Polling agents are not allowed to compare their copies of the Registers of Electors against the records of attendance in the eRegistration devices to confirm the voters who have or have not voted.
- (h) A polling agent who needs to leave the polling station must leave his copy of the Register of Electors at that polling station. This is to ensure that information on any voter on the Register of Electors who has or has not been given a ballot paper or voted at that station is not divulged.
- (i) A candidate or polling agent authorised to be in attendance at a polling station may, before the poll closes, ask an election official for the total number of voters who have voted at the polling station. However, the election official has the discretion to decide whether he can accede to the request for information; the election official will try his best to answer but his priority under the law remains to ensure the continuous and orderly conduct of the poll at the polling station.
- (j) At the close of the poll, candidates and their polling agents may observe the packing of election materials into envelopes and bags and affix their seals or sign on the envelopes and bags if they wish to do so. They may also affix their seals or sign on the ballot boxes after the election officials have completed the sealing of the ballot boxes at the close of the poll.

However, candidates and their polling agents must be careful not to paste over or damage the Returning Officer's seals in the process.

- (k) The candidate or his polling agent, who boards the vehicle to observe the process to transport the sealed ballot boxes from the ordinary polling stations to the counting centres, must comply with the following rules, failing which, the election official has the right to evict the candidate or polling agent from the vehicle:
- Candidates and polling agents must comply with instructions of election officials and shall not behave in a manner which may affect the transport operations, or undermine the security of the ballot boxes;
  - No persons, other than election officials, shall handle the ballot boxes during the transportation process;
  - Candidates and polling agents must adhere to the vehicle seating plan and remain seated at their designated seats on board the vehicle;
  - Photography, audio and video recording are not allowed on the vehicle; and
  - Smoking, eating or drinking is not allowed on the vehicle.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER**

Polling agents are reminded to treat all persons at the polling station with respect. The Returning Officer may take action against any polling agent whose behaviour disrupts the polling process or election official from carrying out his official duties.

ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT  
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE  
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