ELECTIONS TO
GRAM PANCHAYATS

HANDBOOK FOR
RETURNING OFFICERS

ISSUED BY:

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HAND BOOK FOR RETURNING OFFICER

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CHAPTER-I

ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY FOR CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS

Under Rule 3 of Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006 (hereinafter referred to as "Conduct of Election Rules"), the administrative machinery for the purpose of conduct of elections under these rules, shall be such as may be specified by the State Election Commission, by an order made under Article 243-K of the Constitution of India.

The State Election Commission issued notification under Article 243K of the Constitution of India appointing administrative machinery for conduct of elections to Panchayat Raj Bodies. A copy of the same is enclosed as **Annexure-1.**

1. ELECTION AUTHORITY:

The State Election Commission appointed the **Commissioner of Panchayat Raj & Rural Development** as the **'Election Authority'**. Subject to the superintendence, direction and control of the State Election Commission, he shall be responsible for coordination and supervision of the preparation, publication and printing of electoral rolls for and the conduct of elections to Gram Panchayats, Mandal Praja Parishads and Zilla Praja Parishads in the entire State of Andhra Pradesh. He shall also perform such other functions as may be entrusted to him by the State Election Commission from time to time in connection with conduct of elections to Panchayats.

2. DISTRICT ELECTION AUTHORITY:

The State Election Commission appointed the **District Collectors** as the **'District Election Authorities'** in their respective districts. Subject to the superintendence, direction and control of the State Election Commission, they shall be responsible for conduct, coordination and supervision of all items of work connected with elections to Gram Panchayats, Mandal Praja Parishads and Zilla Praja Parishads in their respective jurisdictions. They shall also perform such functions as may be specified under the Act and Rules and also such other functions entrusted to them by the State Election Commission from time to time in connection with conduct of elections to Panchayats.

3. ADDITIONAL DISTRICT ELECTION AUTHORITY:

The State Election Commission appointed the **Joint Collectors**, the **Chief Executive Officers of Zilla Praja Parishads** and the **District Panchayat Officers** as the **'Additional District Election Authorities'** in their respective districts. They shall perform such functions as may be assigned to them by the District Election Authorities concerned. The District Election Authorities may authorise in writing the Additional District Election Authorities to exercise any powers and functions vested on them in any local area of the district in regard to any Gram Panchayat, Mandal Praja Parishad or Zilla Praja Parishad in that area.

4. DEPUTY DISTRICT ELECTION AUTHORITIES:

The State Election Commission appointed the **Revenue Divisional Officers** or the **Sub-Collectors**, as the case may be, as the **'Deputy District Election Authorities'** in their respective jurisdictions. They shall perform such functions as may be assigned to them by the District Election Authorities concerned. The District Election Authorities may authorise in writing the Deputy District Election Authorities to exercise any powers and functions vested on them in any local area of the district in regard to any Gram Panchayat, Mandal Praja Parishad or Zilla Praja Parishad in that area.

5. ASSISTANT DISTRICT ELECTION AUTHORITIES:

The State Election Commission appointed the **Tahsildars** and the **Mandal Parishad Development Officers** as the **'Assistant District Election Authorities'** in their respective jurisdictions. They shall perform such functions as may be assigned to them by the District Election Authorities concerned.

6. RETURNING OFFICER:

For every election to fill the seats of Members and Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat, the District Election Authority shall appoint a **Returning Officer** for **one or more Gram Panchayats, who shall be an officer of the State Government or a local authority.**

7. ASSISTANT RETURNING OFFICERS:

(a) The District Election Authority may appoint one or more persons as **Assistant Returning Officers** to assist any Returning Officer;

Provided that every such person shall be **an officer of the State Government or of a local authority**.

(b) Every Assistant Returning Officer shall, subject to the control of the Returning Officer, be competent to perform all or any of the functions of the Returning Officer:

Provided that no Assistant Returning Officer shall perform any functions of the Returning Officer, which relate to the scrutiny of nominations, unless the Returning Officer is unavoidably prevented from performing such function.

8. ZONAL OFFICERS:

The District Election Authority may also appoint Zonal officers in connection with conduct of elections to Panchayat Raj bodies and entrust any powers and functions under the Conduct of Elections Rules to them to ensure smooth conduct of elections.

CHAPTER-II

ELECTION / POLLING MATERIALS

1. GENERAL:

Each polling party has to be supplied with the election materials necessary for conducting the poll. A standard list of such election / polling materials is given in **Annexure-4**. The total requirement shall be assessed well in advance and procure the stock well in advance to avoid any difficulty at the last minute.

2. STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY FORMS TO BE USED IN STAGE-I & STAGE-II ELECTION PROCESS:

During the process of election, the Returning Officer will have to use a number of Statutory and Non-Statutory Forms and the Returning Officers have to familiarize with them. The list of Statutory and Non-Statutory Forms to be used in Stage-I and Stage-II election process is appended at **Annexure-4**.

All the forms are also made available on the State Election Commission's website in PDF format. Stage-I & Stage-II forms are automatically generated, if the Election Process Management System software is used during the election process.

CHAPTER-III

APPOINTMENT OF RETURNING OFFICER / ASSISTANT RETURNING OFFICER

1. RETURNING OFFICER:

You will receive your appointment order as Returning Officer from the District Election Authority or from an officer authorised by him.

For the purpose of appointment of Returning Officers, the election process of Gram Panchayats is divided into two stages, viz., Stage-I and Stage-II.

The election process starting from the stage of publication of Election Notice under Rule 6 of Conduct of Election Rules and ending with the publication of List of Contesting Candidates for Members and Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat and allotment of symbols to them is called as Stage-I. The election process comprising of all other subsequent election process upto the conduct of the special meeting for election of Upa-Sarpanch is called as Stage-II.

The District Election Authority or officer authorised by him appoints Returning Officers as indicated below:

1) A Returning Officer may be appointed for a group of 2 to 4 contiguous minor Gram Panchayats (having less than 10,000 population each) to perform election process comprising in Stage-I. The same Returning Officer can be continued for Stage-II election process for one of the Gram Panchayats in that group preferably for a bigger Gram Panchayat. For remaining Gram Panchayats, separate Returning Officers may be appointed for Stage-II election process.

2) In respect of single major Gram Panchayat having a population of not less than 10,000, an exclusive Returning Officer, preferably a Gazetted Officer, may be appointed to perform the functions comprising in both Stage-I and Stage-II.

3) As far as possible, Gazetted Officers shall be appointed as Returning Officers (Stage-I). The Officer of the rank of Superintendent may be appointed as Returning Officer (Stage-II).

2. ASSISTANT RETURNING OFFICERS:

The District Election Authority may appoint one or more persons, as Assistant Returning Officers to assist any Returning Officer. Every Assistant Returning Officer shall, subject to the control of the Returning Officer, be competent to perform all or any of the functions of the Returning Officer provided that no Assistant Returning Officer shall perform any functions of the Returning Officer, which relates to scrutiny of nominations, unless the Returning Officer is unavoidably prevented from performing the said function.

Note: The instructions to the Returning Officers contained in this booklet are compiled for the convenience and easy reference by the Returning Officers. But these instructions are not a substitute for the provisions of Act and Conduct of Election Rules. As such, the Returning Officers are requested to refer the Act and Conduct of Election Rules, wherever necessary.

3. BROAD OUTLINES OF THE DUTIES OF THE RETURNING OFFICER:

The Returning Officer is primarily responsible for the following items of election work:-

Returning Officer (Stage-I):

1. Issue of public notice of election under Rule 6 of Conduct of Election Rules.
2. Receipt of nomination papers.
3. Publication of list of nominations received.
4. Scrutiny of nomination papers.
5. Recording of reasons in brief for rejecting any nomination paper.
6. Publication of list of validly nominated candidates.
7. Receipt of notice of withdrawal of candidates.
8. Publication of list of contesting candidates.
9. Allotment of symbols to contesting candidates.

Returning Officer (Stage-II):

1. Despatch of Postal Ballot papers and issue of EDC (Election Duty Certificate).
2. Visiting the Gram Panchayat and inspecting the polling stations.
3. Giving training to the polling staff allotted to Gram Panchayat.
4. Establishing contact with the contesting candidates and political parties to ensure free, fair and smooth elections.
5. Receiving the entire polling material required for conduct of elections to the office of Sarpanch and Members of Gram Panchayat from the distribution centre at the Mandal level and re-distribute the same to his Presiding Officers.
6. Supervise the setting up of polling stations and other poll arrangements in his Gram Panchayats.
7. Despatch of polling parties for the conduct of the poll and supply of election materials to them.
8. Effective supervision of the poll and sending reports to the State Election Commission / Election Authority / District Election Authority.
9. Counting of Votes.
10. Declaration of result.
11. Conduct of election of Upa-Sarpanch.
12. Issue of certificates of elections to the elected candidates.
13. Handing over of all sealed covers containing used and unused ballot papers and other stationery and prescribed covers to the election authority at Mandal level after completion of elections.

CHAPTER-IV

ISSUE OF ELECTION NOTIFICATION BY THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSION AND PUBLICATION OF ELECTION NOTICE & DISPLAY OF VOTERS LIST BY THE RETURNING OFFICER

1. ELECTION NOTIFICATION ISSUED BY THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSION:

The election process is set in motion immediately on issue of Notification by the State Election Commission under Section 201-A (1) of the A.P. Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 and under Rule 4 of the A.P. Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006 calling upon the voters of the Gram Panchayats to elect their Sarpanch and Ward Members. The Election Notification contains detailed election schedule in which dates are appointed for various stages of election. The schedule given under Section 201-A (1) of the Act is given below.

