

ELECTIONS TO GRAM PANCHAYATS



HANDBOOK FOR PRESIDING OFFICERS (WHERE BALLOT BOXES ARE USED)

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CHAPTER-I

PRELIMINARY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As Presiding Officer (PO) you will be responsible for proper conduct of poll in polling station. In Gram Panchayat Elections, a Polling Station may be set up usually for one ward (or) there can be more than one polling station in a particular Ward. The overall responsibility for the election programme of the entire Gram Panchayat vests with the Returning Officer and you will be working under his guidance.
- 1.2 Apart from you, there will be Polling Officers in your team. The number of polling officers may vary from one to three, depending upon the number of voters in the polling Station allotted to you. The final appointment order issued to you will also contain the names of other members of the polling party. One of the polling officers in the party will also be designated as Assistant Presiding Officer (APO). You and your Assistant Presiding Officer will be given training as per the date and venue of training indicated in your appointment order. It will be your responsibility to give training to the other polling officers in your team, which may be done one day prior to the poll.
- 1.3 As a Presiding officer, you have an important role to play in the conduct of poll. You enjoy full powers to control the proceedings in the polling station under your charge. It is your primary duty and responsibility to ensure a free and fair poll at your polling station. It is necessary for this purpose to equip yourself fully with the law and procedure and the relevant instructions and directions of the Commission in relation to the conduct of elections so as to enable you to act strictly in accordance with them without giving room for any complaint.
- 1.4 As a Presiding Officer, you should therefore be acquaint yourself fully with the latest rules and procedures prescribed for the conduct of poll. You should familiarize yourself thoroughly with each step to be taken in the conduct of poll at the polling station. A slight mistake or lapse or wrong application of the law or rules or inadequate knowledge may vitiate the poll at your polling station. Hence, the Handbook for Presiding Officer is designed to give you basic information and broad guidance for conduct of poll.

2. LEGAL PROVISIONS REGARDING CONDUCT OF POLL

The provisions of the law which have a bearing on your duties as a Presiding Officer are reproduced in **Annexure-1**.

3. BROAD OUTLINES OF DUTIES

- 3.1 This Handbook is designed to give you the information and guidance which you may need in the performance of your functions as a Presiding Officer. However, it may be noted that this Handbook cannot be treated as an exhaustive compendium in all aspects and as a substitute reference for various provisions of election law during the conduct of poll. You should, wherever necessary, refer to those legal provisions which are reproduced in **Annexure-1**.

3.2 While detailed directions and instructions are contained in the various Chapters of this Handbook, some of the salient aspects of your duties are given below for your guidance:

- (i) You should acquaint yourself fully with the latest position about the rules and procedures prescribed for the conduct of poll.
- (ii) You should familiarize yourself thoroughly with the operation of Ballot boxes i.e., Opening, Closing and proper sealing of ballot boxes.
- (iii) You must acquaint yourself with members of your polling party in the distribution centre.
- (iv) You must keep in ready possession all relevant instructions of the Returning Officer.
- (v) You must have a clear idea of the location of your polling station and your itinerary to and from the polling station.
- (vi) You should attend all rehearsals and training classes without fail.
- (vii) While collecting election materials, you should ensure that all items have been handed over to you. The most important items are Ballot boxes, Ballot papers, Paper seals, marked copy of electoral roll and other copies, arrow cross mark rubber stamp for voting, distinguish mark, statutory forms, sealing wax and indelible ink etc.
- (viii) On arrival at the polling station, you should have a clear idea of the arrangements to be made for setting up of a proper polling station especially to secure secrecy of voting, regulation of queue of voters, smooth conduct of poll proceedings free from outside interference, etc.
- (ix) You are required to sign your name in full on the **back** of each ballot paper before issue (but **not** on the counterfoil of the ballot paper). To enable the commencement of poll at the appointed time, you should keep some ballot papers signed in advance.
- (x) You are also required to affix on the back of each ballot paper and its counterfoil distinguishing mark of your polling station with the rubber stamp given to you.
- (xi) Before the commencement of poll, the ballot box has to be demonstrated to the polling agents present to satisfy them that no votes are already recorded therein and that the ballot box is in perfect working condition.
- (xii) The ballot box shall then be properly sealed, closed, secured and placed in full view of the Presiding Officer and polling agents.
- (xiii) The poll should commence at the hour fixed for such commencement by the Election Commission. Before commencing the poll, the candidates or their agents present and the polling officers should be warned about the maintenance of secrecy of vote and provisions of Section 217 of Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 mentioned in Chapter-XIV.
- (xiv) At the commencement of poll, you have to arrange a marked copy of the electoral roll and there are declarations to be filled by you and signed by polling agents present in the polling station at the commencement and at end of the poll (**Annexure-11**).
- (xv) The instructions for establishing the identity of the elector should be followed carefully.
- (xvi) The identity of elector should be properly verified by the First Polling Officer with reference to his entry in the marked copy of electoral roll and EPIC or in its absence other identity document(s) prescribed by the State Election Commission. The voter slip / unofficial identity slip carried by an elector should not be accepted as proof of identity.

- (xvii) After an elector is identified with reference to his entry in the electoral roll and the identity document (s) prescribed by the State Election Commission, the left forefinger should be marked with the indelible ink by the second Polling Officer. The indelible mark should be prominent and should be begun from top end of the nail to the bottom of the first joint of the left forefinger.
- (xviii) You should obtain the signature/thumb impression of the voter on the counterfoil of the ballot paper and then only the voter should be issued with the ballot paper. If a voter refuses to put his signature/ thumb impression on the counterfoil, the voter should **not** be issued a ballot paper.
- (xix) In order to ensure that the indelible ink mark put on the voter's finger has properly dried up and developed into a distinct indelible ink mark, polling officer should inspect the indelible ink mark before the voter leaves the polling booth.
- (xx) In order to indicate that an elector has been allowed to vote and also to ensure that he/she does not turn up to vote again, after an elector has been identified, in the entry relating to the elector in the marked copy of the photo electoral roll should be struck diagonally with a red ink pen. The serial number of the female voter has to be rounded off in addition as that will be helpful to the polling officer to count the number of women voters at the end of the poll for the purpose of the relevant statistics of voters to be mentioned in the Presiding Officer's diary.
- (xxi) The serial number of the ballot paper should **not** be noted at all in the marked copy of the electoral roll against the elector's name.
- (xxii) The ballot papers need not be issued to electors in consecutive serial order as that would enable the polling agents to work out the serial number of ballot paper that is being issued to individual voters. At the same time, if the first three or four bundles of ballot papers (50 in number in a bundle) are shuffled and bundles used at random and not in consecutive serial order, then the object would be served. At the close of the poll, the numbers of the ballot papers issued to the electors should be in continuous and unbroken series to avoid confusion in drawing up the ballot paper account.
- (xxiii) If you consider an elector to be much below the minimum age of voting, i.e., 18 years, but are otherwise satisfied about his identity and the fact of inclusion of his name in the electoral roll, you should obtain a declaration from him about his age in the Form of declaration in **(Annexure-16)**.
- (xxiv) You have to go on recording the relevant events as and when they occur in the Presiding Officer's Diary.
- (xxv) You have to regulate the proceedings in the polling station for peaceful and smooth conduct of poll. You require much tact, but at the same time you should be firm and impartial.
- (xxvi) You shall close the poll at the hour fixed by the Election Commission, even if the commencement of poll was delayed for any reason. However, all voters present at the polling station at the closing hour of poll shall be allowed to vote even if that means the continuing of poll for some more time. It should also be ensured that after the closing hour of poll nobody joins the queue of voters. For that purpose, you should distribute numbered slips to all voters standing in the queue at the time fixed for close of poll starting such distribution of slips from the end of the queue.

- (xxvii) At the close of poll, you are required to prepare, in duplicate, a 'Ballot Paper Account' in Part-I of Form-XXV (**Annexure-22**) authenticated copies of such account of Ballot Paper recorded are required to be given to the polling agent of each candidate present. You are also required to make a declaration regarding furnishing of such copies to the candidates agents in the form prescribed by the Commission in part-III of Declarations by the Presiding Officer (**Annexure-11**).
- (xxviii) After the close of poll, the Ballot boxes and all election papers should be sealed and secured in the manner prescribed by the Election Commission. Candidates or their agents present have also to be allowed to affix their seals, if they so desire, on the Ballot boxes and the election papers in addition to your seals. You should follow carefully the relevant instructions about the sealing and securing of Ballot boxes and election papers so that no mistake is committed which cannot be rectified later.
- (xxix) It is your personal responsibility to hand over the Ballot boxes and all election papers duly sealed and secured to the officer responsible (RO State-II) for the collection thereof.
- (xxx) You have to assist the Returning Officer in the process of counting as it is on the same day of the poll and also assist in sealing of election records after counting.
- (xxxi) After counting, as per the programme of return journey to the Reception Centre for depositing the sealed packet and other packets of election papers you should assist the Returning Officer. It is your responsibility to assist the Returning Officer to deliver the ballot boxes and other materials at Reception Centre and to obtain a receipt.

4. Your duties in brief at various stages are given in **Annexure-2** under five different heads for your ready reference and convenience.

CHECK MEMO

5. To ensure that, you have fulfilled the various statutory requirements in connection with the election, the Election commission has drawn up a CHECK MEMO for you, which is given in **Annexure-3**. The said CHECK MEMO should be properly maintained by you.

CHAPTER-II

FORMATION OF POLLING PARTY AND REHEARSALS

1. POLLING PARTY

The strength of your polling party depends on the total number of voters allotted to your polling station. The polling party will normally consists of one presiding officer and three polling officers where the number of voters allotted to a polling station is 600, and one presiding officer and two polling officers where the number of voters allotted to a polling station is between 200-400, and one presiding officer and one polling officer where the number of voters allotted to a polling station is less than 200.

2. CONTACT WITH THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE POLLING PARTY

The other members of your polling party are disclosed only at distribution centre. After knowing your polling party members, explain to them, the part to be taken at the poll by each member of the party. Unless there is team work, your task as Presiding Officer will be more difficult.

3. POLLING REHEARSALS

3.1 Attend as many polling rehearsals as you can. This is essential for fully acquainting yourself with rules and provisions of the act and for obtaining a clear idea of the polling procedure to be followed at the polling station and understanding the provisions of the law.

3.2 Even if you had worked as Presiding Officer or Polling Officer in some earlier elections, you must attend the training classes/rehearsals.

4. ALL PERSONS ON ELECTION DUTY TO APPLY FOR POSTAL BALLOT PAPER RATHER THAN EDC

UNDER THE PRESENT SYSTEM, DUTY TO POLLING PERSONS IS ASSIGNED BY THE METHOD OF RANDOM SELECTION AND NORMALLY THE PERSONS ARE ASSIGNED DUTY OUTSIDE THEIR LOCAL BODY CONSTITUENCIES, BUT WITHIN THE SAME DISTRICT. HENCE TO ENABLE ALL PERSONS ON POLLING DUTY TO EXERCISE THEIR FRANCHISE, THEY ALL MAY BE ASKED TO APPLY FOR AND OBTAIN POSTAL BALLOT PAPERS FOR VOTING. UNDER THE LAW, THERE IS NO BAR TO VOTE BY POST, EVEN IF THE PERSON IS PUT ON DUTY IN THE SAME LOCAL BODY CONSTITUENCY WHERE HE IS REGISTERED AS AN ELECTOR.

5. APPLICATION FOR POSTAL BALLOT PAPER

5.1 You and your Polling Officers may be electors in some Gram Panchayat. The order of appointment as Presiding Officer will be issued in duplicate and along with this order, the Returning Officer will send you sufficient number of Form-XIV (**Annexure-4**) to enable you and the Polling Officers to apply for Postal Ballot Papers to the Returning Officer. You have to send the application form immediately along with the duplicate copy of the order of appointment otherwise there may not be enough time to receive the Postal Ballot Paper.

- 5.2 It may be noted that, once a postal ballot is issued to you, you can vote only through postal ballot, even if you are not actually deployed for election duty for any reason.
- 5.3 It is advisable to apply for postal ballot paper immediately after coming to know about your appointment on election duty without waiting for information about the place of duty to apply.
- 5.4 A copy of the electoral rolls of the Gram Panchayats will be made available for inspection by the Election Authorities concerned at the centre(s) for rehearsal and training classes, so that you can note down the particulars of electoral roll numbers which you have to furnish in your applications for Postal Ballot Paper. Spare copies of Form-XIV (**Annexure-4**) will also be available at the said centre(s).

CHAPTER-III

COLLECTION OF BALLOT BOX AND POLLING MATERIALS

1. POLLING MATERIALS

You should report at the office of the Mandal Praja Parishad or the office specified by the District Election Authority **one day before the actual date of poll**, meet the Returning Officer and receive the material for the elections. A list of material which will be supplied to you is set out in **Annexure-5**. Make sure that you have received all the items. Check up and ensure, particularly the following:-

(a) Checking of Ballot Box

See that every ballot box is in perfect working condition. If found defective, replace it immediately.

(b) Checking of Ballot Papers

You will be supplied with separate sets of Ballot Papers of two different colours. The Ballot Paper for Sarpanch, Gram Panchayat, is in **pink** colour. The Ballot Paper of Ward Member is in **white** colour. The Ballot Papers supplied will be equal in number to the number of voters allotted to your polling station, rounded off to the next ten.

Check the Ballot Papers carefully and note any missing numbers; also ensure that the number on the Ballot Paper, and the number on its counterfoil are the same. If you find that the number on its counterfoil and the number on the Ballot Paper do not tally, you should cancel the Ballot Paper and you should not issue it to the elector. Such defective Ballot Papers should be kept in the cover intended for "Cancelled and Spoilt Ballot Papers," after endorsing on the counterfoil "*CANCELLED/ DEFECTIVE BALLOT PAPER*". It has to be accounted for in the Ballot Paper account in Part-1 of Form-XXV.

(c) Checking of marked copies of Electoral Roll

- (1) You will be supplied with four working copies of Electoral Roll, i.e.,
 - one copy for identification of electors by the first polling officer.
 - one for Presiding Officer.
 - one for circulation among Polling Agents/exhibiting at polling stations and
 - one as reserve.
- (2) that all the four copies of the relevant part of the electoral roll are complete and identical in every respect and, in particular, that-
 - (i) the relevant part given to you pertains to the area for which the polling station has been set up and that it is complete in all respects along with the supplements, in every copy;
 - (ii) all deletions of names and corrections of clerical or other errors as per the supplement have been duly incorporated in all the copies;
 - (iii) all the pages in each working copy of the roll have been serially numbered from No.1 onwards.
 - (iv) the printed serial numbers of the voters are not corrected and no new numbers are substituted for them;

(d) Checking of Indelible ink phials and ink pads

- i. Ensure that there is sufficient quantity of Indelible ink phials i.e., one 10 cc phial for 500 voters supplied to you basing on the voters strength and that the stamp Pads are not dry;
- ii. You will be supplied with ink pads of purple colour, one for putting the distinguishing mark on the back of the ballot paper and its counterfoil and for taking the thumb impression of the voter on the counterfoil of the ballot paper, and another for marking the ballot paper by arrow cross mark rubber stamp. Check that the ink / stamp pads are not dry;

(e) Checking of photocopies of specimen signatures of contesting candidates

Check also that photocopies of specimen signatures of the contesting candidates and their election agents are also given to you. This will help you in verifying genuineness of the signature of the candidate/his election agent in the appointment letter of polling agent(s) at the polling station.

(f) Checking of other polling materials

Ensure that sufficient copies of statutory and non-statutory forms and covers and all the polling material listed in **Annexure-5** are received by you.

If you find any ballot box or any polling material defective in any respect, you must immediately bring such defect to the notice of the officer incharge of distribution of ballot boxes/polling materials or the Returning Officer for necessary remedial action.

CHAPTER-IV

POLLING STATIONS

1. ITINERARY

Have a clear idea of the routes and timings that you have to follow to reach your polling station. Details of the itinerary including the means of transport for yourself and the other members belonging to your party will be supplied to you in advance.

2. ARRIVAL AT THE POLLING STATION

You should reach the polling station a day earlier to the day of poll and on the day of the poll, you should be ready at the polling station with your party atleast one hour before the poll is due to commence.

3. SET UP OF POLLING STATION

3.1 On your arrival at the place where the polling station is to be set up, inspect the building proposed for the purpose and the polling station itself, if it has already been set up. Diagram of model polling station showing the layout when the polling party consists of 1+3 Polling Officers at an election is set out in **Annexure-6**. It is open to you to make minor modifications in the actual set up of the polling station, if considered necessary; but make sure that –

- (i) there is enough space for the voters to wait outside the polling station;
- (ii) there is separate waiting space for men and women as far as practicable;
- (iii) there is separate entrance and exit for voters (this purpose can be achieved by tying a rope to make separate entrance and exit through the same door);
- (iv) there is easy flow of voters from the time they enter the polling station to the time they leave it and there is no crisscross movement within the polling station;
- (v) the Polling Agents are seated in such a way that they can see the face of an elector as and when they enter the polling station and is identified by the first Polling Officer so that they can challenge the identity of the elector, if need be. But they should not in any event be seated in a place where they have the chance of seeing voter actually marking ballot papers on the symbol of choice;
- (vi) the seating arrangement of all the Polling Officers is also such that they are not in a position to see the voter actually marking the ballot paper.
- (vii) even if there is only one door to the room housing the polling station, separate entrance and exit can be provided with the help of bamboos and ropes in the middle of the doorway. Make sure that the inside of the voting compartment is sufficiently lighted. If necessary, arrange for a suitable light to be provided to the voting compartment.

4. VOTING COMPARTMENT

4.1 Voters have to vote in secrecy and for this purpose, Voting Compartment has to be covered three sides. It should not be too wide as to violate the secrecy of voting. The Ballot Box shall be kept near the Presiding Officer (or) a Polling Officer on a table. The voter after marking the ballot paper with Arrow Cross mark in voting compartment, to fold it as per pre-folds and drop in the ballot box kept near the Presiding Officer/Polling Officer. The Presiding Officer shall keep a watch that every voter invariably drops the ballot paper in the ballot box.

- 4.2 The construction of voting compartment should be given special attention. A simple and inexpensive arrangement is to tie four poles to the four legs of a small table or a teapoy and a curtain tied round the pole covering three sides. The table raised to a height of 3ft. above the ground and placed at a distance of about 2ft. from a wall, will provide an ideal voting compartment. The second alternative method of setting up voting compartment is as follows; A thin wooden board 24"X18" with a hole in each corner, four wooden rods of 18" length to fit into the four holes, and a piece of cloth attached to the rods round three sides will be sufficient portable equipment for one voting compartment. This could be set up on a small table of a height of 3ft' from the ground. In case if the table is short, the same could be raised to the requisite height by using bricks.
- 4.3 The best method is making a voting compartment with card board with minimum dimension of 24"x24"x24".

5. DISPLAY OF NOTICE

- 5.1 Display prominently outside each polling station-
- (a) a notice specifying the polling area or the particulars of electors to be served by the polling station; and
 - (b) a copy of the list of contesting candidates in Form-IX with the facsimile of their symbols.
- 5.2 The language of the notice should be the same as for the list of contesting candidates.

CHAPTER-V

DUTIES OF PRESIDING OFFICER AND POLLING OFFICERS & VOTING PROCEDURE

1. For efficient and smooth conduct of poll at your polling station, you should be thoroughly conversant with the procedure that is to be followed from the time an elector comes into the polling station and till he leaves it after casting his vote. Such voting procedure and the duties which each Polling Officer has to perform in this whole operation are explained as follows.

In Gram Panchayat Elections, generally a Ward is a Polling Station. If the voters in a Ward exceed 650, two Polling Stations will be set up in that Ward and the voters will be divided almost equally between the two polling station. Similarly, if the voters exceeds 1300 in a Ward, three Polling Stations may be set up by dividing the voters almost equally among the three polling stations without dividing the voters in a family.

A polling party will consist of one Presiding Officer and one, two or three Polling Officers, depending on the number of voters in a Polling Station. The following scale is adopted for the appointment of polling personnel for various Polling Stations.

| S.No. | No. of Voters in Polling Station | No. of Polling Personnel to be appointed |
|--------------|---|---|
| 1 | Up to 200 Voters | One Presiding Officer + One Polling Officer |
| 2 | 201 to 400 Voters | One Presiding Officer + Two Polling Officers |
| 3 | More than 400 Voters | One Presiding Officer + Three Polling Officers |

2. **VOTING PROCEDURE IN POLLING STATION AND DUTIES OF POLLING OFFICERS:**

WHEN POLLING PARTY CONSISTS OF 1 PRESIDING OFFICER & 3 POLLING OFFICERS (1+3)

AND

WHERE THE NUMBER OF VOTERS ARE MORE THAN 400:

One, among the 3 Polling Officers, will be designated as Assistant Presiding Officer.

- 3.1 **First Polling Officer: Incharge of Maintenance of Marked copies of Electoral rolls and compulsory identification of voters:**

- (i) On entering the polling station the elector will proceed direct to the First Polling Officer who will be incharge of the marked copy of the electoral roll and responsible for identification of the electors. Usually each voter comes with a voter slip, which he received from the official machinery or unofficial identity slip on plain paper issued by a candidate / his agent. These voter slips will enable the voters to know the polling station where he/she has to cast vote and also facilitate the polling personnel to quickly identify the Sl.No. of the voter in the marked copy of the electoral roll.

- (ii) In case no voter slip is brought by the elector, the first polling officer shall himself locate the name of the elector in the electoral roll and after checking it with the particulars in the relevant entry in the roll, will call out loudly the page number, the part number, the serial number and the name of the elector to the hearing of the polling agents and the second polling officer.
- (iii) The State Election Commission has issued Order on compulsory identification of electors in the elections to local bodies. It is necessary for the electors to produce EPIC or in its absence any one of the identity documents from the list, at the polling station to establish their identity.
- (iv) The polling officer in charge of the identification must satisfy himself about the identity of the voter after examining identify document produced by the voter.
- (v) If there is no challenge as regards the identity of the voter, the polling officer will struck diagonally with red ink pen the entry relating to the elector in the marked copy of the electoral roll available with him in every case and where the elector is a female, the serial number of the female voter has to be rounded off in addition as that will be helpful to the polling officers to count the number of women voters at the end of poll.

NOTE: AT THE END OF THE DAY'S POLLING YOU HAVE TO COUNT THE NUMBER OF MEN AND WOMEN VOTERS WHO HAVE VOTED AND RECORD THE SAME IN THE PRESIDING OFFICER'S DIARY. ONE EASY METHOD OF DOING THIS WOULD BE TO WRITE DOWN ALL THE SERIAL NUMBERS FROM 1 TO 200 OR 300 ON TWO SEPARATE SHEETS OF PAPER, BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF POLL. TWO SUCH SHEET MAY BE USED, ONE FOR RECORDING THE NUMBER OF MEN VOTERS AND THE OTHER FOR WOMEN VOTERS. THE SERIAL NUMBER ON THE RELEVANT NUMBER SHEET SHOULD BE STRUCK OFF IN CONSECUTIVE ORDER ACCORDING TO THE SEX OF VOTERS AS AND WHEN THEY COME TO VOTE. THIS WILL ALSO HELP IN ASCERTAINING INSTANTLY THE TOTAL NUMBER OF MEN AND WOMEN VOTERS WHO HAVE VOTED UPTO A PARTICULAR HOUR.

