

PRESS RELEASE

COOLING-OFF DAY AND POLLING DAY – GENERAL ELECTION 2020

10 July 2020 is Polling Day for General Election (GE) 2020 in Singapore. The day before Polling Day, 9 July 2020, is Cooling-off Day.

No campaigning or election advertising on Cooling-off Day (Thursday, 9 July 2020) and Polling Day (Friday, 10 July 2020)

2 Campaigning activity and election advertising¹ (except those exempted in paragraph 5) are not allowed on Cooling-off Day. This 24-hour campaign and election advertising silence period is to let voters reflect rationally on various issues raised during the election campaigning period, before going to the polls. The same restrictions also apply on Polling Day.

3 The following are some of the campaign activities which are prohibited on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day:

- a. Online campaigning including by livestreaming, the uploading of recordings of such livestreams, or the uploading/posting of any other election advertising on any websites and Internet platforms;
- b. Canvassing, distribution of flyers whether through physical or electronic means, or visiting homes and workplaces of voters in connection with the election;
- c. Conducting programmatic advertising, i.e., using technology to automatically deliver digital ads online and on social media platforms;
- d. Wearing, using, carrying or displaying of any political propaganda (such as a badge, symbol, rosette, favour, set of colours, flag, advertisement, handbill, placard, poster or replica of a voting paper) by any person or on any motorcar, truck or other vehicle. However, this does not preclude the wearing by candidates, of a badge indicating affiliation with a political party or replica of the symbol allotted to them. Polling agents, counting agents and members of the public should refrain from wearing any apparel (including masks) bearing the

¹ "Election advertising" means any poster, banner, notice, circular, handbill, illustration, article, advertisement or other material that can reasonably be regarded as intended –

- (a) to promote or procure the electoral success at any election for one or more identifiable political parties, candidates or groups of candidates, or to prejudice the electoral prospects at the election of other political parties, candidates or groups of candidates; or
- (b) to otherwise enhance the standing of any such political parties, candidates or groups of candidates with the electorate in connection with any election, or to prejudice the standing with the electorate of other political parties, candidates or groups of candidates, and such material shall be election advertising even though it can be reasonably regarded as intended to achieve any other purpose as well and even though it does not expressly mention the name of any political party or candidate, subject to certain exclusions.

image, election symbol and/or campaign message of any candidate on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day;

- e. Conducting campaign walkabouts; and
- f. Using perambulating vehicles for campaigning.

Election advertising prohibited on Cooling-off Day (Thursday, 9 July 2020) and Polling Day (Friday, 10 July 2020) with some exemptions

4 The following are prohibited at any time on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day:

- a. Knowingly publishing, or knowingly causing or permitting to be published, any new election advertising in the electoral division (including making changes to any existing election advertising published before Cooling-off Day). Caution should also be exercised not to publish Internet election advertising close to midnight prior to Cooling-Off Day, which may result in the display of such advertising on Cooling-off Day itself; and
- b. Knowingly displaying, or knowingly causing or permitting to be displayed, any election advertising on any vehicle, thing or structure within the electoral division or adjoining the electoral division.²

5 There are some exceptions to the prohibitions of knowingly publishing or displaying election advertising on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day:

- a. Reports in the newspapers, on radio and television relating to election matters;
- b. Party Political Broadcasts scheduled from 8pm onwards on Cooling-off Day (*please see [link](#) for more info*);
- c. Approved posters/banners lawfully displayed before the start of Cooling-off Day;
- d. Election advertising that was lawfully displayed or published before the start of Cooling-off Day on the Internet and that was not changed after its publication or display;
- e. Distribution or promotion of the sale of any book if the book was scheduled for publication independent of the election and the book is not sold at less than its commercial value; and
- f. The transmission of personal political views by an individual to another individual, on a non-commercial basis, using the Internet, telephone or electronic means. For avoidance of doubt, participants of chat groups/channels or webinars involving more than two participants on platforms such as

² Section 78B(1) of the Parliamentary Elections Act, Cap. 218.

WhatsApp, Telegram and Zoom must not publish any election advertising in these mediums, and the moderators of these groups/channels or webinars are required to take all reasonable steps to remove any election advertising once they are aware of them.

6 This General Election has seen public statements being made by persons to draw public attention to the fact that they have made police reports against candidates. Such statements can easily be regarded as intended to prejudice the electoral prospects of those candidates, thereby constituting election advertising. Accordingly, such public statements should not be made on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day.

Advisory for candidates and their supporters

7 Candidates and their supporters are expected to abide fully by all relevant laws on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day, and should refrain from conduct that goes against the spirit behind the prohibition against campaigning on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day.

8 Candidates should be mindful of how they conduct themselves in public and exercise due care to avoid any action that may be perceived as campaigning. To avoid any misunderstanding, candidates should, as far as possible, refrain from visiting their constituents or attending public events on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day, where they are likely to attract public attention and may be perceived to be canvassing for support. At such events, candidates' presence, actions, communications and exchanges (including private exchanges), are highly visible and may be perceived as campaigning.