1.	Issue of Election Notification by the State Election Commission	Day 1
2.	Issue of Election Notice and Receipt of Nominations by the Returning Officer	Day 3 (whether or not it is a holiday)
3.	Last Day for receipt of Nominations	Day 5 (whether or not it is a holiday)
4.	Scrutiny of Nominations	Day 6 (whether or not it is a holiday)
5.	Appeal against rejection of Nomination before the Appellate Authority	Day 7 (whether or not it is a holiday)
6.	Disposal of appeals by Appellate Authority	Day 8
7.	Last day for Withdrawal of Candidatures	Day 9 up to 3 PM (whether or not it is a holiday)
8.	Publication of Final List of Contesting Candidates	Day 9 after 3 PM (whether or not it is a holiday)
9.	Conduct of Poll, wherever necessary	Day 14 (whether or not it is a holiday)
10.	Counting of Votes and Declaration of Results	Day 14 (whether or not it is a holiday)

Section 14 (10) of the A.P. Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 stipulates that a special meeting for the election of the Upa-Sarpanch shall be called on the same date on which the results of the ordinary elections to the Gram Panchayat have been published. The notice of the meeting for election of Upa-Sarpanch shall be given to the members so elected by affixture of the same on the notice board at the office of the Gram Panchayat, immediately after such publication. Provided that if, for any reason, the election of the Upa-Sarpanch is not held on the date aforesaid the special meeting for the election of the Upa-Sarpanch shall be held on the next day, whether or not it is a holiday observed by the Gram Panchayat.

The A.P. Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Election of Upa-Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat) Rules, 2006 were issued in the G.O.Rt.No172, Panchayat Raj & Rural Development Department, dtd. 10.05.2006.

The Sarpanch and the Ward Members elected at the ordinary election shall elect one of the Ward Members as the Upa-Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat by "show of hands".

2. ISSUE OF ELECTION NOTICE:

The Returning Officer Stage-I concerned should issue Election Notice under Rule 6 of the A.P. Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Election) Rules, 2006 in the prescribed form (Form-I) as in (**Annexure-5**) for conduct of election of Sarpanch, Upa-Sarpanch and Members of Gram Panchayat on the date specified in the Election Notification issued by the State Election Commission and arrange for its publication on the notice board of the Gram Panchayat and three other conspicuous places in the Gram Panchayat.

The Returning Officer can generate the Election Notice using the Election Process Management System software module.

3. DISPLAY OF VOTERS LIST:

On the day of publication of Election Notice, the Returning Officer shall affix a notice on the notice board of the Gram Panchayat showing the voters list thereof as required under rule 5 of Conduct of Election Rules.

CHAPTER-V

NOMINATIONS

1. RECEIPT OF NOMINATION PAPERS:

(a) Presentation of nomination papers: The dates on which, the place at which, the hours between which and to whom nomination paper has to be presented are indicated in the Election Notice issued under Rule 6 of the Conduct of Election Rules. Nominations are to be received between 10.30 A.M to 5:00 P.M on all days including public holidays, if any. The nomination papers should be in Form-III (**Annexure-6**) for the Sarpanch and Member of the Gram Panchayat under Rule 8 (1) of A.P. Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006.

Nomination papers must be presented by the candidate himself or his proposer in person and signed by the candidate and the proposer. Nomination papers submitted after the appointed time shall not be received. In order to see that there is no confusion at the time of receiving the nomination papers, the officer notified to receive the nominations, should sit in the appointed place, receive the nomination papers and when they are presented serially number them in the order of their receipt. Doors shall be closed at the specified time on the last day and no one should be allowed to enter the room after that time. Nomination papers of all the persons who are inside the room be received and numbers allotted to them serially.

The maximum number of vehicles that will be allowed to come within the periphery of 100 metres of the office of Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer shall be **one** and maximum number of persons that will be allowed to enter the office of Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer at the time of filing nomination shall be the **candidate plus two** other individuals, which may include the proposer proposing the nomination of the candidate, i.e., there can be only **three** people (including the candidate), who can remain present inside the Returning Officer's/Assistant Returning Officer's room at the time of filing nomination. Rule 8 of A.P. Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006 stipulates that nomination paper can be delivered to the Returning Officer either by the candidate in person or by his proposer. Where a candidate chooses not to be present physically to deliver the nomination paper, the proposer and two other individuals shall be allowed to enter the office of Returning Officer.

(b) Nomination for reserved seats: Under Rule 8(2)(c) of Conduct of Election Rules, a candidate who files his/her nomination for the Office of Sarpanch or Ward Member, Gram Panchayat, which is reserved to be filled by a person belonging to the Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe or Backward Classes, shall invariably fill up the portion of the nomination which contains the declaration specifying the particular tribe or caste or class to which he/she belongs and the area in relation in which that tribe or caste or class, as the case may be, is a scheduled tribe / scheduled caste or backward class of the State. The declaration shall be made before any Gazetted Officer of the Government or before any officer of the Revenue Department not below the rank of a Mandal Revenue Officer (now redesignated as Tahsildar).

The Returning Officer concerned is permitted to accept the nomination to a reserve seat/office on the basis of community certificate issued by any competent authority under the relevant law, in lieu of the declaration [specified in Rule 8(2)(c) of Conduct of Election Rules], if it satisfies the other requirements. In other words, a candidate can either produce a declaration under Rule 8(2)(c) or a community certificate from a competent authority under the relevant law.

(c) Number of Nominations that can be filed: Each candidate shall be nominated on a separate nomination paper. A candidate may be nominated by more than one proposer separately for the same elective post in a separate nomination paper.

As per Section 234(1) of the Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 (hereinafter referred to as the Act), no person shall be entitled to contest in the elections to the office of Member of the Gram Panchayat from more than one ward.

In tune with the said provision, it is stipulated in the Rule 8 (3) of Conduct of Election Rules that a candidate may file nominations for more than one ward of a Gram Panchayat, but he shall withdraw his nominations to all but one ward of his choice, before the date and time fixed for withdrawal of candidature, failing which, all his nominations shall become invalid and he shall not be allowed to contest from any ward.

(d) Serial Numbering of Nomination Papers: All nomination papers must be serially numbered as soon as they are presented to you in the order in which they are presented, separately for the post of Sarpanch and each of the Members of the respective Wards of Gram Panchayat and give a receipt as provided in Form-III (Nomination Form) (**Annexure-6**). Note on the body of each nomination paper, the date and the exact time at which it was received by you.

(e) Registration of names of candidates and proposers in the current electoral roll:

(a) A candidate for the office of Member and Sarpanch shall be a person, whose name is registered in the electoral roll for that Gram Panchayat (in any ward of the Gram Panchayat).
(b) The proposer for Member of a ward of a Gram Panchayat shall be registered voter in that ward (in the concerned ward of the Gram Panchayat).
(c) The proposer for the office of Sarpanch shall be a registered voter in any ward of the concerned Gram Panchayat.

(f) Preliminary examination of Nomination Papers: The Commission issued instructions in Circular No.82/SEC-B2/2026, dtd.26.03.2026 **(Annexure-8)** on preliminary examination of nomination papers and check list. A check list shall be prepared by the Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer in respect of each candidate at the time of filing of nominations.

The RO / ARO concerned shall check the nomination paper and the documents enclosed to it and fill the Checklist and should also make an endorsement about the defects, if any, noticed in the nomination paper and the documents submitted along with it. The Checklist should be prepared in original and duplicate. The original should be kept with the nomination paper and the duplicate to be handed over to the candidate or his/her proposer, who delivers the nomination papers to the RO / ARO.

The format of Checklist is indicated in the above said Circular. Copies of the check list will be printed and supplied to you in adequate number along with other election material to be used in the nomination process.

You should scrupulously follow the instructions issued by the Commission in the said Circular on preliminary examination of nomination papers and check list.

(g) Errors in Electoral Rolls: The Assembly Electoral Roll is the mother roll for the Gram Panchayat Electoral Roll. However, it may sometimes happen that the entries in the electoral roll may suffer from clerical or printing errors. The nomination paper would not, in such a case, tally with the entries in the electoral roll, if the candidate does not adopt and repeat the errors in his nomination paper. You are required by law to overlook such errors in the electoral roll and the resulting discrepancies in the nomination paper, if the identity of the candidate is established beyond doubt.

(h) Signature of Candidates and Proposers in Nomination Paper: The candidate and his proposer shall sign at the places earmarked for the purpose in the nomination form. The candidate or his proposer is not required to write his name in full by way of signature. It is not obligatory that the signature in the nomination paper should tally exactly with the full name of the person as printed in the electoral roll. If he adopts his usual form of signature, it should be treated as valid signature.

(i) Receipt and Notice of Scrutiny: A printed Form for acknowledging the receipt of nomination paper and a notice to the candidate of the date and time for scrutiny of nomination have been incorporated at the end of the nomination paper. Fill this in, detach it from the body of the nomination paper and hand it over, then and there, to the person presenting the nomination paper as a token of receipt of nomination and notice of scrutiny. Do not forget that the date and time-indicated for scrutiny in this receipt should invariably be the same as indicated in your Election Notice.

(j) Instructions regarding Election Expenditure Accounts: At the time of presentation of nomination paper, each candidate should be supplied with copies of orders and instructions issued by State Election Commission for maintenance and lodging of accounts of election expenditure. A copy of the order issued by the State Election Commission is enclosed as **Annexure-6**.