After identification and locating the name of the elector and checking it with the particulars in the relevant entry in the roll, the first polling officer will call out loudly the section number, the page number, the serial number and the name of the elector to the hearing of the polling agents and the second and third polling officers.

The voter will then move to the second polling officer.

3.2 Second Polling Officer: Incharge of application of Indelible Ink and issuing of Ballot Paper:

- (i) The Second Polling Officer will be in-charge of indelible ink and the bundles of ballot papers. As the First Polling Officer reads aloud the part number and serial number of the elector, the Second Polling Officer will record on the counterfoil of both Sarpanch and Ward Member Ballot Papers the serial number of the elector as entered in the marked copy of the electoral roll, Polling Station No. and Ward Number.
- (ii) He will then inspect the voter's left forefinger to see that it does not bear any sign or trace of indelible ink, then "Indelible ink will be applied with the help of brush as a line from top end of the nail to the bottom of the first joint of the left forefinger.

- (iii) The Polling Officer will then obtain the signature/thumb impression of the voter on the counterfoils of both Sarpanch and Ward Member ballot papers. For the purpose of obtaining the thumb impression the stamp pad of purple colour supplied to your polling station should be used and for obtaining signature the ball-point pen should be used. For the use of voters whose thumb impression has been taken on the counterfoil of the ballot paper, a wet piece of cloth may be kept on the table of the Polling Officer for removing the ink. Both the ballot paper signed on reverse side by the Presiding Officer, will then be detached from the counterfoil with the help of a flat metal rule having a sharp edge on the lengthwise side. It will thereafter be delivered to the voter and he will be directed to the Third Polling Officer sitting near the voting compartment. No ballot paper should be delivered to an elector unless he has put his signature or thumb impression on the counterfoil of the ballot paper. It is not necessary to have the thumb impression of the elector on the counterfoil attested by the Presiding Officer or a Polling Officer or by any other officer.
- (iv) At the time of fresh poll/countermanded poll/re-poll, the marking with indelible ink made at the original poll should be ignored and fresh marking with indelible ink should be put at the root of the nail of the voter's left middle finger.

3.3 Third Polling Officer: Incharge of Arrow Cross Mark Rubber Stamp & folding and unfolding of Ballot Paper:

- (i) The Third Polling Officer will be in-charge of the arrow cross mark rubber stamps for marking the ballot paper. He will take the ballot paper (white) from the elector and fold it twice, first vertically and then horizontally, in such a way that the distinguishing mark is clearly visible at the top right hand corner on the back of the ballot paper. He will then unfold the ballot paper and hand it over to the elector. He will also give to the voter an inked rubber stamp and if specifically requested by the voter, instruct him by making a mark with it on a piece of plain paper. The voter will then be asked to proceed to the voting compartment. After recording his vote, the elector will refold, the ballot paper along the lines on which it was folded before it was issued to him, come out of the voting compartment and insert the ballot paper into the ballot box kept in front of the Presiding Officer/Polling Officer, later he will be given pink ballot paper pertaining to Sarpanch election duly folded to the elector who inturn will refold and proceed to voting compartment, record his vote and drop in the same ballot box kept in front of the Presiding Officer/Polling Officer.
- (ii) Before the voter leaves the polling station, the Polling Officer will examine the left forefinger of the elector and satisfy that the indelible ink mark is clearly impressed on the skin. If the voter has removed the mark or the mark is not clear, the voter should be marked again in such a way that the marking is clear and is not immediately removed.

4. WHEN POLLING PARTIES CONSISTS OF 1 PRESIDING OFFICER & 2 POLLING OFFICERS (1+2)

AND

WHERE THE NUMBER OF VOTERS IS BETWEEN 201 AND 400:

- 4.1. There shall be one Presiding Officer and two Polling Officers for each polling station, where the number of voters is between 201 and 400. One of the Polling Officers will also be designated as Assistant Presiding Officer.

4.2. Duties of first Polling Officer:

He will be responsible for identification of voters, and maintenance of marked copy of electoral rolls and incharge of indelible ink. He will read out the name and serial number of the voter in the electoral roll loudly and will struck diagonally with red ink pen the entry relating to the elector in the marked copy of the electoral roll available with him in every case and where the elector is a female, the serial number of the female voter has to be rounded off in addition as that will be helpful to the polling officers to count the number of women voters at the end of poll. He will also mark the indelible ink with the help of brush as a line from top end of the nail to the bottom of the first joint of the left forefinger and thereafter guide the voter to proceed to second polling officer.

4.3. Duties of second Polling Officer:

He will be incharge of bundles of ballot papers of Sarpanch and Ward members of Gram Panchayat and incharge of arrow cross marked rubber stamps used for marking Ballot papers. He will note the particulars of the serial number of the elector as entered in the marked copy of the electoral roll, Polling Station No. and Ward Number on the counter foils of both the Ballot papers (one for Sarpanch and the other for ward member) and thereafter takes the signature/thumb impression of the voter on the counter foils of both Sarpanch and Ward Members Ballot papers. He will take both the Ballot papers from the bundles and will first fold the white Ballot paper relating to ward number, first vertically and then horizontally. He will then unfold the paper and hand it over to the elector. He will also give to the elector an inked rubber stamp. The voter will then be asked to proceed to the voting compartment. After recording his vote, the elector will refold the Ballot paper along the lines which it was folded before issuing to him, come out from the voting compartment and insert the Ballot paper into the Ballot Box kept in front of the Presiding Officer/Polling Officer. In the mean time, he would fold the Ballot paper meant for Sarpanch, Gram Panchayat first vertically and then horizontally. He will then unfold and hand over the pink Ballot paper to the Elector who will proceed to the voting compartment, record his vote on pink Ballot paper, bring it back and drop it in the same Ballot box kept in front of the Presiding Officer/Polling Officer.

5. WHEN POLLING PARTIES CONSISTS OF 1 PRESIDING OFFICER & 1 POLLING OFFICER (1+1)

AND

WHERE THE NUMBER OF VOTERS ARE UPTO 200:

5.1 There shall be one presiding officer and one polling officer for each polling station where the number of voters is less than 200. The lone polling officer will also be designated as Asst. Presiding Officer.

5.2. Duties of the Polling Officer:

As the number of voters is quite less, the polling officer will attend to the following duties:

- (a) He will be incharge of indelible ink, incharge of bundles of ballot papers and incharge of arrow cross marked rubber stamps.
- (b) The presiding officer in this case is responsible for identification of electors, and maintaining the marked copy of the electoral roll. He reads out the name and serial number of the voter in the electoral roll loudly and will struck diagonally with red ink pen the entry relating to the elector in the marked copy of the electoral roll available with him in every case and where the elector is a female, the serial number of the female voter has to be rounded off in addition as that will be helpful to the polling officers to count the number of women voters at the end of poll. Then the polling officer will mark the indelible ink with the help of brush as a line from top end of the nail to the bottom of the first joint of the left forefinger. He will note the particulars of the serial number of the elector as entered in the marked copy of the electoral roll, Polling Station No. and Ward Number of the voter on the counter foils of both the Ballot papers (one for Sarpanch and the other for Ward Member) and thereafter takes the signature/thumb impression of the voter on both the counter foils of Sarpanch and Ward Member Ballot papers. He will take both the Ballot papers from the bundles and will first fold white Ballot papers relating to ward number first vertically and then horizontally. He will then unfold the Ballot paper and hand it over to the elector along with arrow cross marked rubber stamp. Then voter will be asked to proceed to voting compartment. After recording his vote, the elector will refold the Ballot paper along the lines it was folded before issued to him, come out of the voting compartment and insert the Ballot paper into the Ballot Box kept in front of the presiding officer. In the mean time he would fold the ballot paper meant for Sarpanch, Gram Panchayat first vertically and then horizontally. He will then unfold and hand over pink Ballot paper to the elector who will again proceed to the voting compartment, record his vote on the pink Ballot paper, bring it back and drop it into the same Ballot box kept in front of the presiding officer.

CHAPTER-VI

REGULATION OF ENTRY INTO AND SEATING ARRANGEMENTS IN THE POLLING STATION

1. PERSONS ENTITLED TO ENTER THE POLLING STATIONS:

- 1.1 In addition to the electors assigned to your polling station, the following persons can be admitted into the Polling Station:-
- (a) Polling Officers;
 - (b) Each candidate, his election agent and one polling agent of each candidate at a time;
 - (c) Persons authorised by the Commission;
 - (d) Public servants on duty in connection with election;
 - (e) Observers appointed by the Commission;
 - (f) A child in arms accompanying an elector;
 - (g) A person accompanying a blind or an infirm voter who cannot move without help; and
 - (h) Such other persons as you may from time to time admit for the purpose of identifying voters or otherwise assisting you in taking the poll.
- 1.2. You should note that the term "Public servant on duty in connection with election" does not normally include police officers. Such officers, whether in uniform or in plain clothes, should not, as a general rule, be allowed to enter inside the polling booth, unless you decide to call them in for the maintenance of law and order or some similar purpose. Their presence in the polling booth without any compelling reason will give scope to complaints by candidates or parties who may allege that their agents had been overawed by unnecessary show of force.
- 1.3. Similarly, security personnel accompanying, if any, an elector or candidate should also not be allowed to enter the polling station. (The person provided by security cover cannot be appointed as election agent or polling agent).
- 1.4. You should also note that the above expression, "Public servant on duty in connection with election" does not include the Ministers, State Ministers and Deputy Ministers of the Union and the States. They cannot be allowed to be appointed even as election agents or polling agents, as they have to be escorted by security guards who cannot be allowed entry into the polling station.
- 1.5. Entry of persons should be strictly regulated as detailed above, otherwise, the smooth and orderly conduct of poll may be vitiated. You should allow only three or four electors to enter the polling station at a time.
- 1.6. If you have a reasonable doubt about the presence of any person about whose credentials you have a reasonable suspicion in the polling booth, you can have him searched, if necessary, even though the person concerned may be in possession of a valid authority letter to enter the polling booth.
- 1.7. In the performance of your duties, you are only bound by the instructions of the State Election Commission. You are not to take orders from or show any favour to your official superiors or political leaders including Ministers. Even in the matter of requests for entry into the polling booth from these, you should allow them only if they are in possession of a valid authority letter issued by the State Election Commission.

- 1.8. A village officer or other officer or a woman attendant employed by you for helping you in the identification of electors or to assist you otherwise in taking the poll should normally be seated outside the entrance to the polling station. He/she should be admitted into the polling station only when he/she is required for identification of a particular voter or for assisting you for a particular purpose in connection with the taking of the poll. No one inside the polling station should be allowed to influence or try to influence the voters by words or gestures to vote in a particular way.

2. ATTENDANCE OF POLLING AGENTS:

The polling agents of the candidates should be asked to reach the polling station at least one hour before commencement of poll in order to be present when you are going through the preliminaries. If any part of these preliminaries has already been gone through, the proceedings need not be commenced / repeated for any late-comer.

3. PRODUCTION OF APPOINTMENT LETTERS BY POLLING AGENTS:

- 3.1 The polling agent must be the voter within the polling area of any of the Polling Stations in that Gram Panchayat and must have the valid EPIC.
- 3.2 The role of polling agent is to observe the polling i.e., whether the poll process is orderly free and fair. The polling agent can perform his role only if he/she is from local area and familiar with the identity of voters of that particular booth.
- 3.3 Every polling agent must produce before you the appointment letter in Form-XII prescribed in election rules **Annexure-7** by which the candidate or his election agent has appointed him. Check that the appointment is for your polling station.
- 3.4 The polling agent should then complete the document and sign the declaration therein in your presence and then deliver it to you before he can be admitted into the polling station. Preserve all such appointment letters and at the end of the poll send them in a cover to the Returning Officer along with other documents.

In case of any doubt about the genuineness of appointment letter in the said Form-XII **Annexure-7** of any polling agent presented before you, you should compare the specimen signature of the candidate/his election agent with their specimen signatures as provided by the Returning Officer. A copy of the model format for specimen signature of candidates and their election agents may also be seen in **Annexure-8**.

- 3.5 Any revocation of an appointment of polling agent shall be signed by the candidate or his election agent and such revocation will be operative from the date on which it is lodged with the Returning Officer. In the event of revocation or death of any agent at any time before the close of poll, a candidate or his election agent may appoint polling agent in the manner prescribed above.

4. PASSES FOR POLLING AGENTS:

- 4.1 A contesting candidate or his / her Election Agent can appoint one Polling Agent and or relief agent for each polling station.

- 4.2 Give every polling agent an identity card/pass on the authority of which he can come in to the polling station. Model of Polling Agents identity card/pass may be as follows.

| | |
|---|--|
| APSEC | |
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> PHOTO </div> | <p><u>Pass for Polling Agent</u></p> <p>Sl.No. & Name of the Polling Station.....</p> <p>Name of the polling agent</p> <p>Name of the contesting candidate</p> <p>Ordinary / Casual Election to Ward Member/Sarpanch of</p> <p>Name of the GP</p> <p>Date of Poll</p> |
| Signature of Polling Agent | Signature of the issuing authority |

5. SEATING OF POLLING AGENTS

The polling agents have to be seated behind the Polling Officer in-charge of marked copy of the electoral roll. Wherever this is not practicable because of the situation of the door for entrance, they may be given seat just opposite the polling officers. In any seating arrangement, they should be provided opportunity of seeing the faces of the electors and challenging their identity whenever necessary. They should not be allowed to move about in the polling station.

6. SMOKING TO BE PROHIBITED INSIDE POLLING STATION

You should not allow smoking inside the polling station. If any of the polling agents desires to smoke, he may go out of the polling station without causing any dislocation to the polling.

- 7. MOBILE PHONES PROBIHITED:** The Polling Agents are not permitted to use or bring mobile phones inside the polling booth.

8. POLLING AGENTS NOT TO BE ALLOWED TO TAKE AWAY THE COPY OF ELECTORAL ROLL OUTSIDE THE POLLING BOOTH DURING THE POLL HOURS:

“The polling agents shall not be permitted to take their marked copy of electoral rolls outside the polling booth during polling hours, for any reason whatsoever”.

9. FACILITIES TO PRESS REPRESENTATIVES AND PHOTOGRAPHERS

- 9.1 Subject to the maintenance of peace and order there is no objection to any photographer taking photographs of a crowd of voters lining up outside the polling station. He should, however, in no circumstances be allowed to take photographs inside the polling station.

- 9.2 Neither the District Election Authority / Election Authority nor the Returning Officer is empowered to authorise any person who is not an elector or who is not required to assist you in taking the poll, to enter a polling station. Any such person including publicity officials of the State Government should not be allowed inside a Polling Station without a letter of authority from the Commission. In no circumstances will any photograph be allowed to be taken while a voter exercising his vote.

10 FACILITIES TO OBSERVERS APPOINTED BY COMMISSION

- 10.1 The Commission appoints its observers at elections under Section 232 A of the Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994.
- 10.2 During the day of poll, Observers may visit your polling station. It is quite possible that he may start his round of the Ward with the visit to your polling station and may be present there when you are going through the preliminaries before the commencement of poll. He will only observe the poll being taken at your polling station, but will not give you any direction. If, however, he makes any suggestion with a view to providing more convenience to electors or making the poll process at your polling station smoother, you should give due consideration to such suggestion. In case, you are facing any particular problem or feeling any difficulty at your polling station, you may bring it to his notice, as he might be of help to you in solving that problem or removing that difficulty by bringing the matter to the notice of the Returning Officer or other concerned authorities for necessary remedial action.
- 10.3 The Observers will be carrying appointment letters / ID card issued by the Commission.

11. MICRO OBSERVERS

- 11.1 As it is sometimes it may not be possible for the general observer to visit each and every polling station in the constituency allotted to him or to be present at a Gram Panchayat for full time, the Commission will allow micro-observers to observe the elections at the selected Gram Panchayats wherever necessary. These micro-observers will directly work under the control and supervision of the general observer. The micro-observers are expected to reach the Gram Panchayat one hour before the commencement of the poll, i.e., at 6 O'clock in the morning and remain deployed at the Gram Panchayat throughout the day. He/She has to assess the preparedness for the poll and during the poll day he/she would regularly note down the important points on the pre-printed Proforma, but in no case the micro-observer will act as Presiding Officer or the Polling Officer or give any directions to them. His task is to observe that election process is being carried out in a free and fair manner and there is no vitiation of any kind. The micro-observer can oscillate between and visit the polling stations within the same Gram Panchayat at frequent intervals. Each micro-observer shall have a photo-pass and identity card issued by the Returning Officer to ensure his access to the polling stations.
- 11.2 In the process of observation on the day of the poll, the micro-observer should specially observe:-
- a) Voters access to polling station and their entry and exit of polling station.
 - b) Proper identification of voters in accordance with SEC guidelines
 - c) Procedure to be followed in case of **A**bsentee, **S**hifted and **D**uplicate/Dead voters (ASD list)

- d) Application of indelible ink,
- e) Secrecy of voting,
- f) Conduct of polling agents, their complaints, if any, etc.

11.3 During the poll, if the micro-observer feels that the poll is being vitiated for any reason, he will immediately bring it to the notice of General observer through whatever means of communication is available, for example, phone or wireless or any other means. After the poll process is over, the Micro-Observer will brief the Observer on anything of importance that had happened during the day and Observers should arrange for the Micro-Observer to be called for ascertaining further details if any. These reports along with the scrutiny of the counterfoils of Ballot Papers will be taken into consideration for taking a decision on repoll or any other action.

12. VISIT SHEET:

A proforma of visit sheet is designed by the APSEC for recording the observations by the Zonal Officer / Returning Officer / District Election Authority / Deputy District Election Authority / Additional Election Authority / Deputy Election Authority / Election Observers on poll day to enable them to note down their remarks at the time of visit to the polling stations.

Concerned Returning officer shall provide Visit Sheet to the Presiding Officers on the day of distribution of material, to make it available to the Visiting Officers on the poll day, to record the remarks.

The filled Visit Sheet should be kept in separate cover and handed over at reception center along with other election material after end of the poll. A copy of the model Visit Sheet may be seen in **Annexure-9**.

13. WEARING OF BADGES, ETC., INSIDE POLLING STATION

- 13.1 No person should be allowed within the polling station or within 100 meters thereof to wear badges, emblems, etc., bearing the names of candidates or political leaders and/or their symbols or pictorial representation thereof.
- 13.2 The polling agents may, however, display on their person a badge showing the name of the candidate whose agents they are.

CHAPTER-VII

PREPARATION OF BALLOT PAPERS FOR ISSUE

1. PRELIMINARIES BEFORE THE POLL

In order to see that, the poll is commenced at the hour fixed for the purpose, you should start making preliminary preparations, like the preparation of Ballot papers for issue to electors, preparation of ballot box etc. atleast one hour before the time fixed for the commencement of poll and complete atleast 15 minutes before commencement of poll.

2. PREPARATION OF BALLOT PAPERS FOR ISSUE

You will be supplied with ballot papers with counterfoils equal to the number of voters allotted to your polling station, rounded off to the next ten. The ballot papers will be ordinarily in bundles of 50 each and one or more bundles containing less than 50 ballot papers. Every ballot paper before issue to an elector is required to be affixed with a distinguishing mark on its back.

3. AFFIXING OF DISTINGUISHING MARK

3.1 Along with polling material you will be supplied with a rubber Seal containing distinguishing mark of your polling station, the ballot paper and the counterfoil attached there to shall be stamped on the back with such distinguishing mark. The distinguishing mark shall be a fraction within a circle whose numerator will indicate the serial number of the Gram Panchayat in the Mandal and the denominator will indicate the number of the polling station. This polling station number is same as Ward number, if there is only one polling station in that Ward. However, if there are more than one polling station in the Ward the Polling station number will be indicated in terms of Ward number suffixed with 'A', 'B' or 'C'.

3.2 ILLUSTRATION

Thus, for example, for a Gram Panchayat which is assigned serial No.25 within a Mandal and for Ward '6' having one polling station the distinguishing mark will be 25/6. In case Ward '6' is having 2 polling stations, then the distinguishing marks for each of the polling stations will be 25/6A & 25/6B.

The same distinguishing mark shall be stamped on the back side of the counter foil and ballot paper of Sarpanch and Member, on the left side on the top, so that the same will be visible when the ballot paper is folded.

Every Ballot Paper, before it is issued, shall be signed in full in its back by the Presiding Officer.

3.3 The object of affixing the distinguishing mark in this way is that it should be clearly seen from outside after the ballot paper is folded for being put in the ballot box. The mark on the counterfoil will continue to be on the top right hand corner. In case such a stamp is not supplied, you should write this distinguishing mark in your own handwriting on the backside of the ballot paper.

4. PRESIDING OFFICER'S SIGNATURE ON THE BACK OF THE EACH BALLOT PAPER:

4.1. You should sign your name in full on the back of each ballot paper before it is issued to the voter to remove all suspicion regarding the genuineness of ballot papers, but you need not sign on the counterfoil.

4.2. SIGN SOME BALLOT PAPERS IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE POLL.

You may sign about two bundles of 50 ballot papers each immediately before the commencement of the poll. This should be done a few minutes before the commencement of the poll. Usually it would take only about 5 minutes to sign 100 ballot papers and so the signing of the ballot papers should begin not more than 15 minutes before the commencement of the poll. You should sign the remaining ballot paper according to necessity as the poll progresses. You should ensure that only the exact number of ballot papers required for issue to electors is signed by you.

5. RECORD THE FIRST AND LAST SERIAL NUMBER OF THE BALLOT PAPER TO BE USED AT POLLING STATION

5.1. Before commencing the poll, you should allow the polling agents to see the bundles of ballot papers and note the first and last of serial numbers of the ballot papers which will be used at the polling station and also any ballot paper duly cancelled by you on account of its defective nature.

5.2. The Polling agents should not, however, be permitted to take notes of the serial number of any ballot paper issued to any voter nor should they take any other notes which may enable one to work out these serial numbers as this would destroy the secrecy of the vote. You have the authority to prevent anyone from taking any such notes as this amounts to misconduct as being an attempt to violate the secrecy of the vote. You are competent to seize and forfeit any document on which a polling agent may have taken any such note. If any polling agent persists in taking such notes in spite of warnings, you should not allow him to remain in the polling station.

6. SHUFFLING OF BALLOT PAPER BUNDLES

See that the polling agents are not able to note down the serial number of ballot papers issued to particular voter, the ballot papers may not be issued in consecutive serial order but may be issued at random. As shuffling of individual ballot papers in stitched bundles will not be possible, you should do the shuffling in respect of the bundles by issuing the first three or four bundles of ballot papers at random to the Polling Officer in-charge of ballot papers and not in consecutive serial order. This process of shuffling of bundles of ballot papers should not however be repeated towards the close of the poll so that on the completion of the poll the serial numbers of ballot papers issued to voters are, as far as possible, in continuous unbroken series.

CHAPTER-VIII

PREPARATION OF BALLOT BOX AND PROCEDURE FOR USE OF ADDITIONAL BALLOT BOX

1. PRELIMINARIES BEFORE POLL

Begin the preparation of the ballot box one hour before the hour fixed for the commencement of the poll. You should operate the ballot box according to the instructions and as demonstrated in the training classes.