9 It would be permissible for candidates to attend religious worship services, or attend meetings or to other matters in the course of work or employment, subject to the general prohibitions against campaigning and election advertising on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day, and the prevailing regulations and safe management measures for the COVID-19 situation including any other requirements specific to those settings.

10 Please also be reminded that the publication of election surveys and exit polls is prohibited before the close of all polling stations.³

Voting on Polling Day (Friday, 10 July 2020)

11 COVID-19 patients and voters who are on Quarantine Order for COVID-19 will not be allowed to leave their place of isolation to vote, to minimise their contact with members of the public and reduce risk of community transmission.

12 Voters on Stay-Home Notice (SHN) at designated facilities (e.g. hotels) will vote at special polling stations, away from other voters. They may refer to [Annex C](#) of the

³ Sections 78C and 78D of the Parliamentary Elections Act.

Press Release on “Special Voting Arrangements to Protect Health and Safety at General Election 2020” (1 July 2020) for information on polling proceedings.

13 Polling stations in Singapore are open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Polling Day. No ballot papers will be issued after polling closes at 8pm. For voters not covered in paragraphs 11 and 12, the voting arrangements are as follows:-

- a. **Voters who are well should vote within their recommended time-bands.** Those who are not able to vote during their recommended time-bands can vote during official polling hours from 8am to 8pm. However, they are encouraged to avoid voting from 7pm to 8pm, which is meant for voters on SHN at home, MC for ARI, or having a fever [see paragraph 13(c)].
- b. **Younger voters are encouraged not to vote between 8am and 12 noon, unless they have been allotted specific time-bands within this window, as the morning voting hours have mostly been allotted to senior voters aged 65 years and above.** Senior voters who require assistance may be accompanied by one household member. Senior voters may also choose to vote with their families at other times of the day, where they will be able to join priority queues.
- c. **Voters on SHN at home or medical certificate (MC) for acute respiratory infection (ARI), or are having a fever (37.5 degrees Celsius and above), should disregard, and not vote during the recommended time-band indicated on their poll cards.** If they turn up to vote between 8am and 7pm, they will be advised to return later to vote between 7pm and 8pm. These voters may refer to [Annexes A and B](#) of the Press Release on “Special Voting Arrangements to Protect Health and Safety at General Election 2020” (1 July 2020) for information on polling proceedings.
- d. **Safety measures** have been put in place at all polling stations to ensure the safety of voters. These include safe distancing based on the markings at different parts in the polling station, and the provision of disposable gloves to voters before handling the ballot papers and self-inking ‘X’ pen. In addition, from 7pm to 8pm, the polling equipment (i.e. polling booth, self-inking ‘X’ pen) will be sanitised after each use by voters, and the election officials will be in full personal protective equipment (i.e. isolation gown, N95 mask and surgical gloves). Voters may also bring their own pens.
- e. **Access to school polling stations.** Vehicles ferrying senior voters and those with special needs can drop them off at the Special Alighting Point within the polling station.

14 When proceeding to vote, voters are reminded to:-

- a. Take their temperature before going to vote. If they have a fever (37.5 degree Celsius or above), they should not go to vote between 8am and 7pm. They should instead go to vote between 7pm and 8pm;

- b. Check the queue situation at VoteQ.gowhere.gov.sg before going to vote;
- c. Bring their original NRIC/passport and poll card or e-poll card to the polling station to cast their vote;
- d. Comply with safe distancing measures at polling stations, and follow instructions from election officials;
- e. Have their temperature taken at the start of the voter queue. Between 8am and 7pm, any voter found to have a fever at temperature screening will be turned away and advised to return between 7pm-8pm to vote;
- f. Sanitise their hands and don disposable gloves before receiving their ballot papers;
- g. Mark their choice with the self-inking 'X' pen, or if they are using their own pens, mark a "X" on the ballot paper in the space provided on the right hand side of the ballot paper opposite the name of the candidate or, if the electoral division is a group representation constituency, the names of the group of candidates;
- h. Fold their ballot paper so as to conceal their vote, and put the folded ballot paper into the ballot box;
- i. Dispose of the gloves before leaving the polling station; and
- j. Wear a mask at all times.⁴

15 Please also note that using any camera, video or photographic equipment in the polling station is disallowed. Your handphone, tablet or any other digital device with photographic capabilities should not be used at any time in the polling station, regardless of whether the camera function is being used or not. For more guidance on the Do's and Don'ts on Polling Day, please visit [ELD's website](#).

**ISSUED BY
ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE**

8 JULY 2020

⁴ All individuals within a polling station must wear a mask at all times except —

(a) when lawfully required to remove the mask temporarily for the purposes of ascertaining the individual's identity for voting; or

(b) if wearing a mask over the individual's nose and mouth leads to severe medical conditions for the individual and he or she is wearing a face shield instead. He or she must wear a face shield when within a polling station.