(k) List of Nominations received: On every day after completion of the time for receipt of Nominations and immediately after completion of the time on the last date of receipt of nomination papers, prepare a list of all nominations received in Form-V (**Annexure-10**) separately for Sarpanch and for each ward in Telugu and publish it at the place where you received the nominations or at any other conspicuous place. The time, date and place specified in the said Form for scrutiny should invariably tally with those indicated in your Election Notice.

(l) The State Election Commission has developed the Software Modules and Mobile Applications for Election Management System. As part of these software modules, the "Candidates' Portal" has been developed. This can be accessed through the URL: "https://sec-ems.ap.gov.in/apsec/". Through the above "Candidates' Portal" in the SEC-EMS, the State Election Commission has provided a facility for the candidates, who wish to contest for the Ward Member or Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat or for MPTC or ZPTC, to fill their Nomination paper online. After filling the Nomination paper online, the same has to be downloaded and candidate and proposer have to affix their signatures with pen at the required places. Then such online filled in and signed Nomination paper along with self-declaration and other required documents shall be presented to the Returning Officer either by the candidate or by his/her proposer, as the case may be, between the hours and dates specified for filing of Nomination papers in the Election Notification/Election Notice. A copy of Order is enclosed to **Annexure-7.**

2. DECLARATIONS ACCOMPANYING NOMINATION FORM:

Declaration regarding SC / ST / BC status:

(a) A candidate for the office of Ward Member/Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat, which is reserved to be filled by SC or ST or BC, as the case may be, shall not be deemed to be qualified to be chosen to fill the seat unless his nomination contains a declaration as in Part-III of Form-III (Annexure-4). The declaration shall be made before any Gazetted Officer of the Government or before any officer of the Revenue Department not below the rank of a Mandal Revenue Officer (now redesignated as Tahsildar).

(b) A candidate who is a member of a Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe or Backward Class is entitled to the concessional rate of deposit as specified by the State Election Commission under Rule 10 (1). A candidate eligible for this concessional rate must file the declaration annexed as Part-III of Form-IV (Nomination paper) that he is a member of a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe or Backward Class, which he claims to be.

Self declaration to be filed by the contesting candidates regarding criminal antecedents, assets and liabilities and educational qualifications:

Rule 9 (3) of Conduct of Election Rules stipulate that every candidate shall, along with the nomination paper, also file a declaration with regard to his/her criminal antecedents, assets and liabilities and educational qualifications as required by the State Election Commission and in the prescribed format.

The State Election Commission issued order on this subject in the Ref.No.79/SEC-B2/2026, dated 26.03.2026 (copy of the order is enclosed as **Annexure**-**11**). As per the said order:-

(a) Every candidate contesting election to the office of Sarpanch or Member of Gram Panchayat shall, along with the nomination paper, furnish full and complete information regarding his/her criminal antecedents, assets and liabilities and educational qualifications in the form of a self declaration in the format appended attested by two witnesses.

(b) Non-furnishing of the said declaration by any candidate or his proposer shall be considered to be violation of said order and the nomination of the candidate concerned shall be liable to be rejected by the Returning Officer at the time of scrutiny of nominations.

3. DECLARATION REGARDING ELECTION EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS:

A candidate shall also sign a declaration in the format shown in **Annexure-12** regarding maintenance of election expenditure accounts in the presence of Returning Officer before the date and time fixed for scrutiny of nominations. The Returning Officer shall countersign the declaration.

4. DEPOSITS:

As per Rule 10 (1) of Conduct of Election Rules, at or before the time of presentation of nomination paper, each candidate shall remit or cause to be remitted the amount of deposit as may be specified by the State Election Commission, in any Government Treasury or a Bank in which the Gram Panchayat concerned has an account or in cash with the Returning Officer. Where deposit is made in cash, a receipt therefor shall be given by the Returning Officer.

No candidate shall be deemed to be duly nominated, unless the deposit as aforesaid has been made.

Where a candidate has been nominated for the same seat in more than one nomination paper, not more than one deposit shall be required to be made.

The person belonging to SC / ST / BC, who wishes to pay deposit at concessional rate, shall furnish a declaration specified in Part-III of Form-III of Nomination Paper (**Annexure-6**) irrespective of the fact whether he is contesting for a reserved or non-reserved seat.

The delivery to the Returning Officer of a receipt from a Government Treasury or Bank wherein the concerned local body has an account showing the payment by or on behalf of a

candidate to the credit of the Gram Panchayat, as the case may be, of the amount required to be deposited shall be deemed to be a deposit.

5. RETURN AND FORFEITURE OF DEPOSITS:

If no nomination paper is received within the time appointed in that behalf in respect of any person by whom or on whose behalf the deposit has been made or if the nomination of any such person has been rejected or the candidate has withdrawn his candidature, the deposit shall be returned to the person by whom it was made.

If any candidate dies before the commencement of poll,

a) where deposit was made by the candidate himself, it shall be returned to his legal representative;
b) where deposit was made by any person on behalf of the candidate, it shall be returned to such person or his legal representative.

If a candidate by whom or on whose behalf the deposit referred as above has been made is not elected and the number of valid votes polled by him does not exceed one-eighth ($1/8^{th}$) of the total number of valid votes polled to all the candidates (excluding the votes polled to 'NOTA' option), the deposit shall be forfeited to the Government. In case of forfeit of deposit, the Returning Officer shall communicate an order to the person concerned, who made the deposit citing the reasons for such forfeiture.

The deposits made in respect of a candidate shall, if it is not be forfeited as aforesaid, be returned to the candidate or to the persons, who have made the deposits on his behalf, as the case may be, within 30 days after publication of the result of the election.

Immediately after publication of the result of election, the Returning Officer or the person authorised by the District Collector in this behalf, shall pass an order as to whether the deposit shall be refunded or forfeited. The executive authority concerned shall within 30 days from the date of publication of result, return the deposit to the person who made the deposit or to his legal representative when such deposit is refundable.

Several instances of non-refund of deposit have come to the notice of the Commission. It is to be noted that candidate declared elected is also entitled for refund of the deposit. Any instance of non-refund of deposit to eligible persons as per rules will be viewed seriously by the Commission.

6. PUBLICATION OF LIST OF NOMINATIONS:

You have to publish a list of nominations received on every day in Form-V **(Annexure-10)** on the notice board. Further, immediately after expiry of the hour fixed for receipt of nominations on the last date for receipt of nomination paper, you or a person authorized by you in this behalf shall publish a list in Form-V of all nominations received with a notice that the nomination papers will be taken up by you for scrutiny at the specified place on the date and time specified in the election notice.

7. DISPLAY OF COPIES OF NOMINATION PAPERS AND DECLARATIONS:

Copies of nomination papers filed by each candidate along with copies of Declarations accompanying the nomination should be displayed on the notice board in your office on the same day on which the nomination has been filed. If anyone furnishes any information contradicting the statements in the nomination form or the Declarations attested by two witnesses, copies of such papers should also be displayed on the notice board. A copy each of the Declarations furnished by

the candidates should also make available to any person or persons desirous of obtaining the same on nominal payment of copying charges.

8. SOFTWARE MODULE FOR THE RETURNING OFFICER'S ACTIVITIES:

The Returning Officer plays a crucial role in the entire election activity. With a view to generate various Statutory Forms by the Returning Officer, login is provided for the Returning Officer in the Election Process Management System. The Returning Officer will be able to generate statutory forms right from the Election Notice till Certificate of Election to be handed over to the elected candidate using this software module. A manual on the usage of the above software module for the activities of Returning Officer is being issued separately.

CHAPTER-VI

SCRUTINY OF NOMINATIONS

1. SCRUTINY OF NOMINATIONS:

(a) The Returning Officer is required by law to hold the scrutiny of the nomination papers received by him at the office or other specified place on the date and time specified in the Election Notice under Rule 12 of Conduct of Election Rules.

(b) The scrutiny of nomination papers should be done only by the Returning Officer. This work should not be entrusted to the Assistant Returning Officer or anyone else.

(c) On the date appointed for scrutiny of nominations, the candidate, one proposer of each candidate and one other person duly authorised in writing by each candidate are allowed to be present at the time of scrutiny. The Returning Officer will give such persons all reasonable facilities to examine the nomination papers of the candidates, which were received by him.

(d) The candidate and the persons accompanying him can make any substantial or material objection, but not raise flimsy or irrelevant technical objections in regard to any nomination paper.

(e) The Returning Officer should then take up one nomination paper after another and scrutinise them. If, however, more than one nomination paper has been presented by or on behalf of one candidate, you should take them up together and scrutinise them one after another. In case there is any minor error in any one of the nomination papers of a candidate in regard to particulars, such as, part number, name, serial number, etc., of the electoral roll, it can be made up with correct particulars given in another nomination form of the same candidate. Merely because one or more nomination papers of a candidate have been already found valid by you, it would not be correct or legal to pass over other nomination papers of that candidate without scrutiny.

(f) Even if no objection has been raised to a nomination paper, you will have to satisfy yourself that it is valid as per law. If any objection is raised on any nomination paper, you will have to hold a summary inquiry to decide the same and to treat the nomination paper to be either valid or invalid. Record your decision in each case giving brief reasons, particularly where an objection has been raised or where you reject the nomination paper. Your decision may be challenged later in an election petition and so your brief statement of reasons should invariably be recorded.

(g) Section 17, 18, 19, 19A, 19B and 20A of A.P. Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 deal with qualifications and disqualification of candidates for election as Member, Gram Panchayat. An extract of the said sections of the Act is enclosed as **Annexure-13.** The qualification or disqualification of a candidate should be related to the date fixed for scrutiny of nominations. In deciding whether a person is disqualified to contest the election, you should see whether the disqualification subsists on the date fixed for scrutiny.