2. PREPARATION OF THE BALLOT BOX

- 2.1 Before a Ballot Box is put in actual use at the polling station, some preparations, are necessary at the polling station. These preparations have to be done by the Presiding Officer in the presence of the candidates/ their agents before the commencement of poll.
- 2.2. You should start these preliminary preparations about one hour before the time fixed for the commencement of poll. If any polling agent is not present, the preparations should not be postponed so as to await the arrival of the polling agent. Nor should you start the preparations again if any polling agent turns up late.

3. CONDUCT OF DEMONSTRATION OF BALLOT BOX

Immediately before commencement of the poll you shall demonstrate to the polling agents and other authorized persons present, that the ballot box is empty and it does not contain anything and allow them to inspect of Ballot Box.

4. AFFIX LABELS AND ADDRESS TAGS

- 4.1. You should affix labels and address tags inside and outside the Ballot Box marked with the description of Polling Station, the Elective Office for which the box is being used and the date of poll for easy identification of Ballot Box.
- 4.2. Put inside the box an addressed tag duly filled up with all the details for identification in case the necessity arises at the time of counting. Also firmly attach on the handle of the ballot box an addressed tag showing all the details:
The address tag will contain the following particulars:

| APSEC ADDRESS TAG | |
|--|--|
| Ordinary / Casual Election to Sarpanch / Member of Ward No: | |
| Name of the GP & MPP | |
| Ballot Box Sl.No. (engraved) | |
| Ballot Box Sl.No. (assigned) | |
| Sl.No. & Name of the Polling Station where used | |
| Date of Poll | |

5. DEFECTIVE BALLOT BOXES

Before the commencement of poll, if a ballot box is found to be defective or materially damaged, you should substitute the defective or damaged box by another one in good condition.

6. PROCEDURE FOR USE OF ADDITIONAL BALLOT BOXES

If you find at any time during the poll that the ballot box in use is getting filled, even after it has been shaken up and ballot papers have been pressed into position through the slit by means of the pusher supplied, you may prepare another box in the same manner as the first one during the course of the poll but sufficiently in advance. When you place the second box for reception of ballot papers, the first box should be closed immediately, sealed in the manner as indicated in Chapter-XXII and kept aside at safe place. There should be only one box in use at any point of time and a second box should be pressed into service only when the first box in use is full and closed. All the preliminaries like demonstration that the ballot box is empty, declaration, fixing of paper seals etc. should be gone through as in the case of the first box.

CHAPTER-IX

FIXING OF PAPER SEAL AND CLOSING OF BALLOT BOX

1. FIXING GREEN PAPER SEAL

- 1.1. The ballot boxes are sealed and secured by fixing a green paper seal specially got printed by the Commission. Once the green paper seal is fixed in a ballot box and the lid of the box is closed, the box cannot be opened and the ballot papers contained therein cannot be tampered with or taken out for counting unless the green paper seal is torn. In other words it means that once the ballot box is sealed and poll commenced, nobody should be able to tamper with it, to achieve and ensure this, provision has been made for fixing the green paper seal for securing a ballot box.
- 1.2. You should fix the paper seal, where it is necessary, in position in the frame so that the green background shows through the window of the ballot box. You should note that only one paper seal will be used.
- 1.3. You should verify that the paper seal cannot be shifted from the position by softly pulling it at the end. Do not use a damaged paper seal. As the green paper seal will be 10 inches in length, you should take care to fold the two ends so that the paper seal does not hang loose inside the ballot box where it may be damaged when the ballot papers are pushed by means of the pusher supplied.
- 1.4. You should then put the distinguishing mark at the center of the paper seal on the green surface. After marking, put a dash and then add the numbers 1, 2, 3 according to number of ballot boxes used. Then fix the paper seal in such a way that the distinguishing mark is seen through the window. So that the distinguishing mark are visible from outside.

2. SIGNATURES OF PRESIDING OFFICER & POLLING AGENTS ON PAPER SEAL

Before the green paper seal is fixed in the frame provided for the purpose, you should affix your signature in full immediately below the serial number of the paper seal on the white surface of the paper seal. It shall be got signed by such of the candidates or their polling agents as are present and are desirous of affixing their signatures. You should verify that the signatures of the polling agents on the paper seal tally with their signatures on their letters of appointment.

3. PAPER SEAL ACCOUNT

You should keep a correct account of the paper seals supplied to you for use at the polling station and the paper seals actually used by you for sealing and securing the ballot box. Such account shall be maintained by you in form given at **Annexure-10**.

You should allow the candidates or their polling agents present to note down the serial number of paper seals so supplied for use and actually used, and to affix their signature in Part-I of the declaration at the commencement of the poll. Thereafter, forward the completed form to the Returning Officer in a separate cover along with the Ballot Paper Account in Form-XXV and your declarations.

4. CLOSING OF BALLOT BOXES

Close the Ballot Boxes in the balloting position. In securing the Ballot Boxes in the Balloting position make sure that the slit is fully open, so that the Ballot Paper can be freely inserted through it.

CHAPTER-X

COMMENCEMENT OF THE POLL

1. COMMENCEMENT OF THE POLL

Generally, the hours of Poll are: 7.00 A.M. to 1.00 P.M.

Commence the poll at the stroke of the hour fixed for the purpose. Your preliminaries should be over by then. If unfortunately the preliminaries are not over, admit three or four voters at the hour fixed for the commencement of the poll and let the Polling Officer deal with them in regard to their identification, etc. until the preliminaries by you are over. This sort of overlapping of preliminaries is very undesirable and every effort should be made to avoid it. Even if for any unforeseen reason you are not in a position to commence the poll at the appointed hour, you have no authority to extend the appointed polling hours or the closing time except to continue the poll beyond the closing hour until all the electors present at the polling station at the hour appointed for the close of poll (who were distributed slips signed by you in full starting from the tail of the queue towards its head) have voted.

2. WARNING ABOUT SECRECY OF VOTING

Before commencing the poll, explain to all present the provisions of Section 217 of Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 regarding their duty to maintain the secrecy of the vote and the penalty for any breach thereof.

3. PRECAUTIONS FOR INDELIBLE INK

Ask the Polling Officer in-charge of indelible ink to take adequate precautions to see that the phial containing the indelible ink is kept in such a manner that it does not get tilted and the ink spilt during the poll. For that purpose, take some sand or loose earth in a cup provided for the purpose or an empty tin or some such broad-bottomed vessel, and push the phial down three quarters of its length into the centre of the vessel so that it is steadily embedded in the sand or earth. Also ensure that the brush attached to the cork is left standing in the phial and not taken out except for the purpose of marking the voter's forefinger. The BRUSH should always be held with its marking end pointing vertically downwards. Otherwise, some of the ink will drip down the rod and spoil the fingers of the person using it.

4. MARKED COPY OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL

Before commencement of poll, you should also demonstrate to the polling agents and others present at polling station that the copy of electoral roll intended to be used as marked copy does not contain any marks or entries other than the marks of 'PB' against entries of those voters to whom postal ballot papers have been issued.

5. ENTRY OF VOTERS TO POLLING STATION TO BE REGULATED

There should be separate queues for men and women voters. The persons who enforce the queues will allow three or four voters into the polling station at a time, as you direct. Other voters waiting to come in should be made to stand in queue outside. Infirm voters and women voters with babies in arms and elderly persons may be given precedence over other voters in the queue. Men and women voters should be admitted into the polling station in alternate batches. The formation of more than one queue for men voters or for women voters should not be allowed.

CHAPTER-XI

PROCEDURE IN CASE OF CHALLENGE

1. LIST OF DEAD, ABSENT AND ALLEGEDLY BOGUS VOTERS

It is expected that polling agents may bring with them a copy of the list of the names of dead, absent and allegedly bogus voters. The candidate may supply similar list to you. The election authorities may also prepare such list and hand over to you at distribution centre, if any person claims to be a voter whose name is mentioned in that lists you shall check that person's identity rigorously. This will not amount to a formal challenge.

2. CHALLENGED VOTES

2.1 The polling agents can challenge the identity of a person claiming to be a particular elector by depositing a sum of Rs.5/- in cash with the Presiding Officer for each such challenge. The Presiding Officer shall hold a summary inquiry into the challenge. If after the inquiry the Presiding Officer considers that the challenge has not been established, he shall allow the person challenged to vote. If he considers that the challenge has been established, the Presiding Officer shall debar the person challenged from voting and shall handover such person to the police with a written complaint as at **Annexure-12**. All such complaints to the Police should be vigorously pursued and prosecutions launched against the offenders so that they are convicted and suitably punished.

2.2 You should keep a record of such challenged votes in Form-XXI **Annexure-13** model Form of Receipt of Challenge Fee is appended in **Annexure-14**.

3. CHALLENGING A VOTER'S IDENTITY

Every person whose name is entered in the electoral roll is entitled to vote at the election. Unless, there is a challenge by a candidate or his election agent or polling agent, or unless you are clearly satisfied that he is a bogus voter, it should normally be presumed that the person claiming to be a voter and giving out the name and other details correctly and producing the prescribed identification document of that voter is a genuine voter. If there is a challenge or if you feel any reasonable doubt about the identity of the person from the surrounding circumstances, you should hold a summary inquiry and decide the question.

4. CHALLENGE FEE

You should not entertain any challenge by a candidate or his election/polling agent of a voter's identity until the challenger pays five rupees in cash. After the amount has been paid, furnish a receipt therefore to the challenger in the Form prescribed in **Annexure-14**. Warn the person challenged about the penalty for impersonation by reading out the relevant entry in the electoral roll in full and ask him whether he is the person referred to in that entry, enter his name and address in the list of Challenged Votes (Form-XXI) **Annexure-13** and ask him to sign or affix his thumb impression thereof. If he refuses to do so, do not allow him to vote.

5. SUMMARY INQUIRY

First ask the challenger to produce evidence to show that the person challenged is not the voter that he claims to be. If the challenger fails to adduce prima facie evidence in support of his challenge, disallow the challenge and allow the person challenged to vote. If the challenger succeeds in making out a prima-facie case that the person is not the voter in question, you should call upon the latter to produce evidence to rebut the challenge i.e. to prove that he is the voter he claims to be. If he proves his claim by such evidence, allow him to vote. If he fails to do so, hold that the challenge has been established. In the course of the inquiry, you are free to ascertain the true fact from the village officer, the neighbours of the voter in question and any other person present. While taking evidence, you may administer an oath to the person challenged or any other person offering to give evidence. In case the challenge has been established, you should hand over the person to the policeman on duty, together with your complaint, as at **Annexure-12**, addressed to the Station House Officer of Police Station in the jurisdiction of which your polling station falls.

6. RETURN OF FORFEITURE OF CHALLENGE FEE

Immediately after the inquiry is over, return the challenge fee of five rupees to the person who made the challenge after taking his receipt in Column 8 of Form-XXI List of Challenged Votes **Annexure-13** and on the counterfoil of the relevant receipt in the receipt book, in every case, except where you are of the opinion that the challenge was frivolous or was not made in good faith. In the latter case, forfeit the challenge fee to Government and do not return it to the challenger and enter the word 'forfeited' in Column 8 of Form-XXI **Annexure-13** and the relevant counterfoil in the receipt book, instead of taking the depositor's signature or thumb impression.

7. CLERICAL AND PRINTING ERRORS IN THE ROLL TO BE OVERLOOKED

The particulars in respect of a voter as entered in the electoral roll are sometimes incorrectly printed or have become out of date e.g., regarding the exact age of the voter. You should overlook mere clerical and printing errors in any entry relating to a voter in the poll, provided that you are otherwise satisfied about the identity of the person claiming to be the voter, according to the photo and other particulars entered in electoral roll. When the electoral roll has been prepared in more than one language and the name of a person has not been included in the marked copy of the electoral roll, such a person should be allowed to vote if his name appears in the version of the electoral roll in the other language for the same area. An entry in respect of every such elector should be noted by you in ink on the marked copy of the electoral roll.

8. ELIGIBILITY OF A VOTER NOT TO BE QUESTIONED

So long as the identity of a voter is established to your satisfaction, he has the right to vote. No question can be raised at the polling station about the eligibility of such a person to be a voter. For instance, you are not entitled to hold any inquiry into the question whether he is over 18 years of age or ordinarily resides in the constituency.

9. DECLARATION OF ELECTOR ABOUT HIS AGE

But in the case of a person whom you consider much below the qualifying age, you must be clearly satisfied about his claim of being elector with reference to the entry in the electoral roll relating to him.

If you are prima facie satisfied about his identity and the fact of inclusion of his name in the electoral roll but consider him to be below the minimum voting age, you should obtain a declaration as in **Annexure-15** from that elector about his age on the 1st day of January of the year with reference to which the existing electoral roll of the constituency has been prepared/ revised. Before obtaining the declaration from such elector, you should inform him of the penal provision in Section 182 of IPC for making false declaration.

After the close of the poll, the above mentioned list and the declarations should be kept together in a separate cover.

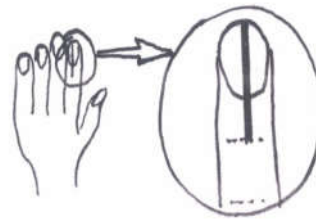
You should also prepare a list of Voters from whom declaration as to their age have been obtained in Part-I of **Annexure-16**. And you should also maintain a list of voters who have refused to make declarations as to their age and go away without casting votes in Part-II of **Annexure-16**. After the close of Poll, the above mentioned list and the declarations should be kept together in a separate cover.

CHAPTER-XII

APPLICATION OF INDELIBLE INK AND OBTAINING SIGNATURE / THUMB IMPRESSION OF ELECTOR BEFORE PERMITTING HIM TO CAST HIS VOTE

1. INSPECTION OF VOTER'S LEFT FOREFINGER AND APPLICATION OF INDELIBLE INK

- 1.1 As soon as may be, after the identity of an elector has been verified by the first Polling Officer, and if there is no challenge as to the elector's identity, his left forefinger will be marked with indelible ink with the help of brush as a line from top end of the nail to the bottom of the first joint of the left forefinger by the second polling officer as shown hereunder:



If any elector refuses to allow his left forefinger to be inspected or marked in accordance with instruction or has already such a mark on his left forefinger or does any act with a view to removing the ink, he shall not be allowed to vote.

- 1.2 While applying excess ink should not be taken by dipping the whole length of the brush. Only the tip of the brush should be dipped in the ink. This will avoid excess in-take of the ink. It must be ensured that the voter's forefinger is perfectly in the horizontal position at the time of the application of the ink and for atleast thirty-seconds immediately after the application of the ink so that the solvent gets evaporated. If the brush is only lightly touched or rubbed against the voters finger, it will merely leave a smudge which is not sufficient.
- 1.2 In case it is noticed that an elector has applied any oily or greasy substance on his finger in order to neutralize the indelible ink mark to be put on his finger, such oily or greasy substance should be removed by the polling officer with the help of a piece of cloth or rug before putting indelible ink mark on the finger of that elector.
- 1.4 Marking of the indelible ink is required to be made before obtaining the signature/thumb impression of the elector on the counterfoil of ballot paper so that by the time the elector leaves the polling station after casting his vote, there is sufficient time gap for the indelible ink to dry up and develop a distinct indelible mark on the left hand forefinger.

2. APPLICATION OF INDELIBLE INK AT FRESH POLL

At the time of fresh poll/countermanded poll, the marking with indelible ink made at the original poll should be ignored and fresh marking with indelible ink should be put on the voter's left middle finger in the same way as prescribed at para 1.1 above.

3. APPLICATION OF INDELIBLE INK WHEN ELECTOR HAS NO LEFT FOREFINGER

If an elector has no left forefinger, then indelible ink should be applied on any such finger which he has on his left hand. If he does not have any fingers on his left hand, the ink should be applied on his right forefinger and if he has no right forefinger, on any other finger which he has on his right hand starting with his right forefinger. If he has no fingers on either hand, ink should be applied on such extremity (stump) of his left or right hand as he possesses.

4. SIGNATURE/THUMB IMPRESSION OF ELECTOR BEFORE ISSUE OF BALLOT PAPER

4.1 After the left forefinger of the elector has been marked with indelible ink as aforesaid, the polling officer incharge of ballot papers will obtain the signature or thumb impression of the elector on the counterfoil of the ballot paper which is to be issued to him and whereon his electoral roll number has been noted by the polling officer. If any elector refuses to put his signature or thumb impression on the counterfoil of the ballot paper, no ballot paper shall be issued to such elector.

4.2 The ballot paper and the counterfoil of which the electoral roll number of such elector refusing to sign has already been noted by the polling officer should be cancelled and both on the ballot paper and its counterfoil the words "cancelled: Refused to sign" should be endorsed by the Presiding Officer. Such cancelled ballot paper should be kept in the cover containing other cancelled ballot paper mentioned in Chapter-XIX and accounted for in the ballot paper account in Form-XXV.

5. SIGNATURE OF ELECTOR

A signature so far on the counterfoil of the ballot paper may be described as the writing of a person's name on a document with the intention of authenticating that document. A literate person, while signing a counterfoil of the ballot paper, will be required to write his name, i.e. both his full name or names and his surnames in full or in any case his surname in full or names either in full or by means of initials of that name or names. The preferable course in the case of a literate voter will be to request him to sign his name, i.e., both his name or names and his surname in full. If a literate person puts simply a mark and insists that, that mark should be taken as a signature, while claiming to be a literate person, then, that mark cannot be taken to be his signature because as stated, signature means, in the case of a literate person, the writing of the name of that person by himself in authentication of a document on which he writes his name. In such a case, if he refuses to sign his name in full as indicated above, then his thumb impression should be taken. If he refuses to give his thumb impression also, then no ballot paper should be given to him and such ballot paper should be cancelled under foregoing paragraph 4.2.

6. THUMB IMPRESSION OF ELECTOR

6.1 **If the elector is uneducated:** If an elector is unable to sign his name, the impression of his left thumb should be obtained on the counterfoil of the ballot paper. It should be noted that it is not necessary for the Presiding Officer or any Polling Officer to attest such thumb impression on the counterfoil of the ballot paper.

- 6.2 If no fingers are available, the voter being unable to mark his ballot paper will necessarily have to seek assistance of a companion under rule 48 of the said rules. In that case the signature or thumb impression of the companion should be taken on the counterfoil.
- 6.3 It is necessary that the thumb impression on the counterfoil should be a clear thumb impression. The thumb of the voter should not be inked so lightly from the stamping pad that it gives only a faint or undecipherable impression on the counterfoil. Nor should the thumb be inked so heavily that it gives a smudge impression instead of a clear thumb impression on the counterfoil. While taking the thumb impression it should also be ensured that no part of such impression extends beyond the counterfoil and on to the actual ballot paper.
- 6.4 After taking the thumb impression, the ink on the elector's thumb should be wiped off with the help of wet piece of cloth.

7. SIGNATURE/THUMB IMPRESSION ON THE COUNTERFOIL OF BALLOT PAPER BY BLIND OR INFIRM OR LEPER VOTERS

Thumb impression of a blind voter or a voter suffering from leprosy should be obtained on the counterfoil of ballot paper. In case any such voter is literate he may be allowed to put his signature in place of thumb impression. In case of infirm voter who cannot use either of his hands, his companion shall put his signature or thumb impression on the counterfoil of ballot paper. A note may be made on such counterfoil of ballot paper regarding signature of thumb impression of the companion.

CHAPTER-XIII

ISSUE OF BALLOT PAPERS AND INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS REGARDING VOTING PROCEDURE

1. PRECAUTION AGAINST BALLOT PAPERS STICKING TOGETHER

Take care to see that two or more ballot papers do not stick together and as a result more ballot papers than one are issued to a voter. The best way to check this is for the polling officer incharge of ballot papers to take out the ballot paper meant for a voter while the voter's identity is being checked and to see that the serial number of the ballot paper left at the top of the bundle is next to the serial number of the ballot paper taken out for issue.

2. DEFECTIVE BALLOT PAPERS

While issuing ballot papers, if any ballot paper is found defective, it should not be issued to any voter, but should be cancelled by you. Such defective ballot papers cancelled by you in the polling station may also be kept in the cover containing cancelled ballot papers. The counterfoil of such ballot paper will remain in the bundle with an endorsement "Cancelled: defective ballot paper". It has to be accounted for in Form-XXV Ballot Paper Account.

3. PREFOLDING OF BALLOT PAPER

- 3.1. When a ballot paper is handed over to an elector for marking his vote thereon, the last polling Officer incharge of rubber stamps will first fold the ballot paper twice, first vertically and then horizontally, in such a way that the distinguishing mark affixed on the back of the ballot paper is clearly visible at the top right hand corner. He will then unfold the ballot paper and hand it over to the elector.
- 3.2. Where the ballot papers are printed in two (2) or more columns, the mode of folding these ballot papers will be different. The ballot paper may be folded vertically first in the middle of each of the two halves and thereafter the third fold may be along the shaded vertical line dividing the two halves. It should then be folded horizontally in such manner that the distinguishing mark affixed on its back is clearly visible. It should thereafter be unfold and handed over to the elector.

4. INSTRUCTIONS AS TO HOW THE BALLOT PAPER IS TO BE MARKED

- 4.1. The Polling Officer in-charge of the rubber stamps will instruct the voter:-
 - (a) to go inside a voting compartment;
 - (b) to record there his vote by making a mark on the symbol of the candidate for whom he wishes to vote with the inked rubber stamps given to him but no demonstration should be made by affixing the rubber stamp on any particular symbol on a specimen ballot paper or any other paper. If any assistance is required by any voter, the procedure for marking should be explained by affixing the stamp on a piece of plain paper without any symbols;
 - (c) not to stamp the ballot paper more than once;
 - (d) to refold the ballot paper along the prefolded lines;
 - (e) to bring it out of the voting compartment thereafter; and
 - (f) to insert the folded ballot paper into the ballot box.

- 4.2. This Officer should ensure that the arrow cross-mark rubber stamp is adequately inked, but not over inked before it is handed over to the voter. He should check from time to time that the pad is not dry and the rubber of the arrow cross-mark rubber stamp is intact and in position. He should also ensure that the self-inking pad is not kept inside the voting compartment at any stage. He should also see, particularly in the case of illiterate voter that they have understood how the stamp is to be used for marking. He may ask such a voter to make a mark with the stamp on a sheet of plain paper, if necessary.

5. VOTERS TO VOTE WITHOUT UNDUE DELAY

See that a voter does not stay in the compartment unduly long. No other voter should be allowed to go into a compartment when another voter is inside. When the voter comes out the polling officer will take the rubber stamp from him and ask him to insert the ballot paper into the ballot box.

6. PRECAUTIONS TO ENSURE CORRECT VOTING

If you notice that the voter has erroneously marked the ballot paper on the back or suspect that the voter has not marked the ballot paper at all you may ask the voter whether he has marked the ballot paper and if so, on the correct side and if not, instruct him to go back into voting compartment and to make the mark. If the voter comes to you with the ballot paper unfolded or folded in the wrong way, you should rectify the defect, maintaining the secrecy of the vote. Ensure also that the voter puts into the box only the ballot paper given to him by checking the distinguishing mark on the back whenever necessary.

CHAPTER-XIV

MAINTENANCE OF SECRECY OF VOTING BY ELECTORS

1. VOTING PROCEDURE TO BE STRICTLY OBSERVED

Every elector who is permitted to vote shall maintain absolute secrecy of voting within the polling station. He should strictly observe the voting procedure mentioned in Chapter-V.

2. WARNING ABOUT SECRECY OF VOTING

Before commencing the poll, explain to all present the provisions of Section 217 of Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994, regarding their duty to maintain the secrecy of the vote and the penalty for any breach thereof.

3. MAINTENANCE OF SECRECY OF VOTING

3.1 Extract of Section 217 of Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994

- (1) Every officer, clerk, agent or other person who performs any duty in connection with the recording or counting of votes at an election shall maintain, and aid in maintaining, the secrecy of the voting and shall not (except for some purpose authorized by or under any law) communicate to any person any information calculated to violate such secrecy.
- (2) Any person who contravenes provisions of subsection (1) shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term, which may extend to three months or with fine or with both.

3.2 Rule 47: Maintenance of secrecy of voting by electors and voting procedure:-

- (1) Every elector to whom a ballot paper has been issued under rule 46 or any other provisions of these rules shall maintain secrecy of voting within the polling station and for that purpose observe the voting procedure hereinafter laid down.
- (2) The elector on receiving the ballot paper or papers, as the case may be, shall forthwith –
 - (a) proceed to one of the voting compartments,
 - (b) make a mark on the ballot paper or papers with the instrument supplied for the purpose on or near the symbol / symbols allotted to the candidate / candidates for whom he intends to vote,
 - (c) fold the ballot paper / papers vertically first and thereafter horizontally so as to conceal his vote,
 - (d) if required, show to the Presiding Officer the distinguishing mark on the ballot paper or papers,
 - (e) insert the folded ballot paper into the specified ballot box, and
 - (f) leave the polling station by the exit provided.
- (3) Every elector shall vote without undue delay.

- (4) No elector shall be allowed to enter a voting compartment when another elector is inside it.
- (5) If an elector to whom a ballot paper has been issued refuses, after warning given by the Presiding Officer to observe the procedure laid down in sub-rule (2), of Rule 47 of Conduct of Election Rules, 2006, the ballot paper issued to him shall, whether he has recorded his vote thereon or not, be taken back from him by the Presiding Officer or a polling officer, under the direction of the Presiding Officer.
- (6) After the ballot paper has been taken back, the Presiding Officer (you) shall record on its back as well as on the counterfoil the word "Cancelled: voting procedure violated" and put your signature below these words and all such ballot papers shall be kept in a separate cover which shall bear on its face the words "Cancelled Ballot Papers - voting procedure violated" and accounted for in Ballot Paper Account in Part-I of Form XXV.
- (7) Without prejudice to any other penalty to which an elector, from whom a ballot paper has been taken back under Sub-rule (5) may be liable, the vote, if any recorded on such ballot paper shall not be counted.

CHAPTER-XV

VOTING BY BLIND AND INFIRM VOTERS

- 1.** If you are satisfied that owing to blindness or other physical infirmity a voter is unable to recognize the symbols on the ballot paper or make a mark thereon without assistance, you should permit the voter to take with him a companion of not less than 18 years of age to the voting compartment for recording the vote on the ballot paper on his behalf and in accordance with his wishes and for folding the ballot paper so as to conceal the vote and for inserting it into the ballot box.
 - 1.1 No person shall be permitted to act as the companion of more than one elector at any polling station on the same day.
 - 1.2 Before any person is permitted to act as the companion of the elector, he shall be required to declare that he will keep secret of the vote recorded by him on behalf of the elector and that he has not already acted as the companion of any other elector at any other polling station on that day. The declaration shall be obtained by you from the companion in the Form-XXII as at **Annexure-17**.
 - 1.3 You shall also keep a record of all such cases in Form-XXIII **Annexure-18** and send this form along with declaration in a prescribed cover to the returning officer.
 - 1.4 Voters with obviously defective eyesight should be questioned in order to find out whether they can distinguish the symbols on the ballot paper and mark properly
 - 1.5 You shall also ensure that none of your polling staff acts as a companion to the blind elector to record vote on his behalf.

CHAPTER-XVI

ELECTORS DECIDING NOT TO VOTE

1. REFUSAL TO VOTE

1.1 Cancellation of Ballot Paper

- (i) If a voter, after receiving the ballot paper do not wish to vote, he may return the ballot papers to you without marking it. The ballot paper and the counterfoil of such ballot paper should be cancelled by writing on it the words "Returned; Cancelled" and you should record as "Returned; Cancelled" on counterfoil of Ballot paper and ballot paper.
- (ii) If the voter decides not to vote, he shall not be forced or compelled to cast his vote.

2. SPOILT BALLOT PAPERS

If an elector has spoilt the Ballot Paper and returns it to you, he may be given another ballot paper. In every such case, the voter should satisfy you of his inadvertence. The ballot paper so returned and the counterfoil of such ballot papers shall be marked "spoilt; cancelled". You should Record as "Spoilt; Cancelled" on counterfoil of Ballot paper and ballot paper.

3. RECORD ALL SUCH CANCELLED BALLOT PAPERS

Keep a record of all such cancelled ballot papers. Such cancelled ballot paper should be kept in the cover for cancelled ballot papers and accounted for in ballot paper account in Part-I of Form-XXV.

CHAPTER-XVII

VOTING BY PUBLIC SERVANTS ON ELECTION DUTY

1. The provisions relating to the exercise of vote by persons on election duty are contained in sub-rule (2) of Rule 25 of Conduct of Elections Rules, 2006.
 - 1.1 Presiding Officers, Polling Officers, or other public servants on election duty registered as electors within the Ward / Gram Panchayat have been given the right to opt to vote in person in a polling station in which they are on election duty, if they so desire, and not by postal ballot. Any such voter opting to vote in person has to apply to the Returning Officer in Form-XV (**Annexure-19**) for such facility.
 - 1.2 The Returning Officer on being satisfied that the person is entitled to the concession will grant him Election Duty Certificate in Form-XVI (**Annexure-20**).
 - 1.3 No steps for identification of such person are required. He may be allowed to vote as under:
 - (i) on production of Election duty certificate, obtain thereon the signature of the person producing the same;
 - (ii) have the person's name and electoral roll number as mentioned in the certificate entered at the end of the marked copy of electoral roll; and
 - (iii) permit him to vote by means in the same manner as for an elector entitled to vote at that polling station.

2. ALL PERSONS ON ELECTON DUTY TO APPLY FOR POSTAL BALLOT PAPER RATHER THAN EDC

UNDER THE PRESENT SYSTEM, DUTY TO POLLING PERSONS IS ASSIGNED BY THE METHOD OF RANDOM SELECTION AND NORMALLY THE PERSONS ARE ASSIGNED DUTY OUTSIDE THEIR CONSTITUENCIES, BUT WITHIN THE SAME DISTRICT. FURTHER, THE PERSONS ON POLLING DUTY COME TO KNOW ABOUT THE PLACE OF DUTY ONLY AT THE LAST MOMENT. THEREFORE, APPLICATIONS FOR EDC FROM THOSE WHO MAY BE PUT ON DUTY IN THEIR OWN CONSTITUENCIES CAN GET DELAYED CONSIDERABLY. HENCE TO ENABLE ALL PERSONS ON POLLING DUTY TO EXERCISE THEIR FRANCHISE, THEY ALL MAY BE ASKED TO APPLY FOR AND OBTAIN POSTAL BALLOT PAPERS FOR VOTING. UNDER THE LAW, THERE IS NO BAR TO VOTE BY POST, EVEN IF THE PERSON IS PUT ON DUTY IN THE SAME CONSTITUENCY WHERE HE IS REGISTERED AS AN ELECTOR.

CHAPTER-XVIII

TENDERED VOTES

1. If a person presents himself at the polling station and seeks to vote representing himself to be a particular elector, after another person has already voted as such elector, you shall satisfy yourself about the identity of the elector concerned. If you are satisfied about the identity of the elector on his satisfactorily answering such questions relating to his identity as you may ask, you shall allow the elector concerned to vote by means of a tendered ballot paper, you should get his left forefinger marked with indelible ink.

1.1. You will then make necessary entry in the list of tendered votes in Form-XXIV **Annexure-21** and obtain the signature or the thumb impression of the voter thereon.

2. ISSUE OF BALLOT PAPER

2.1 He shall then be supplied with an ordinary ballot paper used at the polling station except that

(i) it shall be issued from last serial number in the bundle of ballot papers, and

(ii) that the words "Tendered Ballot Paper" shall be written on the back of each such ballot paper and its counter-foil by the Presiding Officer in his own hand, and signed by him. The voter shall then mark the tendered ballot paper in the marking compartment and fold it. **He shall hand over the ballot paper to you, instead of putting it into the ballot box.**

2.2. You should keep all the tendered ballot papers and the Tendered voters list in a cover specially kept for the purpose and seal it at the close of poll.

3. RECORD THE SERIAL NUMBERS OF BALLOT PAPERS ISSUED TO THE PERSON WHO HAS ALREADY VOTED

3.1. Doubts may arise as to how the serial number of ballot paper issued to the person who has already voted can be recorded in Column-6 of the Form-XXIV, in view of the stipulation that the serial number of the ballot paper issued to a voter should not be noted on the marked copy of the electoral roll. As the serial number of the ballot paper issued to voter will be available in the corresponding counter-foil also, there should be no difficulty to note the ballot paper number in such cases by referring to the counter-foil bundles of the used ballot papers and record it in column-6. No doubt in certain cases, it may take considerable time to search for the serial numbers and fill up Column-6, but it has to be done.

4. RECORD OF VOTERS TO WHOM TENDERED BALLOT PAPERS ISSUED

You shall also maintain complete record of the electors who have been issued with tendered ballot papers, in Form-XXIV (**Annexure-21**). You shall also obtain the signature or thumb impression of the elector in Column (5) of that Form-XXIV before delivering a tendered ballot paper to him.

5. RECORDING OF VOTE ON TENDERED BALLOT PAPER

- 5.1. While delivering a tendered ballot paper to the elector, he shall also be supplied with inked arrow cross mark rubber stamp which is used for marking ballot papers.
- 5.2. On receiving the tendered ballot paper, the elector concerned will mark his vote thereon in the voting compartment by putting the arrow cross mark on or near the symbol of the candidate for whom he intends to vote by means of the arrow cross mark rubber stamp.
- 5.3. The elector will then fold the tendered ballot paper and, after coming out of the voting compartment, hand it over to you, instead of putting into the Ballot Box.
- 5.4. You shall keep all the tendered ballot papers and the lists in Form-XXIV (**Annexure-21**) in a cover specially provided for the purpose and seal the cover at the close of the poll.

6. ACCOUNT OF TENDERED BALLOT PAPERS

You shall keep a correct account of all ballot papers (i) received for use as tendered ballot papers, (ii) issued as such to electors, and (iii) not used and returned, in Part I of Form-XXV.

CHAPTER-XIX

ADJOURNMENT/STOPPAGE OF POLL FOR RIOT, BOOTH CAPTURING, ETC.

1. ADJOURNMENT OF POLL:

- 1.1 Under section 225 B of Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994, the Presiding Officer of a polling station is empowered to adjourn the poll on account of –
- (i) natural calamity like flood, cyclone and the like, or
 - (ii) non-receipt or loss or damage to essential polling material like ballot boxes, ballot papers, authentic copy of the electoral roll and the like or
 - (iii) disturbance of peace at polling station making it impossible to take the poll or,
 - (iv) non -availability of polling party at a polling station due to obstruction on the way or any other serious difficulty or
 - (v) any other sufficient cause.
- 1.2 Whenever the poll is adjourned at any polling station, the Presiding Officer is required to report the fact to the Returning Officer who shall forthwith report the matter to the State Election Commission for further directions.
- 1.3 Seal and secure ballot box(es) used, ballot papers yet to be used, counterfoils of used ballot papers and all election papers in the presence of the polling agents as if the poll has come to a close in the normal way.

2. PROCEDURE FOR COMPLETING THE ADJOURNED POLL:

- 2.1 For completing the adjourned poll, you shall –
- (i) Report the matter with full facts to the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall, in turn through District Election Authority, report the full facts of such case to the State Election Commission.
 - (ii) seek the approval of the State Election Commission of the date, hours and place which you propose for holding the adjourned poll;
 - (iii) formally fix the date, hours and polling station as approved by the State Election Commission;
 - (iv) inform the contesting candidates or their election agents accordingly in writing, but only after the receipt of the Commission's formal approval;
 - (v) affix a notice on your notice board notifying the date, hours and the polling station so fixed(;) and
 - (vi) announce by beat of drum or otherwise in the polling area concerned the date, hours, and the polling station so fixed.

- 2.2 Where the poll has been adjourned at a polling station, the adjourned poll will recommence from the stage at which it was left immediately before the adjournment, i.e., the electors who have not already voted before the poll was adjourned will alone be permitted to vote at the adjourned poll in other words the electors who have already voted at the poll so adjourned shall not be allowed to vote again. The Returning officer will provide you the following sealed packets which were earlier used at the polling station,
- (i) marked copy of the electoral roll
 - (ii) stitched bundles of ballot papers with their counterfoils
 - (iii) counterfoils of used ballot papers received earlier from the presiding officer of the polling station concerned at which the poll was adjourned and also
 - (iv) a new ballot box
 - (v) any other papers directed by the State Election Commission
- 2.3 Before the re-commencement of the poll, the sealed packets containing the marked copy of the electoral roll and the stitched bundles of ballot papers should be reopened by the Presiding Officer in the presence of the candidates or their agents who may be present at the polling station and this very marked copy of the electoral roll and these very bundles of ballot papers should be used for adjourned poll. If a bundle is used only partially that bundle need not be opened for use and fresh unused bundles shall be taken.
- 2.4 The sealed cover containing counterfoils of the ballot papers which were used before the poll was adjourned should not be reopened unless it becomes unavoidable to do so in order to decide any case of an elector who is to be issued a tendered ballot paper.
- 2.5 The provisions of original poll will apply to the conduct of an adjourned poll as they apply to the poll before it was so adjourned.
- 2.6 Where the poll could not be commenced due to non-arrival of the polling party or other reasons mentioned in para 1 (iv) & (v), the provisions of above mentioned rules will apply to every such adjourned poll as they apply to the original poll.
- 2.7 You shall not count votes cast at such election until such adjourned poll has been completed.

3. PROCEDURE FOR HOLDING FRESH POLL IN CASE OF DESTRUCTION etc., OF BALLOT BOXES

- 3.1 Under Section 225 C of APPR Act, 1994, the State Election Commission is competent to declare the poll at a polling station to be void, if at that polling station –
- (i) any ballot box has been unlawfully taken away by an unauthorised person, or
 - (ii) Any ballot box has been accidentally or intentionally destroyed or lost or damaged or tampered with and you are satisfied that the result of the poll at that polling station cannot be ascertained for that reason, or
 - (iii) any error or irregularity in procedure as is likely to vitiate the poll has been committed.

- 3.2 You should report the matter with full facts to the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall, in turn through District Election Authority, report the full facts of such case to the State Election Commission.
- 3.3 After considering all the material circumstances, the Commission will, if necessary,
- (i) declare the poll at the polling station to be void; and
 - (ii) formally fix the date and hours for a fresh poll.
- 3.4 On receiving intimation from the Commission, you should inform in writing the contesting candidates or their election agents of the date, time and place fixed for the fresh poll and affix a notice on your notice board, notifying the date and hours so fixed. Also, you should announce by beat of drum or otherwise in the polling area concerned the place, date and hours so fixed.
- 3.5 All electors entitled to vote at the polling station or stations in question will be entitled to vote at the fresh poll. The marks of the indelible ink made at the original poll should be ignored at the fresh poll. To distinguish the marks to be made at the fresh poll from those already made at the original poll, the Commission directs that the mark of the indelible ink should be put on the voter's left middle finger at the fresh poll.

A new ballot box and a new marked copy of electoral roll shall be used at the fresh poll.

- 3.6 The provisions of Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 and Conduct of Elections Rules, and Orders made thereunder will apply to the fresh poll in exactly the same way as they apply to the original poll. The ballot box or boxes used for the original poll at the polling station(s) where fresh poll has been directed by the Commission should be preserved carefully, unopened and with the seals intact.

4. PROCEDURE FOR HOLDING FRESH POLL IN CASE OF BOOTH CAPTURING

- 4.1 Under Section 231 of Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994, if booth capturing has been taken place at a polling station in such a manner that the result of the poll of that polling station cannot be ascertained, you should report the matter with full facts to the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall, in turn through District Election Authority, report the full facts of such case to the State Election Commission, the State Election Commission shall, after taking all material circumstances into account, either –
- (i) declare the poll at that polling station to be void and direct a fresh poll to be taken on a date to be appointed by it; or
 - (ii) countermand the election if it is satisfied that in view of the large number of polling stations involved in booth capturing the result of the election is likely to be affected.
- 4.2 If the Commission directs fresh poll to be taken at any polling station, you should proceed for taking such fresh poll in accordance with the instructions contained in the preceding paragraph.
- 4.3 If the election is countermanded by the Commission on account of booth capturing, all proceedings for that election will commence anew and a fresh notification calling for the election will be issued in due course.

5. CLOSING OF BALLOT BOX OR BOXES IN THE CASE OF BOOTH CAPTURING

- 5.1 Where you are in opinion that booth capturing is taking place at the polling station, you shall immediately close the ballot box to ensure that no further votes can be cast.
- 5.2 As soon as may be after closing of the ballot box, you should report the matter with full facts to the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall, in turn, report the full facts of such case to the Sate Election Commission.
- 5.3 The State Election Commission, on receipt of the report from the Returning Officer and after taking into account all material circumstances, may –
 - (i) either decide to have the adjourned poll completed from the stage it was adjourned by providing a new ballot box(es), if it is satisfied that the poll up to that stage was not vitiated, or
 - (ii) declare the poll at the polling station as void, if it is satisfied that the poll was vitiated and direct a fresh poll at that polling station.
- 5.4 Further steps to complete the adjourned poll or, conduct a fresh poll as directed by the Commission as the case may be, shall be taken in accordance with the procedure prescribed in paras of 2.1 and 3.6 above.

6. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST POLLING STAFF IF ANY

Wherever specific allegations of serious nature are made in writing against you or the polling staff about your conduct during polling at an election, the Returning Officer shall enquire into the matter immediately and send the papers together with his report to the District Election Authority. Where, however, the complaint is trivial, the Returning Officer shall exercise his discretion in deciding whether it deserves to be enquired into or not.

CHAPTER - XX

CLOSE OF POLL

1. VOTING BY PERSONS PRESENT AT POLLING STATION AT CLOSING HOUR

The poll should be closed at the hour fixed for the purpose, even if for certain unavoidable reason it had commenced somewhat later than the hour appointed for the commencement of poll. However, all electors present at the polling station at the hour appointed for the close of poll should be permitted to cast their votes even if the poll has to be continued for sometime beyond the appointed closing hour.

A few minutes before the appointed closing hour of the poll, announce to all those within the limits of the polling station who are waiting to vote that they will be allowed to record their votes in turn. Distribute to all such electors, slips signed by you in full, which should be serially numbered from serial No.1 onwards according to the number of electors standing in the queue at that hour. Continue the poll even beyond the closing hour until all these electors have cast their votes. Depute police or other staff to watch that no one is allowed to join the queue after the appointed closing hour. This can be effectively ensured if the distribution of slips to all such electors is commenced from the tail of the queue and proceeded backwards towards its head.

2. CLOSING OF POLL

After all the electors present at the polling station at the appointed closing hour have voted as provided in the preceding para, you should formally declare the poll as closed and should not permit any person to vote thereafter in any circumstance.

CHAPTER-XXI

ACCOUNT OF BALLOT PAPER

1 PRELIMINARY

1.1. VERIFICATION OF NUMBER OF BALLOT PAPERS ISSUED TO VOTERS

At the end of the day's poll, the Polling Officer incharge of marked copy of electoral roll and ballot papers should check that the total number of electors to whom ballot papers have been issued by them according to the marked copy of electoral roll and the total number of tendered ballot papers as entered in the list of tendered votes and the total number of ballot papers issued in lieu of spoiled ballot papers **tallies** with the number of ballot papers actually issued to voters and they should record it in Presiding Officer's diary with their signatures.

- 1.2. The first polling officer should also be required to find out the number of women voters and put it in the record.

2. PREPARATION OF BALLOT PAPER ACCOUNT

- 2.1. After the close of poll, you are required to prepare, under rule 52 of the conduct of election rules 2006, the ballot paper account in Form-XXV **Annexure-22** and signed by you. This should be prepared in duplicate.
- 2.2. This account must be accurate; otherwise it will lead to serious difficulties at the time of counting of votes. Thus it is necessary that due care and caution is taken by you while preparing the Ballot Paper Account.
- 2.3. The two copies of Ballot Paper Account recorded in Form-XXV **Annexure-22** should be kept by you in a separate cover with the word's "Account of Ballot Paper recorded" superscribed therein.

3. SUPPLY OF ATTESTED COPIES OF BALLOT PAPER ACCOUNT RECORDED TO POLLING AGENTS

- 3.1 You should note that you are required by rule 52 to furnish to every polling agent present at the close of poll an attested true copy of the ballot paper account prepared by you in Part 1 of Form-XXV obtaining a receipt therefore from the agent. You should, therefore, furnish to every polling agent (but only one polling agent of each candidate) present at the close of poll an attested true copy of ballot paper account even without their asking for it.
- 3.2 To enable you to make the required number of copies of ballot paper account, you will be supplied with as many copies of the printed form (Form-XXV) as the number of contesting candidates plus one or two more for the original account. If possible, you should prepare the required number of copies with the help of carbon paper, while filling in the entries in the original account itself so that all such copies supplied to polling agents and the original account are identical in every respect.

4. DECLARATION TO BE MADE AT THE CLOSE OF POLL

You should obtain their full signatures in token of receipt of such copy on the form declaration prescribed in **Annexure-11** Part-III which declaration you have to make in order to ensure that you have complied with this requirement. Also note in that declaration the name(s) of polling agent(s), if any, refusing to take a copy of the ballot paper account and sign that declaration.

CHAPTER-XXII

CLOSING AND SEALING OF BALLOT BOXES AFTER CLOSE OF POLL

1. CLOSING THE SLIT OF BALLOT BOX

After close of poll, you should close the slit of the Ballot box according to the instructions issued.

2. SEALING OF BALLOT BOX

2.1 After closing and securing the ballot box or boxes of the polling station, run a ribbon or tape on the four sides of the box lengthwise and breadth wise crossing each other on the lid passing under the handle if there is one and tie the knot firmly and seal the knot on a piece of thick paper or cardboard with your seal. The polling agents present should also be asked to affix their seals or their signatures, if they so desire. After this, the ballot box or boxes should be either-

- (i) placed in a strong canvas bag, with provision for closing it with a strong rope or other locking arrangement and the bag closed and sealed by you; or
- (ii) wrapped with a new cloth which shall be sewn and the seams sealed by you.