(h) Do not reject any nomination paper on the ground of any defect, which is not of a substantial character. Any mistake or error of a technical or clerical nature should, therefore, be ignored.

(i) The nomination of a candidate shall not be rejected merely on the ground of any incorrect description of his name or of the name of his proposer or of any other particulars relating to the candidate or his proposer as entered in the electoral roll, if the identity of the candidate or proposer is otherwise established beyond reasonable doubt.

(j) The Returning Officer should meticulously examine the receipts for payment made as deposit in Government Treasury or Bank in which the Gram Panchayat concerned has an account

with reference to the seals of the Treasury or Bank, etc., and make sure that the deposit has actually been made in the Treasury or Bank. Doubts, if any, should be got clarified then and there.

(k) There is a presumption that any nomination paper is valid unless the contrary is prima facie obvious or has been made out. In case of a reasonable doubt as to the validity of a nomination paper, the benefit of such doubt must go to the candidate concerned and the nomination paper should be held to be valid. Remember that whenever a candidate's nomination paper has been improperly rejected and he is prevented thereby from contesting the election, there is a legal presumption that the result of the election has been materially affected by such improper rejection and the election will, therefore be, set aside. There is no such legal presumption necessarily in the converse case where a candidate's nomination has been improperly accepted. It is always safer, therefore, to be comparatively more liberal rather than strict in your scrutiny of the nomination papers.

(l) While holding the scrutiny of nomination papers, you are performing an important quasi-judicial function. You have, therefore, to discharge this duty with complete judicial detachment and in accordance with the highest judicial standards. You must not allow any personal or political predilection to interfere with the procedure that you follow or the decision you take in any case. Fairness, impartiality and equal dealing with all candidates are expected of you by law. You must also devote yourself in such a manner that it would appear to all concerned that you are following the high code of conduct. Even if a candidate or his agent is difficult or cantankerous, you must exercise courtesy and patience. But at the same time you have to be firm so that your task may be accomplished in prompt, orderly and business-like manner.

2. GROUNDS FOR REJECTION:

The Returning Officer will examine the nomination paper and will decide all objections, which may be made in application or on his own motion after such summary enquiry, if necessary, and reject any nomination on any of the following grounds:-

(a) If the candidate is ineligible for election under sections 17, 18, 19, 19A, 19B and 20A of A.P. Panchayat Raj Act, 1994.
(b) If the name of the proposer is not registered in the electoral roll of the Gram Panchayat in case of Sarpanch and in the electoral roll of the concerned ward in case of Ward Member.
(c) If there has been any failure on the part of the candidate or his proposer to comply with any of the provisions of rule 8, 9(3) and 10 of the Conduct of Election Rules.
(d) If the nomination paper has been delivered to the Returning Officer or a person authorised by him in this behalf, by a person other than the candidate or his proposer.
(e) If the candidate’s nomination has not been delivered at the place specified in the Election Notice issued by the Returning Officer.
(f) If the name of the candidate is not registered in the electoral roll of the Gram Panchayat.
(g) If the nomination paper has been delivered to a person other than Returning Officer or person authorised by him in this behalf.
(h) If the nomination paper is not substantially in the prescribed form.
(i) If the nomination has not been signed either by the candidate or by the proposer or by both at the places meant for such signature in the nomination paper.
(j) If the deposit required has not been made in accordance with the law.
(k) If the signature of the candidate or his proposer is not genuine.
(l) If a candidate files a nomination paper to contest a seat reserved for SC/ST/BC or Women and the candidate does not belong to such reserved category or not a woman.
(m) If the candidate has not filed the declaration prescribed by the State Election Commission on disclosure of information regarding criminal antecedents, assets & liabilities and educational qualifications of the candidates in the prescribed proforma and attested by the witnesses.

The Returning Officer shall endorse on each nomination paper his decision accepting or rejecting the same and if the nomination is rejected, he will record in writing a brief statement of his reasons for such rejection. The scrutiny shall be completed on the day appointed in the Election Notice and no adjournment of the proceedings shall be allowed except when such proceedings are interrupted or obstructed by riot or violence or causes beyond the control of the Returning Officer. In case an objection is made, the candidate concerned may be allowed time to rebut the same not later than the next day and the Returning Officer shall record the decision on the date to which the proceedings are adjourned.

3. PUBLICATION OF LIST OF VALIDLY NOMINATED CANDIDATES:

Immediately after completion of scrutiny of nominations, a List of Validly Nominated Candidates shall be published in Form-VI (**Annexure-14**). There shall be one entry only in respect of each of the validly nominated candidate in the list although more than one nomination paper in respect of a candidate has been accepted as valid. If none of the nomination papers is found valid on scrutiny, the name of the candidate should not be entered in the list. This list shall be prepared separately for Sarpanch and each Ward constituency. The same list can be generated from in Election Process Management System, if the scrutiny details are entered in the software.

Note: 1) If a candidate filed 3 sets of nominations for Sarpanch or Ward Member and all the 3 sets of nomination papers were found valid and accepted in scrutiny, there shall be only one entry for such candidate in the list of validly nominated candidates even though 3 sets of nominations filed by him were found valid in scrutiny.

2) It is noticed in previous elections that some vested interests misled candidates who filed 2 or 3 sets of nominations for Sarpanch or Ward Member of Gram Panchayat to submit notice of withdrawal as he filed more than one validly accepted nominations, with a malafied intention to remove them from the contest. Such candidates, who filed 2 or 3 sets of validly accepted nominations, may be cautioned to be more careful not to give notice of withdrawal and once a validly nominated candidate submits the notice of withdrawal of candidature, he shall be treated as withdrawn from the contest for that seat.

4. PROVISION FOR APPEAL AGAINST REJECTED NOMINATIONS:

As per the provision of Rule 13 of Conduct of Elections Rules, the candidate for the office of Sarpanch or Member of Gram Panchayat, whose nomination paper has been rejected, may prefer an appeal against the decision of the Returning Officer before the concerned Revenue Divisional Officer. The date for filing appeal against the rejection of the nomination shall be the day immediately following the date for the scrutiny of nominations and the date of disposal of appeal by the appellate authority shall be the day immediately following the date for filing of the appeal. As the time being very short, you must intimate to the candidate that his candidature is being rejected at the time of rejection and that he has a right to prefer an appeal before the appellate authority the very next day. Since the appellate authority has also got only one day to pass order, you must take action to see that all records relating to the rejected cases are sent to the appellate authority immediately.

Note: The appeal can be filed only against rejection of nomination and not against acceptance.

CHAPTER-VII

WITHDRAWAL OF CANDIDATURE

According to sub-rule (1) of Rule 14 of Conduct of Election Rules, any candidate may withdraw his candidature by notice in writing in Form-VII (**Annexure-15**) signed by him and delivered personally to the Returning Officer at any time after the presentation of his nomination paper and not later than 3 O'clock in the afternoon on the 3rd day after the scrutiny of nominations, whether or not it is a public holiday. If the notice is not delivered by the candidate in person, it shall be delivered by his proposer or election agent, who has been authorised in this behalf in writing by the candidate.

The Returning Officer shall give a receipt for the same as provided in Form-VII on being satisfied as to the genuineness of the notice of withdrawal and the identity of the candidate.

Once a notice of withdrawal of candidature is given by a candidate to the Returning Officer, the candidate shall not be allowed under any circumstances to cancel the withdrawal.

The Returning Officer on receiving a notice of the withdrawal shall, as soon as, cause a notice of the withdrawal published in Form-VIII (**Annexure-16**) on the notice board of the Gram Panchayat.

CHAPTER-VIII

PUBLICATION OF LIST OF CONTESTING CANDIDATES AND ALLOTMENTOF SYMBOLS

1. PUBLICATION OF LIST OF CONTESTING CANDIDATES:

On the expiry of the time for withdrawal of candidature, the Returning Officer shall prepare in Telugu language a list of contesting candidates in Form-IX (**Annexure-17**) separately for each Ward and Sarpanch under Rule 15 of the Conduct of Election Rules and publish on the notice board of the office of the Gram Panchayat or in any conspicuous place, if there is no office of the Gram Panchayat.

The list shall contain the names of the candidates in alphabetical order in Telugu and shall describe them as in their nomination paper.

The arrangement of names shall be on the basis of the first letter of the name of the candidate irrespective of whether the name given is the proper name or surname. If the first letter is same, the second letter shall be taken into consideration and so on. The initials, if any, prefixed to the name of the candidate shall be ignored for the aforesaid purpose. If two candidates have the same name but different initials, then two names shall be arranged inter-se with reference to the first letter of the initial. Further, if two or more such candidates have the same name but different surnames, then their names shall be arranged inter-se in the alphabetical order with reference to the surnames.

If two or more candidates bear the same name they should be distinguished by the addition of their occupation or residence or in some other manner. In the list of contesting candidates, the names of such candidates shall be arranged in the order in which their nominations were received by the Returning Officer.

There will be no objection to the addition of any honorific, academic, hereditary and professional or any other title to the name of a candidate but such title should on no account be taken into consideration in the arrangement of names in alphabetical order.

If the poll is found necessary, the Returning Officer shall assign to each contesting candidate a distinct symbol as per the directions issued by the State Election Commission in that behalf. In every case where a symbol has been assigned to a candidate, such candidate or his election agent shall forthwith be informed of his symbol so assigned and be supplied specimen thereof by the Returning Officer.