2.2 In either case, the polling agents present should be asked to affix their seals, if they so desire.

3. ATTACH ADDRESS TAGS AND LABELS

3.1 Attach firmly and in proper manner the address tag and the label on the canvas bag or the cloth cover, as the case may be. This address tag and the label should contain the very same particulars as the address tag outside ballot box. The address tag and label should be clearly filled in to avoid any confusion at the collection center and subsequently.

3.2 It is not sufficient to write the particulars contained in the address tag and label on the canvas bag or cloth cover. It is very necessary to use the address tags and labels.

4. RECORD THE SL.NO. OF BALLOT BOXES USED BY FRACTIONAL NUMBERS:

On the label pasted outside the box, the serial number of the ballot box should also be given as indicated below:

The serial number of the ballot box should be in **fractional number** giving the serial No. of the box as well as the total number of ballot boxes used. Thus, if three ballot boxes are used at a polling station, the serial numbers on the ballot boxes will be as indicated below:

- (i) on the first ballot box $1/3$
- (ii) on the second ballot box $2/3$
- (iii) on the third ballot box $3/3$

CHAPTER-XXIII

SEALING OF ELECTION PAPERS

1. SEALING OF ELECTION PAPERS IN PACKETS

1.1 After the close of poll, all election papers relating to the poll shall be sealed in separate packets as required by rule 51 (5) of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 2006 (See **Annexure-1**).

1.2 All the packets so sealed, except the packet containing the –

- (i) Ballot Paper Account (**Annexure-22**)
- (ii) Paper Seal Account (**Annexure-10**)
- (iii) Declarations by the Presiding Officer before the Commencement of poll, during the poll and after close of poll (**Annexure-11**)
- (iv) Presiding Officer's Diary (**Annexure-22**) and
- (v) Visit Sheets (**Annexure-9**),

should be put in four large packets as explained in paragraph 3 below and sent to the Returning Officer.

1.3 The following self printed BROWN Colored covers containing

- (i) the Ballot Paper Account
- (ii) the declarations of the Presiding Officer and
- (iii) Paper Seal Account,
- (iv) the Presiding Officer's Diary
- (v) Visit sheet

should be sent separately along with the sealed Ballot Boxes to the receiving Centre (Returning Officer).

2. You should allow each candidate or his election agent or his polling agent who may be present at the polling station to affix their seals on the envelopes and packets containing the following documents:

3. SEALING PROCEDURE – AFTER IMMEDIATE COMPLETION OF THE POLL

I. PACKING OF 'STATUTORY COVERS' AND 'NON-STATUTORY COVERS' AND ELECTION MATERIALS

In order to avoid delay and inconvenience of waiting of the place for depositing sealed Ballot Boxes, election papers and all other materials, you are advised to pack the covers and other materials in four separate large packets, as explained below, and hand them over at the place appointed for receipt thereof.

II. The **First** Packet should contain the sealed covers mentioned below and should be superscribed as "**STATUTORY COVERS**" -

- (i) the sealed cover containing the marked copy of the electoral roll;
- (ii) the sealed cover containing the signed but unused ballot papers, with counterfoils;
- (iii) the sealed cover containing other unused ballot papers with counterfoils;
- (iv) the sealed cover containing the tendered ballot papers and the list in Form-XXIV;
- (v) the sealed cover containing the ballot papers cancelled for violation of voting procedure;
- (vi) the sealed cover(s) containing other cancelled ballot papers;
- (vii) the sealed cover containing counterfoils of used ballot papers including of tendered ballot papers;

At the end of the poll, if the last bundle of ballot papers used for the poll contains some unused ballot papers, the counterfoils of used ballot papers in that bundle should be separated from that bundle and kept in this envelope. The counterfoils so separated should be tagged properly.

Even if a statement or record to be put in any cover mentioned above is nil, a slip noting on it that the statement or record is 'Nil' may be put in the cover and the total number of seven covers made ready so that no necessity arises for the receiving official at the receiving centre to enquire about the non-production of any of the sealed covers to be received by him.

III. The **Second** packet should contain the following covers and should be superscribed as '**NON-STATUTORY COVERS**' -

- (i) the cover containing the copy or copies of electoral roll (other than the marked copy);
- (ii) the cover containing the appointment letters of polling agents;
- (iii) the cover containing the election duty certificates;
- (iv) the sealed cover containing the list of challenged votes;
- (v) the covers containing the list of blind and infirm electors and the declarations of the companions;
- (vi) the cover containing the declarations obtained from electors as to their age and the list of such electors;
- (vii) cover containing the receipt book and cash, if any, in respect of challenged votes;
- (viii) cover containing unused and damaged paper seals;
- (ix) for any other paper that the PO has decided to keep in the sealed cover.

IV. The **Third** packet should contain the following items:

- (i) the Handbook for Presiding Officers;
- (ii) indelible ink set (with stopper having been secured on each phial effectively with molten candle or wax applied thereon to prevent leakage or evaporation);
- (iii) self-inking pads;
- (iv) the metal seal of the Presiding Officer;
- (v) the arrow cross-mark rubber stamp;
- (vi) Distinguished Rubber Stamp.

V. All the other items, if any, should be packed into the **Fourth** packet.

SEALING OF COVERS

Each of the seven smaller covers/packets to be included in the first packet marked Statutory Covers should be sealed. The other smaller covers/packets containing various non-statutory papers and items of election materials to be included in the second, third and fourth packets marked 'Non-Statutory Covers' may be prepared separately, but need not be sealed (except the cover containing List of Challenged Votes in Form-XXI at **(Annexure-13)** in order to save time). All these unsealed covers and the sealed cover, containing list of challenged votes in Form-XXI, should simply be placed in the respective bigger covers along with a check memo signed by the Presiding Officer. These three bigger packets need not be sealed; but may be properly secured by means of pins or thread so that the contents may be checked at the receiving centers. The first packet marked 'Statutory Covers' should, however, be sealed by the Presiding Officer after checking of the contents at the receiving centre.

CHAPTER-XXIV

PREPARATION OF THE PRESIDING OFFICERS DIARY, DELIVERY OF BALLOT BOXES AND ELECTION PAPERS AT COLLECTION CENTRES

1. PREPARATION OF THE DIARY

- 1.1 You should record the proceedings connected with the taking of the poll in the polling station in the diary to be maintained for the purpose. The proforma of diary is reproduced at **Annexure-23**.
- 1.2 You must go on recording the relevant events as and when they occur. You should mention all important events therein.
- 1.3 It has been observed in many cases that the Presiding Officers do not make the entries in the relevant columns of the diary at regular intervals or from time to time as envisaged, and fill in all entries and complete the diary at the end of the poll. This is highly objectionable. It should be noted that any lapse on your part in the proper maintenance of diary at all points of time during the process of poll will be very seriously viewed by the Commission.

2. TRANSMISSION OF BALLOT BOXES AND ELECTION PAPERS TO THE RETURNING OFFICER

- 2.1 After the Ballot Boxes and all election papers have been sealed and secured by you after the close of poll, you have to deliver them or cause them to be delivered at such place as the Returning Officer may direct and in accordance with such arrangements as the Returning Officer may make.
- 2.2 The Ballot Boxes and the election papers should be delivered or caused to be delivered at the collection centre with Zero delay. Any delay in this behalf will be viewed by the Commission with utmost concern and will invite severe disciplinary action against all concerned.

ANNEXURE-1

I. EXTRACTS OF RELEVANT PROVISIONS (SECTIONS) FROM ANDHRA PRADESH PANCHAYAT RAJ ACT, 1994

210. Electoral officers and staff etc. deemed to be on deputation:- (1) Any officer or staff employed in connection with the preparation, revision and correction of the electoral rolls for, and the conduct of all elections shall be deemed to be on deputation to the State Election Commission for the period during which they are so employed and such officers and staff shall during that period, be subject to the control, superintendence and discipline of the State Election Commission.

(2) The Returning Officer, Assistant Returning Officer, Presiding Officer, Polling officer and any other officer appointed under this Act, and any police officer designated for the time being by the State Government for the conduct of any elections shall be deemed to be on deputation to the State Election Commission for the period commencing on and from the date of notification calling for such elections and ending with the date of declaration of the results of such elections and such officer shall, during that period, be subject to the control, superintendence and discipline of the State Election Commission.

217. Maintenance of secrecy of voting:- (1) Every officer, clerk, agent or other person who performs any duty in connection with the recording or counting of votes at an election shall maintain, and aid in maintaining, the secrecy of the voting and shall not (except for some purpose authorised by or under any law) communicate to any person any information calculated to violate such secrecy.

(2) Any person who contravenes provisions of sub-section (1) shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term, which may extend to three months or with fine or with both.

218. Officers etc., at elections not to act for candidates or to influence voting:

(1) No person who is a District Election Officer or a returning officer or an assistant returning officer, or a presiding officer or polling officer at an election, or an officer or clerk appointed by the returning officer or the presiding officer to perform any duty in connection with an election shall in the conduct or the management of the election do any act other than the giving of vote for the furtherance of the prospects of the election of a candidate.

(2) No such person as aforesaid, and no member of a police force, shall endeavour, - (a) to persuade any person to give his vote at an election, or (b) to dissuade any person from giving his vote at an election, or (c) to influence the voting of any person at an election in any manner.

(3) Any person who contravenes the provisions of subsection (1) or sub-section (2) shall be punishable with imprisonment, which may extend to six months, or with fine or with both.

220. Penalty for disorderly conduct in or near polling stations:- (1) No person shall, on the date or dates on which a poll is taken at any polling station,- (a) use or operate within or at the entrance of the polling station, or in any public or private place in the neighbourhood thereof, any apparatus for amplifying or reproducing the human voice, such as a megaphone or a loudspeaker, or (b) shout, or otherwise act in a disorderly manner within or at the entrance of the polling station or in any public or private place in the neighbourhood thereof, so as to cause annoyance to any person visiting the polling station for the poll, or so as to interfere with the work of the officers and other persons on duty at the polling station.

(2) Any person who contravenes, or willfully aids or abets the contravention of the provisions Subsection (1) shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to three months or with fine or with both.

(3) If the presiding officer of a polling station has reason to believe that any person is committing or has committed an offence punishable under this section, he may direct any police officer to arrest such person, and thereupon the police officer shall arrest him.

(4) Any police officer may take such steps, and use such force as may be reasonably necessary for preventing any contravention of the provisions of sub-section (1), and may seize any apparatus used for such contravention.

221. Penalty for misconduct at the polling station:- (1) Any person who during the hours fixed for the poll at any polling station misconducts himself or fails to obey the lawful directions of the presiding officer may be removed from the polling station by the presiding officer or by any police officer on duty or by any person authorised in this behalf by such presiding officer.

(2) The powers conferred by sub-section (1) shall not be exercised so as to prevent any elector who is otherwise entitled to vote at a polling station from having opportunity of voting at that station.

(3) If any person who has been so removed from polling station reenters the polling station, without the permission of the presiding officer he shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months, or with fine, or with both.

221A. Penalty for failure to observe procedure for voting:- If an elector to whom a ballot paper has been issued, refuses to observe the procedure prescribed for voting, the ballot paper issued to him shall be liable for cancellation.

221B. Prohibition of going armed to or near a polling station:- (1) No person other than a Police Officer and any other person appointed to maintain peace and order, at a polling station who is on duty at the polling station, shall, on a polling day, go armed with arms, as defined in the Arms Act, 1959, of any kind within the neighbourhood of a polling station.

(2) If any person contravenes the provisions of sub-section (1), he shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.

(3) An offence punishable under sub-section (2) shall be cognizable.

222. Breaches of official duty in connection with elections:- (1) If any person to whom, this section applies is without reasonable cause guilty of any act or omission in breach of his official duty, he shall be punishable with fine, which any extend to five hundred rupees.

(2) No suit or other legal proceedings shall lie against any such person for damages in respect of any such act or omission as aforesaid.

(3) The persons to whom this section applies are the District Election Officers, returning officers, assistant returning officers, presiding officers, polling officers, and any other person appointed to perform any duty in connection with the receipt of nominations or withdrawal

of candidatures, or the recording or counting of votes at an election and the expression "official duty" shall for the purposes of this section be construed accordingly but shall not include duties imposed otherwise than by or under this Act.

223. Penalty for Government Servants etc. for acting as election agent, polling agent or counting agent:- If any person in the service of the State or Central Government or a local Authority or a Corporation owned or controlled by the State or Central Government acts as an election agent or a polling agent or a counting agent of a candidate at an election he shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months, or with fine or with both.

224. Offence of booth capturing:- (1) Whoever commits an offence of booth capturing shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than one year but which may extend to three years and with fine, and where such offence is committed by a person in the service of the Government, he shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than three years but which may extend to five years and with fine.

Explanation:- For the purposes of this sub-section and section 232A "Booth capturing" includes, among other things, all or any of the following activities, namely,-

- (a) seizure of a polling station or a place fixed for the poll by any person or persons, making polling authorities surrender the ballot papers or voting machines and doing of any other act which affects to orderly conduct of elections;
- (b) taking possession of a polling station or a place fixed for the poll by any person or persons and allowing only his or their own supporters to exercise their right to vote and prevent others from free exercise of their right to vote;
- (c) coercing or intimidating or threatening directly or indirectly threatening any elector and preventing him from going to the polling station or a place fixed for the poll to cast his vote;
- (d) seizure of a place for counting of votes by any person or person, making the counting authorities surrender the ballot papers or voting machines and the doing of anything which affects the orderly counting of votes;
- (e) doing by any person in the service of Government of all or any of the aforesaid activities or aiding or conniving at any such activity in the furtherance of the prospects of the election of a candidate.

(2) An offence punishable under sub-section (1) shall be cognizable.

225. Removal of ballot papers or ballot boxes from polling stations to be an offence:- (1) Any person who at any election fraudulently takes or attempts to take a ballot paper or ballot box out of polling station, or willfully aids or abets the doing of any such act shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to five years and with fine which may extend upto five thousand rupees.

(2) If the presiding officer of a polling station has reason to believe that any person is committing or has committed an offence, punishable under sub-section (1), such officer may, before such person leaves the polling station arrest or direct a police officer to arrest such person and such person may cause him to be searched by a police officer: Provided that when it is necessary to cause a woman to be searched the search shall be made by another woman with strict regard to decency.

(3) Any ballot paper found upon the person arrested on search shall be made over for safe custody to a police officer by the presiding officer or when the search is made by a police officer, shall be kept by such officer in safe custody.

225B. Adjournment of poll in emergencies:- (1) If at an election the proceedings at any polling station are interrupted or obstructed by any riot or open violence, or if at an election it is not possible to take the poll at any polling station or such place on account of any natural calamity, or any other sufficient cause, the Presiding officer for such polling station shall announce and adjournment of the poll to a date to be notified later, and he shall forthwith inform the Returning Officer concerned.

(2) Whenever a poll is adjourned under sub-section (1), the Returning officer, shall immediately report the circumstances to the District Election Authority and the State Election Commission, and shall, as soon as may be, with the previous approval of the State Election Commission, appoint the day on which the poll shall recommence, and fix the hours during which, the poll will be taken, and shall not count the votes cast at such election until such adjourned poll shall have been completed.

(3) In every such case as aforesaid, the Returning officer shall notify in such manner as the State Election Commission may direct, the date and hours of polling fixed under sub-sec.(2).

225C. Fresh poll in the case of destruction etc., of ballot boxes:- (1) If at any election,-

- (a) any ballot box used at a polling station is unlawfully taken out of the custody of the Presiding officer or the Returning officer, or is accidentally or intentionally destroyed or lost or is damaged or tampered with, to such an extent, that the result of the poll at that polling station cannot be ascertained: or
- (b) any voting machine develops a mechanical failure during the course of the recording of votes; or
- (c) any such error or irregularity in procedure as is likely to vitiate the poll is committed at a polling station, the Returning officer shall forthwith report the matter to the State Election Commission.

(2) Thereupon the State Election Commission shall, after taking all material circumstances into account; either-

- (a) declare the poll at that polling station to be void, appoint a day, and fix the hours, for taking a fresh poll at that polling station and notify the day so appointed and the hours so fixed in such manner as it may deem fit; or
- (b) if satisfied that the result of a fresh poll at the polling station will not, in any way, affect the result of the election or that the mechanical failure of the voting machine or the error or irregularity in procedure is not material, issue such directions to the Returning Officer as it may deem proper for the further conduct and completion of the election.

(3) The provisions of this Act and of any rules or orders made thereunder shall apply to every such fresh poll as they apply to the original poll.

225D. Destruction, loss, etc., of ballot papers at the time of counting:- (1) If any time before the counting of votes is completed any ballot papers used at a polling station are unlawfully taken out of the custody of the Returning Officer or are accidentally or intentionally destroyed or lost or are damaged or tampered with, to such an extent that the result of the poll at the polling station cannot be ascertained, the Returning officer shall forthwith report the matter to the State Election Commission.

(2) Thereupon, the State Election Commission shall, after taking all material circumstances into account, either,-

- (a) direct that the counting of votes shall be stopped, declare the poll at the polling station to be void, appoint a day, and fix the hours, for taking a fresh poll at the polling station and notify the date so appointed and hours so fixed in such manner as it may deem fit; or
- (b) if satisfied that the result of a fresh poll at that polling station will not, in any way, affect the result of the election, issue such directions to the Returning officer as it may deem proper for the resumption and completion of the counting and for the further conduct and completion of the election in relation to which the votes have been counted.

(3) The provisions of this Act and of any rules or orders made thereunder shall apply to every such fresh poll as they apply to the original poll.

226. Impersonation at election:- Whoever at an election applies for a ballot paper or votes in the name of any other person, whether living or dead or in a fictitious name, or who having voted once at such election applies at the same election for a ballot paper in his own name, and whoever abets, procures or attempts to procure the voting by any person in any such way shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to five years and with fine which may extend to five thousand rupees.

227. Other offences and penalties there under:- (1) A person shall be guilty of an electoral offence if at any election he,-

- (a) fraudulently defaces or fraudulently destroys any nomination paper; or
- (b) fraudulently defaces or destroys or removes any list notice or other documents affixed by or under the authority of a returning officer, or
- (c) fraudulently defaces or fraudulently destroys any ballot paper or the official mark or any ballot paper or any declaration of identity or official envelope used in connection with voting by postal ballot; or
- (d) without due authority supplies any ballot paper to any person or receives any ballot paper from any person or is in possession of any ballot paper; or
- (e) fraudulently puts into any ballot box anything other than the ballot paper which he is authorised by law to put in; or
- (f) without due authority destroys; takes, opens or otherwise interferes with any ballot box or ballot papers then in use for the purposes of the election; or
- (g) fraudulently or without due authority as the case may be, attempts to do any of the foregoing acts or willfully aids or abets the doing of any such acts.

(2) Any person guilty of an electoral offence under this section shall,-

- (a) if he is a returning officer or an assistant returning officer or a presiding officer at a polling station or any other officer or clerk employed on official duty in connection with the election, be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years or with fine or with both;

(b) if he is any other person, be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with fine or with both.

(3) For the purposes of this section a person shall be deemed to be on official duty if duty is to take part in the conduct of an election or part of an election including the counting of votes or to be responsible after an election for the used ballot papers and other documents in connection with such election, but the expression "official duty" shall not include any duty imposed otherwise than by or under this Act.

228. Penalty for offences not otherwise provided for:- Whoever does any act in contravention of any of the provisions of this Act, or of any rule, notification or order made, issued or passed, there under and not otherwise provided for in this Act shall, on conviction be punished with imprisonment which extend to two years and with fine which may extend to two thousand rupees.

231. Adjournment of poll or countermanding of election on the ground of booth capturing: (1) If at any election,-

- (a) booth capturing has taken place at a polling station or in such number of polling stations as is likely to affect the result of such election or that the result of the poll at that polling station cannot be ascertained; or
- (b) booth capturing takes place in any place for counting of votes in such a manner that the result of the counting at that place cannot be ascertained, the returning officer shall forthwith report the matter to the State Election Commissioner.

(2) The State Election Commissioner shall on the receipt of a report from the returning officer under sub-section (1) and after taking all material circumstances into account, either,--

- (a) declare that the poll at that polling station be void, appoint a day, and fix the hours, for taking fresh poll at that polling station and notify the date so appointed and hours so fixed in such manner as he may deem fit, or—
- (b) if satisfied that in view of the large number of polling stations involved in booth capturing the result of the election is likely to be affected or that booth capturing had affected counting of votes in such manner as to effect result of the election, countermand the election in that constituency.

Explanation: In this section "booth capturing" shall have the same meaning as in Section 224.

II. EXTRACT OF RULES FROM THE ANDHRA PRADESH PANCHAYAT RAJ (CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS OF MEMBERS AND SARPANCH OF GRAM PANCHAYTS, MEMBERS OF MANDAL PRAJA PARISHADS AND MEMBERS OF ZILLA PRAJA PARISHADS) RULES, 2006

19. Appointment of Polling Agent:- (1) The number of polling agents that may be appointed by a contesting candidate or his election agent, shall, in respect of each polling station, be one agent and a relief agent.

(2) Every such appointment shall be made in **Form-XII** and shall be made over to the polling agent for production at the polling station.

(3) No polling agent shall be admitted into the polling station unless he has delivered to the Presiding Officer the instrument of his appointment under sub-rule (2) after duly completing and signing before the Presiding Officer the declaration contained therein.

(4) A polling agent may perform such functions in connection with the poll as are authorised by or under these rules, to be performed by a polling agent.

(5) Any revocation of the appointment of a polling agent shall be signed by the candidate or his election agent, as the case may be. Such revocation shall operate from the date on which it is lodged with the Returning Officer. In the event of such a revocation or of the death of a polling agent before the close of the poll the candidate or his election agent may appoint another polling agent at any time before the poll is closed and shall forthwith give notice of such appointment as laid down in sub-rule (2).

22. Non-attendance of agents:- Where any act or thing is required or authorised by or under these rules to be done in the presence of the polling or counting agents, the non-attendance of any such agent or agents at the time and place appointed for the purpose shall not, if the act or thing is otherwise duly done, invalidate the act or thing done.

33. Voting at Polling Station:- (1) If poll has to be taken, the Returning Officer shall appoint forthwith one Presiding Officer and one or more polling officers at each polling station and may pay the remuneration as fixed by the Government for their services:

Provided that if a polling officer is absent from the polling station, the Presiding Officer may appoint any person who is present at the polling station other than a person who has been employed by or on behalf of or has been otherwise working for a candidate in or about the election, to be the polling officer during the absence of the former officer and inform the Returning Officer accordingly:

(2) A polling officer shall, if so directed by the Presiding Officer perform all or any of the functions of a Presiding Officer under these rules or any rules or orders made thereunder.

(3) If the Presiding Officer, owing to illness or other unavoidable cause, is obliged to absent himself from the polling station, his functions shall be performed by such Polling Officer as has been previously authorised by the Returning Officer to perform such functions during any such absence.

34. Right to vote (Voting to be in person):- All electors voting at an election shall do so in person at the polling station provided for them under the rules.

35. Form of Ballot Paper:- Every Ballot paper shall have a counterfoil attached thereto and the said ballot paper and the counterfoil shall be in such form as the State Election Commission may, by order, direct.

36. Arrangements at Polling Station:- (1) Outside each polling station there shall be displayed prominently,-

- (a) a notice specifying the polling area, the serial number of electors in the relevant electoral roll who are entitled to vote at the polling station; and
- (b) a copy of the list of contesting candidates with the serial numbers and the symbols assigned to them.

(2) At each polling station there shall be set up one or more voting compartments in which electors can record their votes, screened from observation.

(3) Where the elections for Gram Panchayats and Mandal Parishads and Zilla Parishads are held simultaneously there shall be two ballot boxes kept in the polling station, one for the Member and Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat and the other for the Member of Mandal Parishad and Zilla Parishad. Where the elections are held separately only one ballot-box either for Gram Panchayat or for Mandal Parishad or for Zilla Parishad, as the case may be, shall be kept.

(4) The names of the contesting candidates along with their symbols shall be displayed inside the polling station, above the ballot box to enable the voter to exercise his franchise without difficulty.

(5) The Returning Officer shall provide at each polling station sufficient number of ballot boxes, copies of the electoral roll or such part thereof as contains the names of the electors entitled to vote at the polling station, ballot papers, instruments for stamping the distinguishing mark on the ballot paper and articles necessary for electors to mark the ballot papers, stationery and such forms as may be necessary.

37. Admission to Polling Station:- (1) The Presiding Officer shall keep order at the polling station, shall see that the election is fairly conducted, shall regulate the number of electors to be admitted at any one time inside the polling station and shall exclude therefrom all persons other than, -

- (a) his polling officers and such persons as the Presiding Officer may, from time to time, admit for the purpose of identifying electors;
- (b) other public servants on duty in connection with the election;
- (c) the candidates, their election agents, and one polling agent of each candidate at a time;
- (d) a child in arms accompanying an elector;
- (e) a person accompanying blind or infirm voters who cannot move without help; and
- (f) persons authorised by the State Election Commission.

(2) (a) Where a woman elector cannot be identified by the identification officers appointed for the purpose by reason of her observing 'purdah' she may be required to be identified by any of her near relatives unless she otherwise satisfies the Presiding Officer of her identity.

(b) If any question arises as to whether a person is or is not a near relative within the meaning of clause (a) above, it shall be decided by the Presiding Officer and his decision shall be final.

38. Preparation of Ballot Boxes.- (1) Where a paper seal is used for securing a ballot box, the Presiding Officer shall affix his own signature on the paper seal and obtain thereon the signature of such of the polling agents present as are desirous of affixing the same.

(2) The Presiding Officer shall thereafter fix the paper seal so signed in the space meant therefor in the ballot box and shall then secure and seal the box in such manner that the slit for the insertion of ballot paper therein remains open.

(3) The seals used for securing a ballot box shall be affixed in such manner that after the box has been closed, it is not possible to open it without breaking the seals.

(4) Where it is not necessary to use paper seals or securing the ballot boxes, the Presiding Officer shall secure and seal the ballot box in such manner that the slit for the insertion of ballot papers remains open and shall allow the polling agents present to affix, if they so desire, their seals.

(5) Every ballot box used at a polling station shall bear label both inside and outside marked with:-

- (a) the details of the Ward/Territorial Constituency;
- (b) the serial number and name of the polling station;
- (c) the serial number of the ballot box (to be filled in at the end of the poll on the label outside the ballot box only) and;
- (d) the date of poll.

(6) Immediately before commencement of the poll the Presiding Officer shall demonstrate to the polling agents and other persons present, that the ballot box is empty and bears the labels referred to in sub-rule (5).

(7) The ballot box shall then be closed, sealed, secured and placed in full view of the Presiding Officer and polling agents.

39. Demonstration of the marked copy of the electoral roll: - Immediately before commencement of the poll, the Presiding Officer shall demonstrate to the polling agents and others present, the marked copy or, as the case may be, marked copies of the electoral roll to be used during the poll.

40. Facilities for woman electors:- (1) Where a polling station is for both men and women electors, the Presiding Officer may direct that they shall be admitted into the polling station alternately in separate batches.

(2) The Returning Officer or the Presiding Officer may appoint a woman to serve as an attendant at any polling station to assist women electors and also to assist the Presiding Officer generally in taking the poll in respect of women electors, and in particular, to help in searching any woman elector in case it becomes necessary.

41. Identification of electors:- (1) The Presiding Officer may employ at the polling station such persons, as he thinks fit to help identification of the electors or to assist him otherwise in taking the poll.

(2) As each elector enters the polling station, the Presiding Officer or the polling officer authorised by him in this behalf shall check the elector's name and other particulars with the relevant entry in the electoral roll and then call out the serial number, name and other particulars of the elector.

(3) Every elector shall produce identity card issued to him/her under the provisions of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 made under the Representation of the Peoples Act, 1950 or any such document as may be specified, by order, by the State Election Commission before the Presiding Officer or the polling officer authorized by him in this behalf, in order to establish his/her identity at the polling station.

(4) In deciding the right of a person to cast his vote, the Presiding Officer or the polling officer, as the case may be, shall overlook the clerical or printing errors in an entry in the electoral roll if he is satisfied that such person is identical with the elector to whom such entry relates.

42. Facilities for public servants on election duty:-(1) The provisions of Rule 41 shall not apply to any person who produces at the polling station an election duty certificate issued by Returning Officer and seeks permission to cast his vote at that polling station although the polling station is different from the one where he is entitled to vote.

(2) On production of such certificate the Presiding Officer shall –

- (a) obtain thereon the signature of the person producing it;
- (b) have the person's name and electoral roll number as mentioned in the certificate entered at the end of the marked copy of the electoral roll; and
- (c) issue to him a ballot paper, and permit him to vote, in the same manner as for an elector entitled to vote at that polling station.

43. Challenging of Identity:- (1) Any polling agent may challenge the identity of a person claiming to be a particular elector by first depositing a sum of five rupees in cash with the Presiding Officer for each such challenge.

(2) On such a deposit being made, the Presiding Officer shall:

- (a) warn the person challenged, of the penalty for personation;
- (b) read the relevant entry in the electoral roll in full and ask him whether he is the person referred to in the entry.
- (c) enter his name and address in the list of challenged votes in **Form-XXI**; and
- (d) require him to affix his signature in the said list.

(3) The Presiding Officer shall thereafter hold a summary inquiry into the challenge and may for that purpose –

- (a) require the challenger to adduce evidence in proof of the challenge and the person challenged to adduce evidence in proof of his identity;
- (b) put the person challenged any question necessary for the purpose of establishing his identity and require him to answer them on oath; and
- (c) administer an oath to the challenger and any other person offering to give evidence.

(4) If, after the inquiry, the Presiding Officer considers that the challenge has not been established, he shall allow the person challenged, to vote; and if he considers that the challenge has been established, he shall debar the person challenged from voting.

(5) If the Presiding Officer is of the opinion that the challenge is frivolous or has not been made in good faith, he shall direct that the deposit made under sub-rule (1) be forfeited to the Government and in any other case he shall return it to the challenger on the conclusion of the inquiry.

44. Safeguards against personation: (1) Every elector about whose identity the Presiding Officer or the Polling Officer, as the case may be, is satisfied shall allow-

- (a) the inspection of his left fore-finger by the Polling Officer; and
- (b) an indelible ink mark to be put on his left fore-finger.

(2) If any such elector—

- (a) refuses to allow such inspection of his left fore-finger; or
- (b) refuses to allow an indelible ink mark to be put on his left fore-finger; or
- (c) does any act in order to remove any such mark after it has been put; or
- (d) fails or refuses to produce his identity card or any other document specified by State Election Commission to establish his identity under rule 41 of these rules; or
- (e) refuses to put his signature or thumb impression on the counter-foil;

he shall not be entitled to be supplied with any ballot paper or to record his vote at the election.

(3) A person who already has such a mark on his left fore-finger at the time he enters the polling station shall not be supplied with any ballot paper.

(4) Any reference in this rule to the left fore-finger of an elector shall, in the case where the elector has no left fore-finger be construed as a reference to another finger of his left hand and shall in the case whether there are no fingers on his left hand be construed as a reference to the fore finger or any other finger on his right hand and shall in the case where he has no finger on both the hands be construed as a reference to such extremity of his right or left arm as he possesses.

45. Distinguishing Mark:- Before a ballot paper is issued to an elector, the ballot paper and the counterfoil attached thereto, shall be stamped on the back with such distinguishing mark as the State Election Commission may direct and every ballot paper before it is issued shall be signed in full on its back by the Presiding Officer.

46. Issue of ballot paper:- (1) At the time of issuing a ballot paper to an elector, the polling officer shall,-

- (a) record on its counterfoil the electoral roll number of the elector as entered in the marked copy of the electoral roll, and
- (b) obtain the signature or thumb impression of that elector on the said counterfoil:
- (c) mark the name of the elector in the marked of the electoral roll to indicate that a ballot paper has been issued to him, without however, recording therein the serial number of the ballot paper issued to the elector:

Provided that no ballot paper shall be delivered to an elector unless he has put his signature or thumb impression on the counterfoil of that ballot paper.

(2) No person in the polling station shall note down the serial numbers of the ballot papers issued to the electors.

47. Maintenance of secrecy of voting by electors and voting procedure:- (1) Every elector to whom a ballot paper has been issued under rule 46 or any other provisions of these rules shall maintain secrecy of voting within the polling station and for that purpose observe the voting procedure hereinafter laid down.

- (2) The elector on receiving the ballot paper or papers, as the case may be, shall forthwith-
 - (a) proceed to one of the voting compartments,
 - (b) make a mark on the ballot paper or papers with the instrument supplied for the purpose on or near the symbol / symbols allotted to the candidate / candidates for whom he intends to vote,
 - (c) fold the ballot paper / papers vertically first and thereafter horizontally so as to conceal his vote,
 - (d) if required, show to the Presiding Officer the distinguishing mark on the ballot paper or papers,
 - (e) insert the folded ballot paper into the specified ballot box, and
 - (f) leave the polling station by the exit provided.
- (3) Every elector shall vote without undue delay.
- (4) No elector shall be allowed to enter a voting compartment when another elector is inside it.
- (5) If an elector to whom a ballot paper has been issued refuses, after warning given by the Presiding Officer to observe the procedure laid down in sub-rule (2), the ballot paper issued to him shall, whether he has recorded his vote thereon or not, be taken back from him by the Presiding Officer or a polling officer, under the direction of the Presiding Officer.
- (6) After the ballot paper has been taken back, the Presiding Officer shall record on its back the word "Cancelled: voting procedure violated" and put his signature below these words and all such ballot papers shall be kept in a separate cover which shall bear on its face the words "Ballot Papers - voting procedure violated".
- (7) Without prejudice to any other penalty to which an elector, from whom a ballot paper has been taken back under sub-rule (5) may be liable, the vote, if any recorded on such ballot paper shall not be counted.

48. Recording of votes of Blind or infirm voters: - (1) If the Presiding Officer is satisfied that owing to blindness or other physical infirmity, an elector is unable to recognise the symbols on ballot paper or to make a mark thereon without assistance, the Presiding Officer shall permit the elector to take with him a companion of not less than eighteen years of age to the voting compartment for recording vote on the ballot paper on his behalf and in accordance with his wishes and if necessary, for folding the ballot paper so as to conceal the vote and insert it into the ballot box:

Provided that no person shall be permitted to act as the companion of more than one elector at any polling station on the same day:

Provided further that when any person is permitted to act as the companion of the elector on any day under this rule, the person shall be required to declare in Form-XXII that he shall keep secret the vote recorded by him on behalf of the elector and that he has not already acted as the companion of any other elector at any polling station on that day.

(2) The Presiding Officer, shall keep a record of all cases under this rule in Form-XXIII.

49. Spoilt and returned ballot papers.- (1) An elector who has inadvertently dealt with his ballot paper in such manner that it cannot be conveniently used as a ballot paper, may, on returning it to the Presiding Officer and on satisfying him of the inadvertence, be given another ballot paper and the ballot paper so returned and the counterfoil of such ballot paper shall be marked as "Spoilt: Cancelled" by the Presiding Officer.

(2) If an elector, after obtaining a ballot paper, decides not to use it, he shall return it to the presiding officer, and the ballot paper so returned and the counterfoil of such ballot paper shall be marked as "Returned: Cancelled" by the presiding officer.

(3) All ballot papers cancelled under sub-rule (1) and sub-rule (2) shall be kept in a separate packet.

50. Tendered Votes:- (1) If a person representing himself to be a particular elector seeks to vote after another person has already voted as such elector, he shall, on, satisfactorily answering such questions relating to his identity as the Presiding Officer may ask, be entitled, subject to the following provisions of this rule, to mark a ballot paper (hereinafter in these rules referred to as a "Tendered Ballot Paper") in the same manner as any other elector.

(2) Every such person, shall, before being supplied with a tendered ballot paper, sign his name against the entry relating to him in a list in **Form-XXIV**.

(3) A tendered ballot paper shall be the same as the other ballot paper used at the polling except that it shall be-

(a) serially the last in the bundle of ballot papers issued for use at the polling station; and

(b) endorsed on the back of the ballot paper and its counterfoil with the words "Tendered Ballot Paper" by the Presiding Officer in his own hand and signed by him.

(4) The elector, after marking a tendered ballot paper in the voting compartment and folding it, shall instead of putting it into the ballot box, give it to the Presiding Officer, who shall place it in a cover specifically kept for the purpose.

51. Closing of Poll and Sealing of Ballot Boxes and covers after poll:- (1) The Presiding Officer shall close the polling station at the hour appointed for closing and shall not thereafter admit any elector into the polling station:

Provided that all electors present at the polling station before it is closed shall be allowed to cast their votes.

(2) If any question arises whether an elector was present at the polling station before it was closed, it shall be decided by the Presiding Officer and his decision shall be final.

(3) The Presiding Officer of each polling station, as soon as practicable, after the close of the poll, shall close the slit of the ballot box and where the box does not contain any mechanical device for closing the slit, he shall seal up the slit and also allow any polling agent present to affix his seal. The ballot box shall thereafter be sealed and secured.

(4) Where it becomes necessary to use a second ballot box by reason of the first ballot box getting full, the first box shall be closed, sealed and secured as provided in sub-rule (3) before another ballot box is put into use.

(5) The Presiding Officer of each polling station, as soon as practicable, after the close of the poll, shall in the presence of any candidate or polling agents who may be present make up the following into separate packets and seal with his own seal and the seals of such candidates or agents as may desire to affix their seals:

- (i) the tendered ballot papers;
- (ii) the unused ballot papers;
- (iii) the spoilt and returned ballot papers;
- (iv) the marked copy of the electoral roll;

- (v) the tendered votes list;
- (vi) the list of challenged votes;
- (vii) the counterfoils of used ballot papers;
- (viii) the ballot papers cancelled for violation of voting procedure; and
- (ix) any other papers directed by the State Election Commission to be kept in a sealed cover/packet.

(6) Each packet shall be numbered and shall bear a note as to its contents, description of the election and the polling stations. Where no vote has been recorded at any polling station, the Presiding Officer shall submit a 'nil' report.

52. Account of ballot papers:- (1) The Presiding Officer shall at the close of the poll prepare a ballot paper account in **Form XXV** and place it in a separate cover with the words "Ballot Paper Account" superscribed thereon.

(2) The Presiding Officer shall furnish to every polling agent present at the close of the poll a true copy of the entries made in the ballot paper account after obtaining a receipt from the said polling agent therefor and shall also attest it as a true copy.

53. Delivery of ballot boxes to Returning Officer:- (1) The Presiding Officer shall then, as soon as may be, deliver the ballot boxes and all such packets and papers used at the polling station or cause them to be delivered to the Returning Officer at such places as he may direct.

(2) The Returning Officer shall make adequate arrangements for the safe transport of all ballot boxes, packets and other papers referred to in this rule from polling stations and for their safe custody until the commencement of this counting of votes.

54. Procedure on adjournment of poll:- (1) If the poll at any polling station is adjourned under section 225 B, the provisions of rules 51 to 53 shall, as far as practicable, apply as if the poll was closed at the hour fixed in that behalf.

(2) When an adjourned poll is recommended under sub-section (2) of section 225B, the electors who have already voted at the poll so adjourned shall not be allowed to vote again.

(3) The Returning Officer shall provide the Presiding Officer of the polling station at which such adjourned poll is held, with the sealed packet containing the marked copy of the electoral roll and a new ballot box.

(4) The Presiding Officer shall open the sealed packet in the presence of the polling agents present and use the marked copy of the electoral roll for marking the names of the electors to whom the ballot papers are issued at the adjourned poll, without however recording therein the serial number thereof.

(5) The provisions of rules 33 to 53 shall apply in relation to the conduct of an adjourned poll as they apply in relation to the poll before it was so adjourned.

55. Fresh Poll in case of destruction of ballot boxes:- If at any election any ballot box used at a polling station is unlawfully taken out of custody of the Presiding Officer or Returning Officer or is accidentally or intentionally destroyed or lost or is damaged or is tampered with to such an extent that the result of the poll at that polling station cannot be ascertained or any such error or irregularity in procedure is likely to vitiate the poll is committed at the polling station, the procedure prescribed in section 225C of the Act shall be followed.

56. Counting of Votes: - (1) The counting of votes shall commence on the day and at the place and hour appointed in that behalf. Votes shall be counted by or under the supervision of the Returning Officer.

(2) The postal ballot papers shall be counted first.

(3) Each candidate, the election agent and the counting agent of each candidate shall have a right to be present at the time of counting. No other person shall be allowed to be present except such person as the Returning Officer may appoint to assist him in counting votes and no person shall be appointed to assist in counting votes who has been employed by or on behalf of any candidate for any purpose whatsoever connected with the election.

(4) The Returning Officer shall, before he commences to count the votes, read out the provisions of section 217 of the Act to such person as may be present and shall then count and check all the ballot boxes placed for the counting of votes and satisfy himself that all such ballot boxes contain the ballot papers which are to be counted at such place have been received and accounted for.

(5) The Returning Officer shall allow, the candidates and their election agents and counting agents present at the counting, reasonable opportunities to inspect the ballot boxes and their seals for satisfying themselves that they are in order.

(6) If any ballot box is found by the Returning Officer to have been tampered or interfered with or destroyed or lost, or if at any time, before counting of votes is completed any ballot papers used at a polling station or at a place fixed for the poll are unlawfully taken out of the custody of the Returning Officer or are accidentally or intentionally, destroyed or lost or are damaged or tampered with to such an extent that the result of the poll at that polling station or place cannot be ascertained, the Returning Officer shall follow the procedure laid down in section 225D of the Act.

(7) (a) Subject to such general or special directions, if any, as may be given by the State Election Commission in this behalf the ballot papers shall be counted after mixing the votes ward-wise/ Gram Panchayat wise/ Territorial Constituency-wise, as the case may be.

(b) The Returning Officer shall open, or cause to be opened, simultaneously the ballot box or boxes used at more than one polling station and shall have the total number of ballot papers found in such box or boxes counted and recorded in Part-II of ballot paper account in Form-XXV.

(c) Discrepancy, if any, between the total number of such ballot papers recorded as aforesaid and the total number of ballot papers issued to voters as shown in Item-3 of Part-I of the said Form-XXV minus the number of ballot papers cancelled as shown in Item-4 thereof and the number of papers as shown in item 5 thereof, shall also be recorded in Part-II of Form-XXV.

(8) The Returning Officer shall, as far as practicable, proceed continuously with the counting of the votes and shall, during any necessary intervals during which the counting has to be suspended, place the ballot papers, packets and other documents relating to the election under his own seal and the seals of such candidates or agents as may desire to affix them and shall cause adequate precautions to be taken for their custody.

57. Counting of Postal Ballot Papers:- (1) The Returning Officer shall first deal with the postal ballot papers in the manner hereinafter provided.

(2) No cover in Form-XIX received by the Returning Officer after the expiry of the time fixed in that behalf shall be opened and no vote contained in any such cover shall be counted.

(3) The other covers shall be opened one after another and as each cover is opened, the Returning Officer shall first scrutinise the declaration in Form-XVII contained therein.

(4) If the said declaration is not found, or has not been duly signed and attested, or is otherwise substantially defective, or if the serial number of the ballot paper as entered in it differs from the serial number endorsed on the cover in Form-XVIII, that cover shall not be opened, and after making an appropriate endorsement thereon, the Returning Officer shall reject the ballot paper therein contained.

(5) Each cover so endorsed and the declaration received with it shall be replaced in the cover in Form-XIX and all such covers in Form-XIX shall be kept in separate packet which shall be sealed and on which shall be recorded the details of the ward/constituency, the date of counting and a brief description of its content.

(6) The Returning Officer shall then place all the declarations in Form-XVII which he has found to be in order in a separate packet which shall be sealed before any cover in Form-XVIII is opened and on which shall be recorded the particulars referred to in sub-rule (5).

(7) The covers in Form-XVIII not already dealt with under the foregoing provisions of this rule shall then be opened one after another and the Returning Officer shall scrutinise each ballot paper and decide the validity of the vote recorded thereon.

(8) A postal ballot paper shall be rejected--

- (a) if it bears any mark (other than the mark to record the vote) or writing by which the elector can be identified; or
- (b) if no vote is recorded thereon; or
- (c) if the vote is given on it in favour of more candidates than one; or
- (d) if it is a spurious ballot paper; or
- (e) if it is so damaged or mutilated that its identity as a genuine ballot paper cannot be established; or
- (f) if it is not returned in the cover sent along with it to the elector by the Returning Officer.

(9) A vote recorded on a postal ballot paper shall be rejected if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such manner as to make it doubtful to which candidate the vote has been given.

(10) A vote recorded on a postal ballot paper shall not be rejected merely on the ground that the mark indicating the vote is indistinct or made more than once, if the intention that the vote shall be for a particular candidate clearly appears from the way the paper is marked.

(11) The Returning Officer shall count all the valid votes given by postal ballot in favour of each candidate, record the total thereof in the result sheet in Form-XXVI and announce the same.

(12) Thereafter, all the valid ballot papers and all the rejected ballot papers shall be separately bundled and kept together in a packet which shall be sealed with the seals of the Returning Officer and of such of the candidates, their election agent or counting agents as may desire to affix their seals thereon and on the packet so sealed shall be recorded the details of the ward/constituency, the date of counting and a brief description of its contents.

58. Grounds for rejection of ballot papers:- (1) The Returning Officer shall reject a ballot paper,-

- (a) if it bears any mark or writing by which the elector can be identified, or
- (b) if it bears no mark at all to indicate the vote, it bears a mark elsewhere than on or near the symbol of one of the candidates on the face of the ballot paper or, it bears a mark made otherwise than with the instrument supplied for the purpose, or
- (c) if votes are given on it in favour of more than one candidate, or
- (d) if the mark indicating the vote thereon is placed in such manner as to make it doubtful as to which candidate the vote has been given, or
- (e) if it is a spurious ballot paper, or
- (f) if it is so damaged or mutilated that its identity as a genuine ballot paper cannot be established, or
- (g) if it bears a serial number, or is of a design, different from the serial numbers, or, as the case may be, design, of the ballot papers authorised for use at the particular polling station, or
- (h) if it does not bear both the distinguishing mark and the signature which it should have borne under the provisions of rule 45.