2. ALLOTMENT OF SYMBOLS:

The State Election Commission issues symbol notification specifying list of free symbols separately for the office of Sarpanch and Member. You shall serially allot the symbols from the list of free symbols notified by the State Election Commission to the contesting candidates for the office of Sarpanch or Ward Member, as the case may be. In Ward Member/Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat elections, after arranging the list of contesting candidates as per Telugu alphabetical order in Form-IX, symbols shall be allotted to them serially as notified by the State Election Commission.

In case of Sarpanch election, the first symbol in the list of free symbols notified for the office of Sarpanch should be allotted to first candidate in the list of contesting candidate for the office of Sarpanch and symbol at Sl.No.2 to the second candidate in the list of contesting candidate and so on.

In case of Ward Member election, the first symbol in the list of free symbols notified for the office of Ward Member shall be allotted to the first candidate in the list of contesting candidates for the ward concerned and symbol at Sl.No.2 to the second candidate in the list of contesting candidates and so on.

3. "NONE OF THE ABOVE" (NOTA) OPTION:

Rule 35-A of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 2006 stipulate that in the Postal Ballot Papers and Ballot Papers used for conduct of poll at the polling station, a provision shall be made for "None of the Above" (NOTA) option for the benefit of those electors, who may wish to exercise their option of not voting to any of the candidates in the fray. The last panel of the ballot paper below the last candidate (for both Sarpanch election and Ward Member election) shall be earmarked for NOTA option. The symbol assigned to "None of the Above" (NOTA) option is indicated below.



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NOTE: Please note that the Form-IX denotes List of Contesting Candidates. As such, NOTA is not required to be shown in it.

CHAPTER-IX

DECLARATION OF RESULTS OF UNCONTESTED ELECTIONS

Under Rule 16 of Conduct of Election Rules, if there is only one validly nominated candidate after the last hour for withdrawal of candidature for the office of Sarpanch or Member of Gram Panchayat, the Returning Officer shall forthwith declare such candidate as duly elected in Form-X (**Annexure-16**) and send the same to the State Election Commission, Election Authority and District Election Authority.

GRANT OF ELECTION CERTIFICATE:

As soon as may be after a candidate has been declared under Rule 16 to have been elected, the Returning Officer shall grant such candidate a Certificate of Election in Form-XXIX **(Annexure-29)** and obtain from the candidate an acknowledgement of its receipt duly signed by him immediately.

CONDUCT OF ELECTION TO UPA-SARPANCH, IN CASE OF SARPANCH & ALL WARD MEMBERS ARE DECLARED ELECTED AS UNCONTESTED:

In case of Sarpanch and all Ward Members declared elected as 'uncontested' (entire body of Gram Panchayat), the election of Upa-Sarpanch should be conducted by the Returning Officer (Stage-I), in the same manner as prescribed in CHAPTER-XVII.

CHAPTER-X

FINAL ACTION IN STAGE-I

Soon after the publication of the list of contesting candidates, completion of allotment of symbols and despatch of postal ballots, you should handover the following records to the Mandal Parishad Development Officer in his/her office on the same day and obtain acknowledgement.

(a) Gram Panchayat wise, Post-wise election Files which contain all valid nomination papers along with its enclosures, Rejected nomination papers if any, Form-V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, and X and receipts relating to crediting the security deposit amount into the concerned head of account of the Gram Panchayat concerned. These should be maintained chronologically for each of the group of Gram Panchayat assigned to you, duly numbering the pages in it. It contains essential documents crucial in deciding any election dispute by the Election Tribunal.

(b) Files relating to Upa-Sarpanch election, when the Sarpanch & All Ward Member as declared uncontested (entire body) and the Upa-Sarpanch is also held.

(c) Hand Book for Returning Officer and Manual of Election Law (Panchayat Raj).

(d) Booklet containing special instructions of District Election Authority, if any, supplied.

(e) Unused stationery items.

CHAPTER-XI

ELECTION PROCESS (STAGE-II)

1. DUTIES OF RETURNING OFFICER (STAGE-II):

The Returning Officer (Stage-II) will be appointed separately for each Gram Panchayat and he will be responsible for completion of the entire remaining election process in that Gram Panchayat, which includes the following stages:-

a) Despatch of Postal Ballot Papers and issue of EDCs.
b) Visiting the Gram Panchayat and inspecting the polling stations.
c) Observance of Model Code of Conduct
d) Giving training to the polling staff allotted to Gram Panchayat.
e) Receiving the entire polling material required for conduct of elections to the office of Sarpanch and Member of Gram Panchayat from the distribution centre at the Mandal level and re-distribute the same to his polling parties.
f) Supervise the setting up of polling stations and other poll arrangements in his Gram Panchayat.
g) Supervising the actual polling process in all the wards in his Gram Panchayat.
h) Take up counting of votes for all Wards and Sarpanch and declare the results.
i) After declaring results, convening a special meeting of the Gram Panchayat to elect the Upa-Sarpanch.
j) Issue of certificates of election to the elected candidates.
k) After completion of elections, handing over of all sealed covers containing used and un-used ballot papers, other stationery and prescribed covers at the Reception Centre.

CHAPTER-XII

APPONTMENT OF ELECTION AGENT, POLLING AGENT AND COUNTING AGENT

1. ELECTION AGENT:

Under Rule 18 (1) of Conduct of Election Rules, every person nominated as a candidate, may appoint in writing a person to be his election agent. The candidate shall obtain in writing the acceptance of such person for being appointed as election agent. The notice of such appointment shall be given in Form-XI (**Annexure-20**) by forwarding the same in duplicate to the Returning Officer, who shall return one copy thereof to the election agent after affixing his seal and signature in token of his approval of the appointment. A candidate may revoke appointment of his election agent in writing and such revocation will be operative from the date on which it is lodged with the Returning Officer. In the event of such revocation or death of an election agent, the candidate may appoint another person to be his election agent in a like manner. The election agent so appointed shall perform such functions during elections as are authorized under the relevant Conduct of Election Rules.

2. POLLING AGENT:

A candidate or his election agent may appoint one agent and one relief agent to act as polling agents for each polling station and every such appointment shall be made in Form-XII (**Annexure-21**) and shall be made over to the polling agent for production at the polling station. The polling agent shall, on the date fixed for the poll, present the copy and sign the declaration contained therein before the Presiding Officer of the polling station where such polling agent is appointed for duty and the Presiding Officer shall retain it thereafter in his custody. At any polling station only one polling agent or relief agent can be present at any given point of time, but not both.

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.

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 this role only if he is from local area and familiar with the identity of voters of that particular booth. A person appointed as polling agent from outside the local area and not familiar with the identity of voters will not serve the purpose for which he is appointed. The State Election Commission issued the following guidelines with regard to appointment of Polling Agents by contesting candidates.

(i) A person to be appointed as Polling Agent shall be a registered voter in any of the polling stations located in the Gram Panchayat concerned.

(ii) Such polling agent must have EPIC or any of the identity documents notified by the State Election Commission.

(iii) All polling agents shall display their identity document prominently on their person on the day of poll for easy and quick identification.

(iv) The set up of polling stations should be made in such a way that the polling agents are seated inside the polling stations so that they may see the face of an elector as and when he/she enters the polling station so that they can challenge the identity of the elector, if needed. They should also be able to watch entire operation inside the

polling station including his/her movement to the voting compartment and his/her exit from the polling station after recording his/her vote. But they should not, in any event, be seated in a place where they have the chance of seeing voter actually recording his/her vote which would compromise secrecy of voting.

(v) As per Rule 19 of Conduct of Election Rules, 2006, the appointment of polling agent shall be made in Form-XII.

3. COUNTING AGENT:

Each candidate may appoint such number of counting agents at places fixed for counting as may be specified by the District Election Authority. Generally each candidate can appoint as many counting agents as there are counting tables. Every such appointment shall be made by the candidate or his election agent before the commencement of counting of votes by writing a letter in duplicate in Form-XIII (**Annexure-22**) and by forwarding it to the Returning Officer. One copy of which shall be forwarded to the Returning Officer while the other copy shall be made over to the counting agent for production before the Returning Officer not later than one hour before the time fixed for counting and sign the declaration contained therein before the Returning Officer and Returning Officer shall retain it for custody. The counting agents so appointed by the candidate may perform such functions in connection with counting of votes as are authorized under the Conduct of Election Rules. Any revocation of an appointment of counting 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 counting of votes, the candidate or his election agent may appoint another person as counting agent in the manner prescribed above.

CHAPTER-XIII

ADVANCE PRINTING OF BALLOT PAPERS

Elections to the Gram Panchayats are held on non-party basis. Ballot papers shall be printed with symbols notified by the State Election Commission without the names of contesting candidates separately for the post of Sarpanch and Ward Member along with NOTA symbol well in advance. It is to be noted that NOTA is to be printed in the last panel of ballot papers.

There is marked departure from the practice followed in the last ordinary elections to Gram Panchayats. Earlier, the District administration used to cut the ballot paper of higher denominations to the required size after finalization of list of contesting candidates. Due to introduction of NOTA, it is not possible to adopt this method of cutting ballot paper of higher denomination to required size.

In view of large number of Sarpanch and Ward constituencies in Gram Panchayats, advance printing is essential.

The Commission issued detailed instructions to the District Administration in Circular No. 76/SEC-B2/2026 & 77/SEC-B2/2026, dated 26.03.2026 for advance action for printing of ballot papers of Sarpanch and Ward Member of various denominations along with reserve and also the colour, form and specification of ballot papers. These instructions are reproduced hereunder.