Provided that where the Returning Officer is satisfied that any such defect as is mentioned in clause(g) or clause (h) has been caused by any mistake or failure on the part of a Presiding Officer or Polling Officer, the ballot paper shall not be rejected merely on the ground of such defect:

Provided further that a ballot paper shall not be rejected merely on the ground that the mark indicating the vote is indistinct or made more than once, if the intention that the vote shall be for a particular candidate clearly appears from the way the paper is marked.

(2) Before rejecting any ballot paper under sub-rule (1), the Returning Officer shall allow candidates and their counting agents present a reasonable opportunity to inspect the ballot paper but shall not allow them to handle it or any other ballot paper.

(3) The Returning Officer shall endorse on every ballot paper which he rejects the word "rejected" and the grounds of rejection in abbreviated form either in his own hand or by means of a rubber stamp and shall initial such endorsement.

(4) All ballot papers rejected under this rule shall be bundled together.

(5) Every ballot paper which is not rejected under this rule shall be counted as one valid vote.

60. Recount of Votes:- (1) After such announcement has been made under rule 59, a candidate or, in his absence, his election agent or any of his counting agents may apply in writing to the Returning Officer for recounting of the votes either wholly or in part stating the grounds on which, he demands such recount.

(2) On such an application being made the Returning Officer shall decide the matter and may allow the application in whole or in part or may reject it wholly if it appears to him to be frivolous or unreasonable.

(3) Every decision of the Returning Officer under sub-rule (2) shall be in writing and contain the reasons therefor.

(4) If the Returning Officer decides under sub-rule (2) to allow a recount of the votes either wholly or, in part he shall -

- (a) do the recounting in accordance with rule 56.
- (b) amend the result sheet in **Form-XXVI** to the extent necessary after such recount; and
- (c) announce the amendments so made by him.

(5) After the total number of votes polled by each candidate has been announced under sub-rule (4), the Returning Officer shall complete and sign the result sheet in **Form-XXVI** and no application for a further or second recount shall be entertained thereafter.

61. Equality of Votes:- If, after the counting of the votes is completed an equality of votes is found to exist between any candidates and the addition of one vote will lead to any of those candidates being declared elected, the Returning Officer shall forthwith decide between those candidates by lot, and proceed as if the candidate on whom the lot falls had received the additional vote.

62. Declaration of result of election and return of election: (1) The Returning Officer shall subject to the provisions of rule 61 in so far as they apply to any particular case –

- (a) declare in **Form-XXVII** the candidate to whom the largest number of valid votes have been given to be elected for the seat and send signed copies thereof to the State Election Commission, Election Authority and District Election Authority.
- (b) complete and certify the return of election in **Form-XXVIII** and send copies thereof to the State Election Commission, Election Authority and District Election Authority.

(2) Any candidate or his agent shall, on application be permitted to take a copy of an extract of the return of election in **Form-XXVIII**.

63. Grant of Election Certificate:- As soon as may be after a candidate has been declared by the Returning Officer under rule 16 or, as the case may be, under rule 62 to have been elected, the Returning Officer shall grant such candidate a certificate of election in **Form-XXIX** and obtain from the candidate an acknowledgement of its receipt duly signed by him immediately.

64. Publication of Results:- The Returning Officer shall publish on the notice board in the Office of the Gram Panchayat/Mandal Parishad/Zilla Parishad concerned a notification signed by him, stating the names of the candidates duly elected.

65. Sealing of used ballot papers:- The valid ballot papers of each candidate and the rejected ballot papers shall thereafter be bundled separately and the several bundles made up into a separate packet which shall be sealed with the seals of the Returning Officer and of such of the candidates, their election agents or counting agents as may desire to affix their seals thereon, and on the packets to be sealed shall be recorded the following particulars, namely –

- (a) number of ward/name of the Gram Panchayat or Territorial Constituency of the Mandal Parishad, or the Zilla Parishad, as the case may be; and
- (b) the date of counting.

ANNEXURE-2

OUTLINES OF FUNCTIONS TO BE PERFORMED BY PRESIDING OFFICERS AT VARIOUS STAGES

- 1. On intimation of appointment as Presiding Officer.**
- 2. On the day previous to the day of Poll.**
- 3. On the day of Poll.**
- 4. During the hours of Poll.**
- 5. After the completion of Poll.**

1. ON INTIMATION OF APPOINTMENT AS PRESIDING OFFICER:

- 1.1 (a) Find out the details of your Returning Officer as mentioned in appointment order
(b) Venue and date of training classes.

Attend as many training classes as you can, so that you become fully familiar with rules and regulations and latest instructions. Never rely on your memory and past experience as they may betray you. The instructions are being changed considerably from time to time.

- 1.2 Read the Handbook for Presiding Officers booklet very carefully and follow instructions given by Returning Officer from time to time.
- 1.3 Familiarize yourself with the item of polling material given in **Annexure-5**.
- 1.4 Be well acquainted with the working of ballot boxes (opening, fixing of the paper seal and sealing of ballot boxes etc.).
- 1.5 Read carefully the different forms, statutory and non-statutory that are to be used during poll process at the polling station.
- 1.6 Read very carefully the relevant sections of the Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 (Extracts given in **Annexure-1**) and relevant rules under the Conduct of Elections Rules, 2006 (Extracts also given in **Annexure-1**).
- 1.7 If you have any doubt, approach your Returning Officer and get your doubt clarified. Never be in a confused mind.

2. ON THE DAY PREVIOUS TO THE DAY OF POLL:

When you receive your appointment order at distribution centre one day before the poll, please check up carefully and examine:-

- (a) The name and number of your polling station;
- (b) The name of the Ward and Gram Panchayat within which the polling station is situated;
- (c) The exact location of your polling station.

This information will be found in your appointment order. You may also find the names of your Polling Officers in the order. Contact them.

Know your polling party members at the distribution centre and explain them the part to be taken at the poll by each member.

2.1 On the day previous to the day of poll, you will be asked to collect the polling materials for use at the polling station. Please ensure that:-

- (a) The ballot boxes given to you pertain to your polling station.
- (b) Check up that ballot boxes are in perfect working conditions.
- (c) Check up that appropriate ballot paper concerned to your polling station has been supplied to you.
- (d) Check up the serial No. of the ballot paper and total No. of ballot paper are supplied are found to be correct, if any missing and found discrepancy report immediately to Returning Officer.
- (e) All the items of polling materials mentioned in **Annexure-5** have been supplied in required quantity;
- (f) Check up the serial numbers of paper seals;
- (g) Check up the marked copy of electoral roll to ensure that :-
 - (i) the copies of the supplements are given,
 - (ii) the part number of the roll and the supplement is correctly given,
 - (iii) page numbers in the working copies of the roll are given serially,
 - (iv) the printed serial numbers of voters are not corrected and no new numbers are substituted for them,
 - (v) all deletions of names and corrections of clerical or other errors as per the supplements have been incorporated.
- (h) Check the copy of the list of contesting candidates given to you. The names and symbols of the candidates given in the list must tally and should be in the same serial order in which they appear in the ballot paper.
- (i) Check up that the phial of indelible ink supplied to you contains sufficient quantity of indelible ink and that its cap is perfectly sealed; if not re-seal the cap with candle/wax (or) replace it in distribution counter.
- (j) Check up the arrow cross-mark rubber stamp and your brass seals. Ensure that the arrow cross mark rubber stamp has seals affixed on both the sides and that the stamp pad is not dry. If your polling station is proposed to be located in a temporary structure, obtain iron box of sufficient dimensions to store your election papers.
- (k) If you have any doubt about your movement programme, route to be followed to reach the polling station, get them cleared and make sure of the time, the place of departure and mode of transport for reaching the polling station.

2.2 (a) Reach your polling station latest by 4-00 p.m. on the day previous to the day of poll and ensure that-

- (i) there is enough space for the voters to wait outside the polling station and for separate queues for male and female voters;
- (ii) there are separate passages for entry and exit of voters;
- (iii) the voting compartment for voters to record their votes is well lighted;
- (iv) a notice showing the polling area and details about voters is prominently displayed;
- (v) the copy of the list of contesting candidates with symbols allotted to them is prominently displayed.

- (b) Utilize the services of village officers in identifying the voters including female assistant.
 - (c) Decide the place where you, your Polling Officers and Polling Agents of the candidates will sit and place for arrangement of voting compartment.
 - (d) Remove any photograph of any leader belonging to any political party hung in the polling station or cover them fully.
- 2.3 The ballot box and the polling materials entrusted to you should remain in your custody throughout, till the poll is completed and the ballot box and the materials are handed over back by you. Either you or one of the Polling Officers selected by you should remain in the polling station in charge of the ballot box and polling materials from the moment you arrive there. The ballot box and polling materials should not be left in the custody of the Police Guard on duty at the polling station or any person other than yourself or a Polling Officer selected by you.

3. ON THE DAY OF POLL

- 3.1 Ensure that you and other members of your polling party present and ready at the allotted the polling station one hour before the hour fixed for starting the poll. Once again, check the ballot box, ballot papers and the polling materials.

3.2 **Section 217 of A.P. Panchayat Raj Act, 1994:-
Maintenance of secrecy of voting:-**

- (1) Every officer, clerk, agent or other person who performs any duty in connection with the recording or counting of votes at an in connection with the recording or counting of votes at an election shall maintain, and aid in maintaining, the secrecy of the voting and shall not, except for some purpose authorised by or under any law, communicate to any person any information calculated to violate such secrecy.
 - (2) Any person who contravenes the provisions of sub-section (1) shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months or with fine or with both.
- 3.3 Make arrangements to appoint a Polling Officer if one from your party has not turned up.
- 3.4 Start preparing the ballot papers for issue and ballot boxes ready, one hour before the time fixed for commencement of poll.
- 3.5 Demonstrate the ballot boxes and marked copy of electoral rolls in front of polling agents.
- 3.6 Fix the paper seal and close the slot of the ballot boxes.
- 3.7 Place the phial of indelible ink in such a way that the ink does not spill out.

4. DURING THE HOURS OF POLL

- 4.1 Ensure that the polling starts sharp at the appointed time. Even if all formalities have not been completed, admit some voters in the polling station at the appointed time.
- 4.2 While poll is in progress, unusual complex cases are likely to crop up. Deal with them yourself leaving the Polling Officers to carry on their normal duties. Such cases will be.

- (a) Challenge to a voter,
- (b) Voting by minors,
- (c) Voting by blind or infirm voters,

- (d) Voters deciding not to vote,
- (e) Voting on E.D.C.,
- (f) Tendered votes,
- (g) Breach of secrecy of voting,
- (h) Disorderly conduct at the booth and removal of disorderly persons,
- (i) Adjournment of poll because of riot or any other cause.

- 4.3 Collect statistical information for compilation item 19 of your diary regarding polling every two hours.
- 4.4 Close the poll at the appointed hour even if it has started late. Give slips with your signature to those persons who are in the queue at this hour. Ensure that no additional person joins the queue after the appointed hour.

5. AFTER THE COMPLETION OF POLL

- 5.1 Close and seal the ballot boxes.
- 5.2 Ascertain the number of female voters who have voted.
- 5.3 Complete Form-XXV (Ballot Paper Account). Furnish to every Polling Agent present at the close of the poll, an attested true copy of Form-XXV after obtaining from him a receipt for it on the declaration form. Then complete the declaration in other respects.
- 5.4 Complete your Presiding Officer diary.
- 5.5 Seal all election papers.
- 5.6 Keep the (1) Ballot Paper Account (2) Paper Seal Account (3) Declarations made by you before the commencement of poll, at the time use of subsequent ballot box(es) and at the end of poll (4) Presiding Officer's diary and (5) Visit Sheets in separate self printed Brown colored covers and prepare **First Packet (Green coloured)** of seven statutory covers.
- 5.7 Prepare **Second Packet (Yellow coloured)** of nine covers.
- 5.8 Prepare **Third Packet (Blue coloured)** of six items.
- 5.9 Prepare **Fourth Packet (White coloured)** of all other items.
- 5.10 You have to assist the Returning Officer in the process of counting as it is on the same day of the poll and also assist in sealing of election records after counting.
- 5.11 After counting, as per the programme of return journey to the Reception Centre for depositing the sealed packet and other packets of election papers you should assist the Returning Officer. It is your responsibility to assist the Returning Officer to deliver the ballot boxes and other materials at the Reception Centre and to obtain a receipt.

ANNEXURE-3**CHECK MEMO FOR PRESIDING OFFICERS**

| ITEM | ACTION TO BE TAKEN | REMARKS |
|-------------|---|--|
| 1. | Obtaining and keeping in possession all relevant instructions from the Returning Officer. | Whether obtained and kept? |
| 2. | Familiarization with the other members of the polling party and maintenance of close relationship with them. | Whether done? |
| 3. | Collection of election material | Whether ensured that all the election materials and that too in sufficient quantities and numbers have been collected? |
| 4. | Checking up of ballot boxes, marked copies of the electoral roll, arrow cross mark rubber stamp, paper seals, ballot paper and paper seal account, etc. | Whether done? |
| 5. | Separate entrance and exit for voters at polling stations. | Whether ensured? |
| 6. | Display of notice specifying the polling area and the numbers of electors assigned and also a copy of the list of contesting candidates. | Whether displayed? |
| 7. | Arrangement of voting compartment as per rules specified. | Whether done? |
| 8. | Demonstration on ballot box and marked copy of electoral rolls. | Whether conducted? |
| 9. | Allowing polling agents to note the serial numbers of ballot boxes and paper seal. | Whether allowed? |
| 10. | Fixing of paper seal in the frame provided in the ballot box. | Whether done? |
| 11. | Address tags to be put inside the ballot box. | Whether done? |
| 12. | Closing the slit of the ballot box and keeping ballot box ready for commencing the poll. | Whether done? |
| 13. | Signing of ballot paper and affixing distinguishing mark. | Whether done? |
| 14. | Shuffling of bundles of ballot papers. | Whether done? |
| 15. | Allowing polling agents to note down the first and last serial number of ballot papers. | Whether allowed? |

| | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 16. | Declaration to be made at the commencement of the poll. | Whether made? |
| 17. | Reading out the provisions of the Sec. 217 of A.P.P.R. Act, 1994 with regard to the secrecy of voting by presiding officer at the beginning of the poll. | Whether done? |
| 18. | Marking of indelible ink on left forefinger and obtaining the signature/thumb impression on the counterfoil of ballot papers. | Whether being properly done? |
| 19. | Declaration from under-aged electors. | Whether obtained? |
| 20. | Maintenance of presiding officer's diary. | Whether events are recorded from time to time as and when they occur? |
| 21. | Close of poll at the appointed hour. | Whether done? |
| 22. | Supply copies of ballot paper account recorded in Form XXV given to all the polling agents. | Whether attested? |
| 23. | Declaration to be made at the close of poll. | Whether made? |
| 24. | Sealing of ballot boxes and election papers. | Whether done according to the instructions? |

ANNEXURE-4

FORM - XIV
[See Rule 25 (1)]

APPLICATION FOR POSTAL BALLOT PAPER

To
The Returning Officer,
Gram Panchayat / Mandal Praja Parishad / Zilla Praja Parishad.

I intend to cast my vote by post at the ensuing election to the office of the Sarpanch / Member of Ward No..... of Gram Panchayat / Member, Territorial Constituency ofMandal Praja Parishad / Zilla Praja Parishad.

My name is entered at Sl. No. in Section No. of the electoral roll for ward No.....ofGram Panchayat of Mandal Praja Parishad Zilla Praja Parishad.

The Ballot paper may be sent to me at the following address :

Place :

Date :

Yours faithfully

ANNEXURE-5

LIST OF POLLING MATERIALS FOR A POLLING STATION WHERE BALLOT BOXES IS USED

| A. REQUIREMENT OF POLLING MATERIALS USED AT POLLING STATION: | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1. | Ballot Box (es) | 1+1 Reserve |
| 2. | Ballot Papers | As per requirement (including Tendered Ballot Papers) |
| 3. | Marked Copies of Electoral Rolls | 4 |
| 4. | Indelible Ink Phial (10 C.C. phial for 500 Voters) | 1 |
| 5. | Paper Seals for Ballot Boxes | 4 |
| 6. | Address Tags for Ballot Boxes | 4 |
| 7. | Label for Ballot Boxes | 4 |
| 8. | Arrow Cross Mark Rubber Stamp | 3 |
| 9. | Distinguishing Mark Rubber Stamp | 1 |
| 10. | Stamp Pad (Purple) | 2 |
| 11. | Purple Ink Bottle | 1 |
| 12. | Pusher | 1 |
| 13. | Metal Seal for Presiding Officer | 1 |
| 14. | Match Box | 1 |
| 15. | Material for making Voting Compartment (Cardboard) | 1 |
| 16. | Poster Notice specifying Polling Area | 1 |
| 17. | Poster showing the List of Contesting Candidates & Symbols allotted to them (1 for Sarpanch & 1 for Ward Member) | 2 |
| B. STATUTORY, NON-STATUTORY FORMS & POLLING MATERIALS: | | |
| 1. | List of Contesting Candidates (Form-IX) | 2 |
| 2. | Appointment of Polling Agent (Form-XII) | 10 |
| 3. | List of Challenged Votes (Form-XXI) | 2 |
| 4. | List of Blind and Infirm Voters (Form-XXIII) | 2 |
| 5. | List of Tendered Votes (Form-XXIV) | 2 |
| 6. | Ballot Paper Account (Form-XXV) | 10 |
| 7. | Paper Seal Account | 4 |
| 8. | Receipt Book for deposit of Challenged votes fee | 1 |
| 9. | Letter to S.H.O. | 4 |
| 10. | Declarations to be made by the Presiding Officer before commencement of Poll, Change of Ballot Box and at the close of poll (Part-I to Part-III) | 2 |
| 11. | Form of Declaration by Elector about age | 5 |
| 12. | Declaration by Presiding officer about Electors age | 2 |
| 13. | Declaration by the companion of blind and infirm voters | 3 |
| 14. | Presiding Officers Diary | 2 |
| 15. | Entry Passes for Polling Agents | 10 |
| 16. | Visit Sheet | 2 |
| 17. | Format for specimen signature of Contesting Candidates and Election Agent | 2 |
| SIGN BOARDS | | |
| (a) | Presiding Officer | 1 per P.S. |
| (b) | Polling Officer | 3 per P.S. |
| (c) | Entry | 1 per P.S. |
| (d) | Exit | 1 per P.S. |
| (e) | Polling Agents | 1 per P.S. |

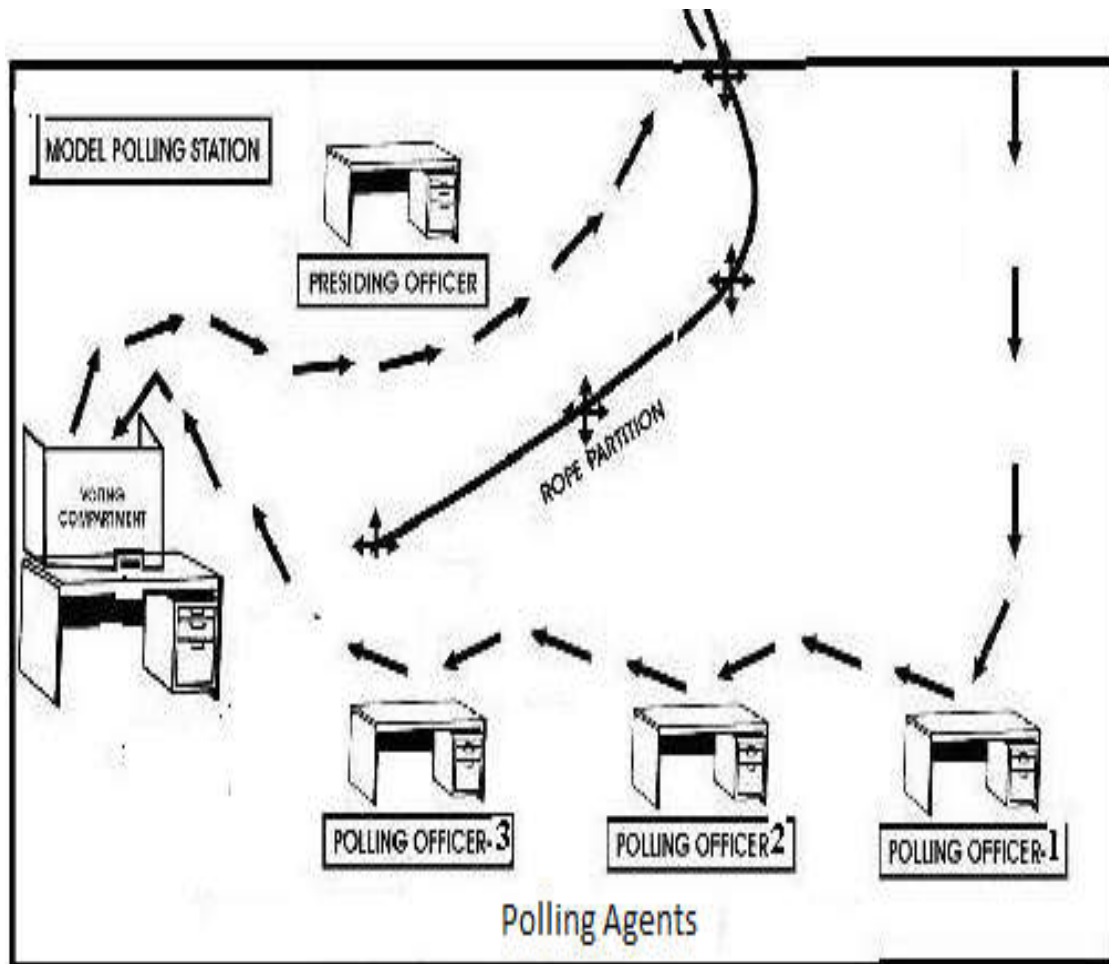
| C. STATIONERY: | | |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------|
| 1. | Ordinary Pencil | 1 |
| 2. | Ballpoint Pen (1 Blue + 1 Red) | 2 |
| 3. | Plain Foolscap Paper | 2 sheets |
| 4. | Pins | 10 pieces |
| 5. | Drawing Pins | 20 pieces |
| 6. | Sealing Wax | 2 sticks |
| 7. | Gum Bottle (Small size) | 1 |
| 8. | Blade | 1 |
| 9. | Candle sticks | 2 |
| 10. | Thin Twine Thread | 20 metres |
| 11. | Sutli (Country twine) | 20 metres |
| 12. | Flexible wire | 5 pieces |
| 13. | Sewing thread | 20 metres |
| 14. | Needle | 1 |
| 15. | Flat Metal Rule | 1 |
| 16. | Carbon Paper | 2 |
| 17. | Cloth or Rag for removing oil, etc., | 1 |
| 18. | Packing paper sheets | 1 |
| 19. | Cup/empty tin/plastic for holding Indelible Ink bottle | 1 |
| 20. | Rubber bands | 10 |
| 21. | Cello bands | 1 |
| 22. | Canvas bag | 1 |
| 23. | Ribbon or Tape for tying sealed ballot boxes | 6 |
| 24. | Gunny bag | 1 |
| 25. | Checklist for Polling Material | 2 |
| D. COVERS: | | |
| S.No. | Cover Name | Requirement per P.S. |
| a. | The BROWN coloured cover should contain the following covers which shall also in the same coloured as Brown: | Big Size 1 |
| | (1) Cover for Ballot Paper Account | Medium size 2 |
| | (2) Cover for Declarations by Presiding Officer before and after Poll | Medium size 2 |
| | (3) Cover for Paper Seal Account | Medium size 2 |
| | (4) Cover for the Diary of the Presiding Officer | Small size 2 |
| | (5) Cover for Visit Sheet | Small size 2 |
| b. | The "STATUTORY COVERS" (GREEN coloured) should contain the following covers which shall also be in the same coloured as Green: | Big Size 1 |
| | (1) Cover containing Marked Copy of electoral roll | Medium size 2 |
| | (2) Cover containing the signed but unused ballot papers with counterfoils | Medium size 2 |
| | (3) Cover containing other unused ballot papers with counterfoils | Medium size 2 |
| | (4) Cover containing the tendered ballot papers and the list in Form-XXIV | Small size 2 |
| | (5) Cover containing the ballot papers cancelled for violation of voting procedure | Small size 1 |
| | (6) Cover(s) containing other cancelled ballot papers | Small size 2 |
| | (7) cover containing counterfoils of used ballot papers including Tendered Ballot Papers | Medium size 2 |

| | | |
|--|--|-------------------|
| c. | The "Non-STATUTORY COVERS" (colored YELLOW) should contain following covers which shall also be in the same colored as YELLOW : | Big size 1 |
| | (1) Cover containing the copy or copies of electoral roll (other than the Marked Copy) | Medium size 2 |
| | (2) Cover for Appointment letters of Polling Agents | Medium size 2 |
| | (3) Cover for Election Duty Certificate | Small size 2 |
| | (4) Cover for list of Challenged Votes | Small size 2 |
| | (5) Cover for list of Blind and Infirm electors and the declarations of the companions | Small size 2 |
| | (6) Cover for declarations obtained from electors as to their age and the list of such electors | Small size 2 |
| | (7) Cover for receipt book and cash, if any, in respect of Challenged Voters | Small size 2 |
| | (8) Cover for unused and damaged paper seals | Small size 2 |
| | (9) For any other paper that the P.O. has decided to keep in the sealed cover | Medium size 2 |
| | (10) Plain covers | Medium size 5 |
| d. | Cover (BLUE coloured) for the following items | Big size 1 |
| | (1) Handbook for Presiding Officers | |
| | (2) Indelible Ink Set (with stopper having been secured on each phial effectively with molten candle or was applied thereon to prevent leakage or evaporation) | |
| | (3) Self-inking Pads | |
| | (4) Metal Seal of the Presiding Officer | |
| | (5) Arrow Cross Mark Rubber Stamp | |
| | (6) Distinguishing Mark Rubber Stamp | |
| e. | Empty Cover (WHITE coloured) | Big size 1 |
| Wherever the covers/envelopes are smaller in size the packing paper may be used and where the relevant printed cover/envelope is not available plain envelope can be used and purpose may be indicated with red ink) | | |

ANNEXURE-6

MODEL POLLING STATION

LAYOUT OF POLLING STATION



ANNEXURE-7

FORM-XII
[See Rule 19]

APPOINTMENT OF POLLING AGENT

Election to Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. of
..... Gram Panchayat / Member,
..... Territorial Constituency of
..... Mandal Praja Parishad / Zilla Praja Parishad.

I, a Candidate / the Election Agent of
..... who is a candidate at the above election, do hereby
appoint (name and address)
..... as a Polling Agent to attend Polling Station No.
..... fixed for the poll on at

Place :
Date :

Signature of Candidate/Election Agent

I agree to act as such polling agent.

Signature of Polling Agent : _____

Declaration of Polling Agent to be signed before Presiding Officer

I hereby declare that at above election I will not do anything forbidden by section 217 of the Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994, which I have read / has been read over to me.

Date:

Signature of Polling Agent.

Signed before me

Date:

Presiding Officer

Note: The appointment order shall be made in duplicate and one copy thereof shall be handed over to the polling agent for production at the polling station and the other copy to be sent to the Returning Officer.

ANNEXURE-8

**FORMAT FOR SPECIMEN SIGNATURE OF CANDIDATES AND THEIR
ELECTION AGENTS**

Election to Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. of Gram
Panchayat of Mandal Praja Parishad.

The specimen signatures of contesting candidates and their election agents are given below
for the purpose of verification of their signatures by the Presiding Officer in the letters of
appointment of Polling Agents at the time of poll :-

| Sl. No. | Name of Contesting Candidate | Specimen Signature | Name of his/ her Election Agent | Specimen Signature |
|--------------------|---|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Shri/Smt./Ms..... (Candidate No.1) | ..... | Shri/Smt./Ms..... | ..... |
| 2 | Shri/Smt./Ms..... (Candidate No.2) | ..... | Shri/Smt./Ms..... | ..... |
| 3 | Shri/Smt./Ms..... (Candidate No.3) | ..... | Shri/Smt./Ms..... | ..... |

Place:

Signature:

Date:

(SEAL)

* Returning Officer / Election Officer

* Strike off whichever is in applicable.

ANNEXURE-9

VISIT SHEET

Date of Poll : _____

Name of the Gram Panchayat / MPP : _____

Name and Number of Ward : _____

Name and Number of Polling Station : _____

Number of Electors : _____

| Sl. No. | Name & Designation of the Officer visiting (Observer/DEA/RO/ARO/Zonal Officer) | Time of visit | Brief description of polling process (peaceful / incidents, if any) | Number of votes polled till the time of visit | % polled till the time of visit | Remarks , if any | Signature of visiting Officer |
|---------|--|---------------|---|---|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

Signature of Presiding Officer
(with date)

ANNEXURE-10

**RECORD OF PAPER SEALS USED AT ELECTION TO WARD MEMBER / SARPANCH,
GRAM PANCHAYAT**

Part-I

Name of the Gram Panchayat : _____

Polling Station Name and Number : _____

| Serial No. of Ballot Box Used | Serial No. of Paper Seal Used | Remarks |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| (1) | (2) | (3) |
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |

Part-II

ACCOUNT OF PAPER SEALS

| | | | |
|----|--|---|---------------------|
| 1. | Serial numbers of Paper Seals supplied | : | From to |
| 2. | Total numbers supplied with Sl. Nos. | : | |
| 3. | Number of paper seals used with Sl. Nos. | : | |
| 4. | Number of unused paper seals returned to Returning Officer (Deduct Item 3 from Item 2) with Sl. Nos. | : | |
| 5. | Number of damaged paper seals, if any, with Sl. Nos. | : | |

Date :

Place :

Signature of Presiding Officer.

ANNEXURE-11

DECLARATION BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER

PART-I

Declaration by the Presiding Officer before the commencement of the Poll / Election to
..... Ward Member / Sarpanch and Sl. No. & Name of Polling Station
.....

Date of Poll :

I hereby declare:-

- (1) that I have demonstrated to the polling agents and other persons present that the ballot box(es) to be used for the poll is/are empty and I have allowed them to note down the serial numbers of the ballot box (es);
- * (2) that on the paper seal used for securing the ballot box I have affixed my own signature and obtained thereon the signatures of such of the polling agents as are present and desirous of affixing the same;
*(is applicable where paper seal is not used)
- (3) that I have demonstrated to the polling agents and others present that the marked copy of the electoral roll to be used during the poll does not contain any marks other than those used for issuing postal ballot papers and election duty certificates; and
- (4) that I have allowed the polling agents to note the first and the last of the serial number of the ballot papers which will be used at the polling station.

Signature
Presiding Officer

Signature of polling agents:

- 1. (of candidate)
- 2. (of candidate)
- 3. (of candidate)

The following polling agents(s) declined to affix his/her signature(s) on this declaration:

- 1. (of candidate)
- 2. (of candidate)
- 3. (of candidate)

Date

Signature
Presiding Officer

PART-II

Declaration by the Presiding Officer at the time of use of subsequent Ballot Box(es)

Election to Ward Member / Sarpanch and No. & name of
Polling StationDate of Poll

I hereby declare:

- (1) that I have demonstrated to the polling agents and other persons present that the second/third () ballot box to be used for the poll is empty; and
- *(2) that on the paper seal used for securing the ballot box I have affixed my own signature and obtained thereon the signatures of such of the polling agents as are present and desirous of affixing the same;

Signature
Presiding Officer

*(in applicable where paper seal is not used)

Signature of polling agents:

- 1. (of candidate)
- 2. (of candidate)
- 3. (of candidate)

The following polling agents(s) declined to affix their signature(s), on this declaration:

- 1. (of candidate)
- 2. (of candidate)
- 3. (of candidate)

Signature
Presiding Officer

Date:

PART-III

DECLARATION OF THE END OF POLL

I have furnished to the polling agents, who were present at the polling station at the close of the poll and whose signatures are affixed below, an attested copy of each of the entries in the ballot paper account in Form XXV as required under rule 52(2) of the Conduct of Election Rules, 2006.

Signature.....
Presiding Officer

Signature of polling agents:

1. (of candidate)
2. (of candidate)
3. (of candidate)

The following polling agents who were present at the close of the polling declined to receive an attested copy of the ballot paper account and to give a receipt therefore and so an attested copy of the ballot paper account, was not supplied to them:

1. (of candidate)
2. (of candidate)
3.(of candidate)

Signature
Presiding Officer.

Date:

ANNEXURE-12

LETTER OF COMPLAINT TO POLICE (S.H.O.)

To
The Station House Officer,
.....
.....

Sub: Election to Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. of
..... Gram Panchayat of Mandal
Praja Parishad - Sl.No. and name of the Polling Station
Date of poll

Sir,

I am to report that Sri..... son of Sri.....,
and resident of has challenged the identity of the
person, who is being handed over to This person claimed to be
..... whose name appears at Serial No in Part
No..... of the electoral roll of Ward. He could not prove himself
to be this elector. In my opinion, he is an imposter. I am to request you to take necessary
action as required under Section 171-F of the Indian Penal Code.

Place

Date

Yours faithfully,

Signature
Presiding Officer

Copy forwarded to the Returning Officer *

Name of the Gram Panchayat

Signature
Presiding Officer

RECEIPT

The above letter and the person referred to therein were handed over to me
at..... (hour) on (date) by the Presiding Officer.

*Here insert ex-officio designation of the concerned

Signature
Returning Officer.

ANNEXURE-13

FORM XXI
[See Rule 43 (2)(c)]

LIST OF CHALLENGED VOTES

Election to the Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. of Gram Panchayat / Member,
..... Territorial Constituency of Mandal Praja Parishad / Zilla Praja Parishad.

Number and Name of Polling Station Ward No. Gram Panchayat

| S.No | No. of Elector on Electoral Roll / Section Number Gram Panchayat | Name of Elector | Signature or thumb impression of the person challenged and his address | Name of Challenger | Signatures or thumb impression and address of identifier, if any | Order of Presiding Officer | Signature of Challenger on receiving refund of deposit |
|------|--|-----------------|--|--------------------|--|----------------------------|--|
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

Place :

Date :

Signature of Presiding Officer

ANNEXURE-14

RECEIPT FOR CHALLENGE FEE

Book No..... Page No.....

Office of the Presiding Officer for Polling Station No of Election to the Sarpanch/
Member of Ward No. of Gram Panchayat of
..... Mandal Praja Parishad.

Received a sum of Rs.5/- (Rupees Five only) in cash from Sri
Candidate / Election Agent / Polling Agent on account of deposit for challenge under rule 43
of the Conduct of Election Rules, 2006.

Date

Presiding Officer

Forfeited to Government

Presiding Officer

Received back the amount of Rs.5/- (Rupees Five only) under rule 43 of the Conduct of
Election Rules, 2006.

Name and Signature of Candidate /

Date

Election Agent / Polling Agent

**RECEIPT
FOR CHALLENGE FEE**

Book No..... Page No.....

Received a sum of Rs.5/- (Rupees five only) in cash from Sri/Smt./Kum.
..... Candidate / Election Agent /
Polling Agent on account of deposit for challenge under rule 43 of the Conduct of Elections
Rules, 2006.

Date

Presiding Officer
for Polling Station No.....

ANNEXURE-15

FORM OF DECLARATION BY ELECTOR ABOUT AGE

I hereby solemnly declare and affirm that my age was more than 18 years on the first date of January, i.e., the qualifying date with reference to which the existing electoral roll of the constituency was prepared/revised.

I am aware of the penal provisions of Section 182 of IPC, for making any false declaration in connection with the inclusion of any name in the electoral roll or the preparation, revision or correction of the electoral roll.

Signature/Thumb impression of the Elector

.....

Father/Mother/Husband's Name

.....

Part number of elector roll

.....

Dated.....

Serial number of elector

.....

Certified that the above declaration was made and subscribed by the elector above named before me.

Signature of the Presiding Officer

.....

Number and name of polling station

.....

Dated.....

ANNEXURE-16

DECLARATION BY PRESIDING OFFICER ABOUT ELECTOR'S AGE

Election to Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. of Gram Panchayat of Mandal Praja Parishad. Serial No. and Name of Polling Station

Part-I

LIST OF VOTERS FROM WHOM DECLARATION AS TO THEIR AGE HAVE BEEN OBTAINED

| Sl. No. | Name of Elector | Part No. and Serial No. in Electoral Roll | Age as entered in Electoral Roll | Age as assessed by the Presiding Officer |
|---------|-----------------|---|----------------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (1) | | | | |
| (2) | | | | |
| (3) | | | | |
| (4) | | | | |
| etc. | | | | |

Part-II

LIST OF ELECTORS WHO HAVE REFUSED TO MAKE DECLARATIONS AS TO THEIR AGE

| Sl. No. | Name of Elector | Part No. and Serial No. Electoral Roll | Age as entered in Electoral Roll | Age as assessed by the Presiding Officer |
|---------|-----------------|--|----------------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (1) | | | | |
| (2) | | | | |
| (3) | | | | |
| (4) | | | | |
| Etc. | | | | |

Dated

Signature of Presiding Officer

ANNEXURE-17

FORM-XXII

[See Rules 48(1) & 80(1)]

DECLARATION BY THE COMPANION OF BLIND OR INFIRM ELECTOR

Election to Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. of Gram Panchayat/ Member, Territorial Constituency of Mandal Praja Parishad/ Zilla Praja Parishad.

Sl. No. and Name of Polling Station.....

I, son ofaged resident of* hereby declare that

- (a) I have not acted as companion of any other elector at any polling station today, the
- (b) I will keep secret the vote recorded by me on behalf of

Signature of Companion

* Full address to be given.

ANNEXURE-18

FORM-XXIII

[See Rules 48(2) & 80(2)]

LIST OF BLIND AND INFIRM VOTERS

Election to *Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. of
Gram Panchayat / Member, Territorial Constituency of
..... Mandal Praja Parishad / Zilla Praja Parishad.

Number and Name of the Polling Station.....

| Part No. & Sl. No. | Full Name of the Voter | Full Name of the Companion | Address of the Companion | Signature of Companion of Voter |
|--------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Date :.....

Signature of Presiding Officer

*Score out of the word not applicable.

ANNEXURE-19

FORM-XV

[See Rule 25 (2)]

APPLICATION FOR ELECTION DUTY CERTIFICATE

To
The Returning Officer,
Gram Panchayat / Mandal Praja Parishad / Zilla Praja Parishad.

Sir,

I intend to cast my vote in person at the ensuing election to the office of the Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. of Gram Panchayat / Member, Territorial Constituency of Mandal Praja Parishad / Zilla Praja Parishad.

I have been posted on election duty elsewhere than the polling station at which I am entitled to vote.

My name is entered at S.No. in Section No. of the electoral roll for Ward No. comprised in the Gram Panchayat Mandal Praja ParishadZilla Praja Parishad.

I request that an Election Duty Certificate in Form XVI may be issued to enable me to vote at the polling station where I may be on duty on the polling day. It may be sent to me at the following address.

Place :

Date :

Yours faithfully

ANNEXURE-20

FORM-XVI
[See Rule 25 (2)(a)]

Certified that is an elector in the
..... Gram Panchayat, Mandal Praja Parishad,
..... Zilla Praja Parishad his electoral roll number being
..... of Gram Panchayat that by reason of his being
on election duty he is unable to vote at the polling station where he is entitled to vote and
that he is therefore hereby authorised to vote at any polling station (in the Ward No.....
of Gram Panchayat / Territorial
Constituency of Mandal Praja Parishad / Zilla Praja Parishad, as the case may be. He may
be on duty on the date of poll.

Place :

Date :

Signature
Returning Officer
(Seal)

ANNEXURE-21

FORM-XXIV
[See Rule 50 (2)]

LIST OF TENDERED VOTES

Election to the Sarpanch/ Member of Ward No. of

Gram Panchayat / Member, Territorial Constituency of

..... Mandal Praja Parishad / Zilla Praja Parishad.

Number and Name of Polling Station in Ward No.

of Gram Panchayat.

| Sl. No. | Name of the Elector | No. in Electoral Roll/Section No. Name of Gram Panchayat | Serial No. of tendered Ballot paper vote | Signature of elector or thumb impression of person tendering | Serial No. of ballot paper issued to the person who had already voted |
|---------|---------------------|--|--|--|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | |

Place :

Date :

Signature of Presiding Officer

ANNEXURE-22

FORM-XXV
[See Rules 52 & 56]

PART-I

BALLOT PAPER ACCOUNT

Election to the Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. of
Gram Panchayat / Member,..... Territorial Constituency of
..... Mandal Praja Parishad / Zilla Praja Parishad.

Ward No:

Gram Panchayat:

No. and Name of the Polling Station:

| | | Serial No(s). | | Total |
|----|--|----------------------|-------|--------------|
| | | From | To | |
| 1 | Ballot Papers received | ..... | ..... | ..... |
| 2 | Ballot Papers unused (i.e. not issued to Voters): | | | |
| | (a) With the signature of Presiding Officer | ..... | ..... |  |
| | (b) Without the signature of Presiding Officer | ..... | ..... |  |
| | Total (a) + (b) |  |  | ..... |
| 3* | Ballot Papers used at the Polling Station (1 minus 2 = 3) |  |  | ..... |
| 4 | Ballot Papers used at the Polling Station, but NOT INSERTED INTO THE BALLOT BOX | | | |
| | (a) Ballot Papers cancelled for violation of voting procedure under Rule 47 (6) | ..... |  |  |
| | (b) Ballot Papers cancelled for other reasons | ..... |  |  |
| | (c) Ballot Papers used as Tendered Ballot Papers | ..... |  | ..... |
| | * Total (a) + (b) + (c) | | | |
| 5* | Ballot Papers to be found in the Ballot Box (3 minus 4 = 5) |  |  | ..... |

* Serial numbers need not be given

Date :

Signature of the Presiding Officer

Part-II (of Form XXV)

RESULT OF INITIAL COUNTING

(to be used when the counting of votes is done by mixing)

1. Total number of ballot papers found in the ballot box(es) used at the polling station
.....

2. Discrepancy, if any, between the total number as shown against Item 1 in this Part
and the total number of ballot papers to be found in the ballot box(es) shown in
Item 5 of Part-I
.....

Date.....

Signature of Counting Supervisor

Signature of the Returning Officer

ANNEXURE-23**PRESIDING OFFICER'S DIARY**

| | | | |
|----|--|---|--|
| 1 | Name of the Gram Panchayat and Ward No. | : | |
| 2 | Name of the Mandal Praja Parishad | : | |
| 3 | Date of Poll | : | |
| 4 | No. & Name of the Polling Station | : | |
| | Whether located in - | | |
| | (i) Government or quasi-government building | : | |
| | (ii) Private building | : | |
| | (iii) Temporary structure | : | |
| 5 | Number of polling officers recruited locally, if any | : | |
| 6 | Appointment of polling officer made in the absence of duly appointed polling officer, if any, and the reasons for such appointment | : | |
| 7 | Number of Ballot Boxes used | : | |
| 8 | (i) Number of Paper Seals used | : | |
| | (ii) Sl. Nos. of Paper Seals used | : | |
| 9 | No. of Polling Agents and the No. who arrived late | : | |
| 10 | Number of candidates who had appointed polling agents at the polling station | : | |
| 11 | (i) Number of ballot papers issued to voters according to marked copy of the electoral roll | : | |
| | (ii) Number of ballot papers actually issued at the polling stations (including tendered ballot papers, cancelled ballot papers, etc.) | : | |
| | Signature of 1st Polling Officer | | Signature of Polling Officer in-charge of ballot papers |
| 12 | Number of electors who voted (tendered votes should not be included here) | | |
| | Men | : | |
| | Women | : | |
| | Total | : | |
| 13 | Challenged Votes - | | |
| | (i) Number allowed (i.e. where the challenge was upheld and the persons were not allowed to vote) | : | |
| | (ii) Number rejected (i.e. where the challenge was rejected and the voters were allowed to vote) | : | |
| | (iii) Amount forfeited Rs {This should tally with the figure obtained by multiplying (Rs.5/- with item (ii))} | : | |

| | | | |
|----|---|---|--|
| 14 | Number of persons who have voted on production of Election Duty Certificate (EDC) | : | |
| 15 | Number of electors who voted with the help of companions | : | |
| 16 | Number of tendered votes: | : | |
| | Men | : | |
| | Women | : | |
| | Total | : | |
| | % of tendered votes to total votes polled | : | |
| 17 | No. of electors - | | |
| | (i) from whom declarations as to their age obtained | : | |
| | (ii) who refused to give such declaration | : | |
| 18 | Whether it was necessary to adjourn poll and if so, the reasons for such adjournment | : | |
| 19 | Number of votes cast | : | |
| | From 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. | : | |
| | From 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. | : | |
| | From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. | : | |
| 20 | No. of slips issued at the closing hour of the poll | : | |
| 21 | Electoral offences with details: | | |
| | Number of cases of - | | |
| | (a) canvassing within one hundred metres of the polling station | : | |
| | (b) impersonation of voters | : | |
| | (c) fraudulent defacing, destroying or removal of the list of notice or other document at the polling station | : | |
| | (d) bribing of voters | : | |
| | (e) intimidation of voters and other persons | : | |
| 22 | Was the poll interrupted or obstructed by - | | |
| | (1) riot | : | |
| | (2) open violence | : | |
| | (3) natural calamity | : | |
| | (4) booth capturing | : | |
| | (5) any other cause | : | |
| | Please give details of the above. | | |
| 23 | Was the poll vitiated by - | | |
| | (1) any ballot box used at the polling station having been unlawfully taken out of the custody of the Presiding Officer | : | |
| | (a) accidentally or intentionally lost or destroyed | : | |
| | (b) damaged or tampered with | : | |
| | (2) the ballot papers having been unlawfully marked by any person and deposited in the ballot box | : | |
| | Please give details. | | |

| | | | |
|----|---|---|--|
| 24 | Serious complaints, if any, made by the candidate / agents | : | |
| 25 | Number of cases of breach of law and order | : | |
| 26 | Report of mistakes and irregularities committee, if any, at the polling station | : | |

Place

Date

Presiding Officer

(This diary should be forwarded to the Returning Officer along with the Ballot Boxes and other sealed papers)