COLOUR OF THE BALLOT PAPER:

The State Election Commission decided that the colour of the Ballot Paper for **Sarpanch** shall be **"Pink"** wove paper and for **Ward Member** shall be **"White"** wove paper**.**

PRINTING OF THE BALLOT PAPER:

(a) Old method of printing ballot papers:

In all Gram Panchayat elections held so far, the established procedure that we have followed was that the ballot papers of various denominations are printed well in advance as they contain only symbols without the names of the candidates.

Due to introduction of NOTA (None of the Above), every ballot paper shall have NOTA symbol below the last candidate. Due to this development, ballot paper are required to be printed in all denomination from 3 (2 + NOTA) up to 15 (14 + NOTA).

(b) Printing of Ballot Paper with NOTA Symbol:

Rule 35A of A.P. Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006 stipulates that "None of the Above (NOTA)" symbol option shall be printed below the last symbol of the contesting candidate.

Both the Sarpanch and Ward Member election ballot papers shall be printed with NOTA symbol. The symbol assigned for NOTA is indicated below.



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Therefore, advance action shall be taken for printing of Sarpanch and Ward Member Ballot Paper with different denominations with NOTA symbols.

(c) Ballot paper for Sarpanch election:

The Ballot Paper for Sarpanch election shall be printed on Pink coloured wove paper with all denominations starting with 3 panels including NOTA symbol as given below.

Denomination of Ballot Paper	Number of Symbols + NOTA
3 Symbols	2 Candidate symbols + NOTA symbol
4 Symbols	3 Candidate symbols + NOTA symbol
5 Symbols	4 Candidate symbols + NOTA symbol
……..	…….

The proportion of these denominations may be decided based on the number of contested candidates in the last ordinary election, actual utilization of ballot paper of various denomination / symbols in the last ordinary elections. A reserve plan should also be kept in mind for meeting the need for higher denomination papers as may be found after finalization of list of contesting candidates.

(d) Ballot paper for Ward Member election:

The Ballot Paper for Ward Member election shall be printed on White coloured wove paper with all denominations starting from 3 panels including NOTA symbol as given below.

Denomination of Ballot Paper	Number of Symbols + NOTA
3 Symbols	2 Candidate symbols + NOTA symbol
4 Symbols	3 Candidate symbols + NOTA symbol
5 Symbols	4 Candidate symbols + NOTA symbol
……..	…….

The proportion of these denominations may be decided based on the number of contested candidates in the last ordinary election, actual utilization of ballot paper of various denomination / symbols in the last ordinary elections. A reserve plan should also be kept in mind for meeting the need for higher denomination papers as may be found after finalization of list of contesting candidates.

The proportion of these denominations may be decided based on the number of contested candidates in the last ordinary election, actual utilization of ballot paper of various denomination / symbols in the last ordinary elections. A reserve plan should also be kept in mind for meeting the need for higher denomination papers as may be found actually at later stage.

After finalization of list of contesting candidates, if there are more than 7 candidates in the contest, then arrangements have to be made expeditiously to undertake printing of higher denomination ballot papers, wherever necessary, as per the requirement in the district.

Supply of printed Ballot Papers to Gram Panchayats:

The number of Sarpanch and Ward Member ballot papers shall be supplied to each polling station of Gram Panchayat equal to the number of voters of that polling station rounded off to nearest 10.

SPECIFICATIONS FOR PRINTING OF BALLOT PAPERS:

I. Counterfoil of the ballot paper:

a. Every Ballot paper shall have a counter foil attached to it. The counterfoil shall be at the top of the Ballot Paper and its depth should ordinarily not exceed 6 centimetres.

b. **The details to be mentioned in the counterfoil of the Ballot Paper shall be same for Sarpanch and Ward Member and shall contain the following details:**

(i) Space for stitching at the top of the counterfoil.
(ii) A black border of 5 millimetres at the top of the counterfoil.
(iii) The particulars of election shall be printed in Telugu below, as follows –

గ్రా. పం. సా. ఎ. 2026

(Note: Year of election should be printed in full when the actual printing is taken up)

(iv) The counterfoil shall contain space for entering name of the Gram Panchayat, Ward number and Polling Station No. and Serial No. of the elector as shown below:

గ్రా.పం.పేరు..... వార్డు నెం..... పోలింగు స్టేషన్ నెం.....

ఓటరు లిస్టు నందు ఓటరు క్రమ సంఖ్య.....

(v) The serial number of the Counterfoil:

The ballot paper and counter foil shall be numbered by automatic numbering machine for both Sarpanch and Ward Member elections.

The numbering on the Counterfoil of the ballot paper for Sarpanch as well as Ward Member of each of the denominations shall begin with an alphabet prefixed to the 6 digit serial number of ballot paper as indicated below. For the next higher denomination, the subsequent letter of the alphabet to be prefixed to serial number starting with 000001 (6 digits). Thus each denomination is identified with one alphabet and a 6 digit numeral beginning with 000001 in seriatim as shown in the table below –

Denomination of Ballot Paper	Numbers should start with
3 Symbols (2+NOTA)	A 000001
4 Symbols (3+NOTA)	B 000001
5 Symbols (4+NOTA)	C 000001
6 Symbols (5+NOTA)	D 000001
7 Symbols (6+NOTA)	E 000001
8 Symbols (7+NOTA)	F 000001

The serial number of the counter foil shall be printed on the lower left-hand side of the counter foil and the same number should be printed on the ballot paper also. The serial number on the counterfoil and ballot paper shall be identical. The words "voter's signature / thumb impression" shall be printed on the lower right-hand side of counterfoil. Leave some place for signature or thumb impression of the elector just above the words "voter's signature/thumb impression".

Example: For 8 Symbols, i.e., 7 + NOTA, the serial number of the Ballot Paper shall be printed as:

No. F 037254

ఓటరు సంతకము/వేలిముద్ర

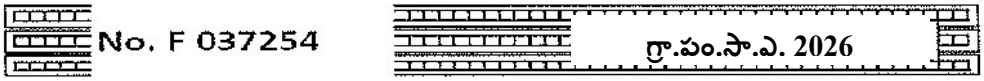
II. Chain Borders and Perforated Rule: There shall be two chain borders and a perforated rule/disjoined straight line in between two chain borders for separating the ballot paper from the counterfoil as shown below. Total width of these borders shall be 1.5 centimeters



III. Printing of Ballot Paper Portion attaching to the Counterfoil:

a. **Serial Number & Particular of the Election printed in the First Shaded Area:** It may be noted that the names of the contesting candidates will not be printed on the ballot papers. The front face of the ballot paper will contain the serial numbers of candidates and the symbols allotted to them. The serial number of the ballot paper and particulars of the election specified above at (I)(b)(iii) (i.e., Particulars of election) & (v) (i.e., Serial number of the ballot paper) shall be printed on the first shaded area. The serial number on the ballot paper shall be the same number indicated on the counterfoil and it shall be printed on the left-hand side and the particulars of election on the right-hand side in the central space of shaded area as indicated below.

Example: For 8 Symbols (7+NOTA), the details shall be printed in the first shaded area as:



b. The width of the ballot paper will be 4 (Four) inches.
c. Within the panel, the serial number of the candidate will appear on the left side and the symbol on the right side.
d. The depth of the space allotted to each candidate will be 3 centimeters and the depth of the shaded area between the spaces allotted to any two candidates will be 1.2 centimeters. There will be a thick black border of 5 millimeters of width at the bottom.
e. The size of the each symbol will be not more than 3.5 centimeters (width) x 2.5 centimeters (height), but it should be uniform.

IV. Printing of Ballot Paper in one or more columns depending upon the Number of Contesting Candidates:

Where the number of contesting candidates is 7 and below and the number of symbols including NOTA is 8 or less, the ballot paper shall be printed in one column including NOTA symbol. And where the number of contesting candidates is 8 or more (i.e., 8 Candidates symbols + NOTA symbol), the ballot paper shall be printed in two or more columns depending upon the number of

contesting candidates. Then, the width of ballot paper and its counterfoil shall also depend upon the number of columns which are provided on the ballot paper. Each column shall be separated from the other by a shaded area (thick black line) of 5 millimeters width from top to bottom. If the number of contesting candidates including NOTA is not exactly divisible by the number of candidates in each column, the remaining end panels on the right side of the ballot paper, which do not contain any symbol shall be kept completely shaded.

Where the number of contesting candidates is (8 + NOTA) up to (15 + NOTA), the ballot paper shall be printed in two columns as shown in the following table.

No. of Contesting Candidates + NOTA Symbol	**First Column**	**Second Column**
8 + 1 (NOTA) = 9	5 Symbols	3 Symbols + 1 NOTA Symbol & 1 Empty Block
9 + 1 (NOTA) = 10	5 Symbols	4 Symbols + 1 NOTA Symbol
10 + 1 (NOTA) = 11	6 Symbols	4 Symbols + 1 NOTA Symbol & 1 Empty Block
11 + 1 (NOTA) = 12	6 Symbols	5 Symbols + 1 NOTA Symbol
12 + 1 (NOTA) = 13	7 Symbols	5 Symbols + 1 NOTA Symbol & 1 Empty Block
13 + 1 (NOTA) = 14	7 Symbols	6 Symbols + 1 NOTA Symbol
14 + 1 (NOTA) = 15	8 Symbols	6 Symbols + 1 NOTA Symbol & 1 Empty Block
15 + 1 (NOTA) = 16	8 Symbols	7 Symbols + 1 NOTA Symbol

Where number of contesting candidates is (16 + NOTA) up to (23 + NOTA), the ballot paper shall be printed in 3 (three) columns; the width of the ballot paper and its counterfoil shall be thrice the width of the ballot paper of single column, as specified above, and between every two columns along the middle, there shall be shaded area (thick black line) of 5 millimeters width vertically from top to bottom. The distribution of candidates / symbols in each of the three columns is given below.

No. of Contesting Candidates + NOTA Symbol	**First Column**	**Second Column**	**Third Column**
16 + NOTA = 17	6 Symbols	6 Symbols	4 Symbols + NOTA Symbol + 1 EB
17 + NOTA = 18	6 Symbols	6 Symbols	5 Symbols + NOTA Symbol
18 + NOTA = 19	7 Symbols	7 Symbols	4 Symbols + NOTA Symbol + 2 EBs
19 + NOTA = 20	7 Symbols	7 Symbols	5 Symbols + NOTA Symbol + 1 EB
20 + NOTA = 21	7 Symbols	7 Symbols	6 Symbols + NOTA Symbol
21 + NOTA = 22	8 Symbols	8 Symbols	5 Symbols + NOTA Symbol + 2 EBs
22 + NOTA = 23	8 Symbols	8 Symbols	6 Symbols + NOTA Symbol + 1 EB
23 + NOTA = 24	8 Symbols	8 Symbols	7 Symbols + NOTA Symbol

(EB = Empty Block)

Similarly, if the number of contesting candidates is (24 + NOTA) up to (31 + NOTA), the ballot paper should be printed in 4 columns. The number of candidates in each column in multi-columned ballot paper shall not exceed 8 including NOTA. The distribution of candidates / symbols in each of the four columns is given below.

No. of Contesting Candidates + NOTA Symbol	1st Column	2nd Column	3rd Column	4th Column
24 + NOTA = 25	7 Symbols	7 Symbols	7 Symbols	3 Symbols + NOTA Symbol + 3 EBs
25 + NOTA = 26	7 Symbols	7 Symbols	7 Symbols	4 Symbols + NOTA Symbol + 2 EBs
26 + NOTA = 27	7 Symbols	7 Symbols	7 Symbols	5 Symbols + NOTA Symbol + 1 EB

27 + NOTA = 28	7 Symbols	7 Symbols	7 Symbols	6 Symbols + NOTA Symbol
28 + NOTA = 29	8 Symbols	8 Symbols	8 Symbols	4 Symbols + NOTA Symbol + 3 EBs
29 + NOTA = 30	8 Symbols	8 Symbols	8 Symbols	5 Symbols + NOTA Symbol + 2 EBs
30 + NOTA = 31	8 Symbols	8 Symbols	8 Symbols	6 Symbols + NOTA Symbol + 1 EB
31 + NOTA = 32	8 Symbols	8 Symbols	8 Symbols	7 Symbols + NOTA Symbol

(EB=Empty Block)

The ballot papers have to be stitched into bunches of 50 each with consecutive serial numbers. It shall be ensured that the serial number on each ballot paper and its counterfoil is identical.

POSTAL BALLOT PAPERS:

In elections to Gram Panchayats, Service Voters and their wives, voters under Preventive Detention and voters on Election Duty are entitled to give their vote by Postal Ballot. The pre-printed Ballot Paper to be used at polling stations may also be used as postal Ballot paper duly following the procedures specified in A.P. Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006.

MODEL BALLOT PAPERS OF SARPANCH AND WARD MEMBER:

Model Ballot Papers for Sarpanch and Ward Member are given at **Annexure-18.**

CHAPTER-XIV
POSTAL BALLOT PAPER

1. Rule 23 to 32 of Conduct of Election Rules deal with all matters relating to voting by postal ballot.

2. VOTERS ENTITLED TO POSTAL BALLOT:

As the Returning Officer for election of members of all wards and Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat, you will have to send postal ballot papers to those of the voters at each of the two elections who are entitled to vote by post. They are:

(a) Service voters and their wives;
(b) Voters subjected to preventive detention; and
(c) Voters on election duty, who opt for postal ballot.

"Service voter" means any person who is required to give his vote by postal ballot under Rule 23 of Conduct of Election Rules, members of the Armed Forces of the Union and members of the Armed Police Force of the State serving outside the State.

"Voter subject to preventive detention" means any person subjected to preventive detention under any law for the time being in force, as specified in Rule 24 of the Conduct of Election Rules.

"A voter on election duty" means a polling agent, a polling officer, a presiding officer or other public servant, who is an elector in the ward/territorial constituency and is by reason of his being on election duty, unable to vote at the polling station where he is entitled to vote.

3. POSTAL BALLOT PAPER – FORM AND LANGUAGE:

The postal ballot paper of the elections to Member and Sarpanch, Gram Panchayat contain only symbols allotted to candidates. The names of candidates are not printed on ballot paper. The ballot papers for Sarpanch election is PINK in colour and the ballot paper for Ward Member election is WHITE in colour.

The postal ballot paper shall be issued from the first series of ballot paper allotted to the Gram Panchayat.

Since the names of candidates are not printed on ballot papers, names of contesting candidates and symbols allotted to them are indicated in Form-XX (Instructions for guidance of electors who cast their vote by postal ballot) sent along with the postal ballot paper.

4. POSTAL BALLOTS FOR SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS:

At a simultaneous election, all the forms viz., Form-XVII (Declaration by Elector) (**Annexure-23 D)**; Form-XVIII (Postal Ballot Paper Cover 'A') (**Annexure-23 E**); Form-XIX (Postal Ballot Paper Cover 'B') (**Annexure-23 F)**; and Form-XX (Instructions for Guidance of Electors) (**Annexure-23 G)** must be sent in two sets, one pertaining to the Sarpanch election and other to the Ward Member election. Each of these sets can be put in the respective covers, viz., Form-XIX with the address of Returning Officer specified thereon. While sending out to the record office, etc, the larger envelopes, each containing the two separate sets of forms, can be put in a single outer cover.

5. ENVELOPES:

The covers in Form-XVIII and XIX for Sarpanch election may be printed in 'PINK' colour and for Ward Member election in 'WHITE' colour.

6. DESPATCH OF POSTAL BALLOT PAPERS:

The postal ballot papers and other material shall be despatched to the voters entitled to vote by post within 24 hours after the last hour of withdrawal of candidature. The following acts should be done.

i) Note down the electoral part number and serial number of the elector as entered in the marked copy of electoral roll on the counterfoil of the Postal Ballot Paper and detach the ballot paper from the counterfoil and then,
ii) Write the letter "PB" against the entry of the elector in the marked copy of the electoral roll to indicate that a Postal Ballot Paper has been issued to him without recording therein the serial number of the ballot paper issued to the elector.
iii) You will have to send to each voter a form of declaration (Form-XVII), a smaller cover containing the postal ballot paper in Form-XVIII, a larger cover addressed to yourself in Form-XIX (no postage to be affixed on this cover) and a copy of the printing instructions to voters in the Form-XX. Then those will be placed inside an outer cover and sent to each voter by ordinary post under certificate of posting. Before you send off these documents to any voter, remember to fill up in ink correctly in Forms-XVII and XVIII the serial number of the connected postal ballot paper. This is very important as at the time of counting of votes, you will have to compare these numbers on Forms-XVII and XVIII that they tally. If they do not tally in the case of any voter, the postal ballot paper will have to be rejected.
iv) Also remember to fill up correctly hour and date in Form-XX.
v) Note the letter "W" on the envelope in Form-XIX, i.e., the envelope addressed to the Returning Officer in case of women service elector. It will help to ascertain the statistics of men and women voters, who cast their votes by Postal Ballot Paper.
vi) The Postal Ballot Paper for the wife of a service voter should be sent in a separate cover and not in the cover addressed to her husband.

7. VOTERS ON ELECTION DUTY:

(i) Applications from voters on election duty for permission to vote by postal ballot are required by law to be made in Form-XIV (Application for Postal Ballot Paper) **(Annexure-23 A)** at least seven days or such shorter period as you may allow before the day of poll or the first day of the poll in Gram Panchayat. This is to enable you to send the postal ballot papers in time and to make the necessary entries in the working copies of the electoral rolls for the respective polling stations. If you have appointed the officers and supplied them with the application forms in time, you need not relax this seven-day rule. A Presiding Officer, polling officer or policeman or other public servant may be appointed for duty at a polling station so late that though he is otherwise entitled to apply for a postal ballot paper, he cannot do so seven days before the first date fixed for the poll. You should, whenever practicable, exercise your discretion in favour of such officer or public servant and allow him the facility of postal ballot when he applies for such facility.

(ii) A voter on election duty in the ward constituency in which he is registered as elector, will also have the option to vote in person at a polling station although the polling station is different from the one where he is entitled to vote, if he so desires. If he chooses to vote in person at the polling station where he is on duty on the polling day, he should send application(s) in Form-XV (Application for Election Duty Certificate) (**Annexure-23 B)** to the Returning Officer concerned so as to reach you at least four days before the date of poll or such shorter period as you may allow, if you are satisfied that the applicant is such public servant and voter on election duty in the ward constituency, you will allow the request and issue an election duty certificate(s) in Form-XVI (Election Duty Certificate) **(Annexure-23 C)**.

(iii) The above concession is admissible only for such public servants as are posted for election duty in the same ward constituency as the one in which they are registered as voters and not in other cases. A polling agent is not entitled to this facility.

8. ALL PERSONS ON ELECTION DUTY TO APPLY FOR POSTAL BALLOT PAPER RATHER THAN ELECTION DUTY CERTIFICATE (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 gram panchayat, but within the same district. Further, the persons on polling duty come to know about the place of duty only at the last moment. 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 law, there is no bar to vote by post, even if the person is put on duty in the same gram panchayat where he is registered as an elector.

9. RETURN OF BALLOT PAPER:

After an elector has recorded his vote and made his declaration under Rule 28 or Rule 29 of A.P. Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006, he shall return the ballot paper and declaration to the Returning Officer in accordance with the instructions communicated to him in Part-II of Form-XX so as to reach the Returning Officer before the hour fixed for the commencement of counting of votes.

If any cover containing a Postal Ballot Paper is received by the Returning Officer after the expiry of the time fixed in sub-rule (1) of Rule 31, he shall note thereon the date and time of its receipt and shall keep all such covers together in a separate packet.

10. SAFE CUSTODY OF POSTAL BALLOT PAPERS:

The Returning Officer shall keep in safe custody until the commencement of the counting of votes all covers containing Postal Ballot Papers received by him.

11. Postal Ballot Module

The Postal Ballot software module has been developed which facilitates the employees posted on election duty to apply for Postal Ballots online. All the applications filed for Postal Ballots will be populated in the Returning Officer's login. If the Returning Officer is satisfied with the details, he will dispatch the postal ballot in physical mode as in the existing system and a watermark "PB" will be made against such voter in the Marked Copy of the Electoral Roll. Separate guidelines are being issued for this purpose.

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CHAPTER-XV

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS

I. GENERAL

1. Polling Stations:

The Mandal Parishad Development Officer concerned will finalize the list of Polling Stations for the Gram Panchayats under his jurisdiction and arrange for their draft and final publication after the approval of the District Election Authority as per the instructions issued by the State Election Commission (**Annexure-24**). You shall obtain a list of Polling Stations located in the Gram Panchayat from the Mandal Parishad Development Officer concerned and inspect them. The list of finally published Polling Stations will be available in the Returning Officer's login.

You should note that if it comes to your notice, at any time, that the owner of a building in which a Polling Station is located is a candidate or a known sympathizer or worker of a candidate at the election, you should immediately bring it to the notice of the District Election Authority, who will take necessary further action in the matter.

2. APPOINTMENT OF PRESIDING OFFICERS AND CONSTITUTION OF POLLING PARTIES:

(a) The District Election Authority or any other officer authorised by him will appoint the Presiding Officer and Polling Officers for each polling station.
(b) Sufficient number of polling personnel will be allotted to the Gram Panchayat according to the number of polling stations. You have to utilize the services of the polling personnel and may take one or two reserve polling personnel along with you to press them into service in case of exigencies. Each polling station should be manned by one Presiding Officer and one, two or three Polling Officers depending upon the number of voters in the Polling Station.
(c) Polling personnel shall not be drafted on election duty in their native Gram Panchayat or Gram Panchayat of their official duty.
(d) If at a polling station there is considerable number of women voters, women assistants may be employed, wherever practicable.
(e) You will be transported to the Gram Panchayat where elections are to be conducted along with the polling personnel and polling materials one day before the date of poll. Check the arrangements for the accommodation of the polling personnel.

3. POLLING REHEARSAL AND TRAINING OF STAFF:

Before you arrange election rehearsals for the training of polling personnel under you, it is essential that you should have yourself attended a polling rehearsal organised by the District Election Authority or Deputy District Election Authority so that you may have no doubts, whatsoever about the correct procedure to be followed as also the underlying significance of each step in the polling process.

Hold at least one polling rehearsal and see that the presiding officer and other polling personnel of every polling party attend the rehearsal. You may make them go through and understand thoroughly the instructions issued by the State Election Commission / District Election Authority for guidance of Polling Staff.

4. PREPARATION OF PROGRAMME FOR POLLING:

The important task that you have to perform is to plan for detailed arrangements for the poll, counting of votes, declaration of results, and election of Upa-Sarpanch. A good deal of forethought and advance planning is necessary to conduct the election efficiently. It would be

advisable to maintain a forward diary of the various items that you have to attend to from time to time, and keep it up-to-date, by adding remarks to watch the progress made in respect of each item. If there are any problems, they may be brought to the notice of District Election Authority or Deputy District Election Authority sufficiently in advance.

5. FINALISATION OF POLLING ARRANGEMENTS:

As soon as the list of contesting candidates has been published, you should calculate exactly the number of ballot boxes and the other polling material (a list of which is set out in the **Annexure-4**) that you will require for conducting the poll. You should, at this stage, finalize your arrangements and check that everything is ready for taking the poll.

II. PREPARATION FOR POLL (ACTIVITIES ONE DAY PRIOR TO POLL):

1. RECEIVING AND DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTION MATERIALS:

A day before the poll, each polling team has to be supplied with necessary material, a list of which is set out in the **Annexure-4**.

As Returning Officer, estimate the total requirements of all items of election material needed for your Gram Panchayat. First, you have to receive the entire election material from the distribution centre and thereafter distribute to your Presiding Officers as per their requirement. Besides, you will also require some items of material for carrying out your own duties up to the process of counting. These should also be secured from the distribution centre.

2. DISTRIBUTION OF BALLOT BOXES:

Generally, only one ballot box would suffice for election to Member and Sarpanch, at a Polling Station. However, it is desirable to keep a reserve of two or three boxes for a Gram Panchayat with you. Please ensure that required number of ballot boxes in good condition is obtained from Distribution Centre.

3. WORKING COPIES OF ELECTORAL ROLLS:

Prepare 4 copies of Electoral Roll (one Marked Copy and three Working Copies) for each polling station for distribution as follows:

1. First Polling Officer responsible for identification of voters (This is Marked copy of electoral roll. Only one copy needs to be maintained for both the offices of Sarpanch and Ward Member). : 1 Copy
2. Presiding Officer (working copy) : 1 Copy
3. For circulation among polling agents / exhibition at polling station (working copy) : 1 Copy
4. Reserve (working copy) : 1 Copy

4. DISTRIBUTION OF BALLOT PAPERS TO DIFFERENT POLLING STATIONS:

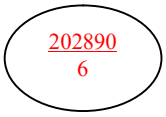
The number of ballot papers supplied to each Polling Station should be equal to the number of electors rounded off to the next ten. The number required to be supplied to each polling station should be calculated on this formula. It is your responsibility to secure and provide required ballot papers for all the Polling Stations in your Gram Panchayat.

5. DISTINGUISHING MARK:

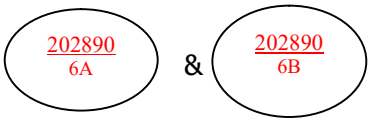
Under Rule 45 of the Conduct of Election Rules 2006, the distinguishing mark shall be stamped or written on the back of each ballot paper before it is issued to the elector. The distinguishing mark shall be a fraction within a circle whose numerator will indicate the LGD (Local Government Directory) Code of the Gram Panchayat in the Mandal and the denominator will indicate the number of the polling station. The 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 stations in the ward, the polling station number will be indicated in terms of ward number suffixed with 'A', 'B' or 'C'.

Illustration:-

If the LGD Code of a Gram Panchayat is 202890 and the serial number of the Polling Station / Ward is 6 and the distinguishing mark to be stamped on the back side of the ballot papers to be used at the polling station shall be –



In case 6th Ward is having 2 polling stations, then the serial numbers of the polling stations in that Ward will be -



The same distinguishing mark shall be stamped on the back side of the counter foil and ballot paper of Sarpanch and Ward Member, on the top left side 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 on its back by the Presiding Officer.

The Collectors & District Election Authorities will take necessary action to prepare the rubber stamps bearing the distinguished mark for each polling station and arrange for their supply to the Returning Officers/Presiding Officers concerned.

III. ON POLLING DAY:

1. POLL:

The poll has to be conducted on the date and time specified in the Election Notification. The general polling hours are from 7.00 AM and 1.00 PM.

Detailed instructions regarding poll, such as, preparation of ballot boxes, ballot papers, scaling of ballot box, preparation of ballot paper account, paper seal account, etc., are given in the "Presiding Officer's instruction booklet". You must go through the booklet and familiarize yourself with the contents of the booklet.

During poll hours, you may go round the polling stations in the Gram Panchayat to ensure smooth and peaceful poll.

2. ARRANGEMENTS AT POLLING STATIONS:

1) Outside each polling station there shall be displayed prominently –

   a) a notice specifying the polling area, the serial number of electors in the electoral roll who are entitled to vote at the polling station.

b) A copy of the list of contesting candidates with serial numbers and symbols assigned to them.

2) The names of contesting candidates along with their symbols shall be displayed inside the polling station above the ballot boxes to enable the voter to exercise his franchise without delay.

3) There shall be only one ballot box at any time inside the polling station. The polled ballot papers of Sarpanch election (PINK colour) and Ward Member election (WHITE colour) have to be dropped in the common ballot box kept inside the polling station.

3. ELECTORAL OFFENCES:

The most important cause which tends to mar the smooth conduct of an election and disturbs the atmosphere is the violation of statutory provisions of the election law by some candidate or by his workers or by the authority conducting the election. You should, therefore, meet the candidates, make a special appeal to them to cooperate in this regard and take active steps to ensure that no one oversteps the limits laid down by law and renders himself liable to penalties prescribed by law. The authorities conducting the election should also, therefore, strictly adhere to the provisions of law and statute.

The common offences are the following:-

i) Impersonation of voters;
ii) Bribing of voters;
iii) Intimidation of voters (and other persons);
iv) Canvassing within 100 metres of a polling station;
v) Transportation of voters to and from polling stations by a candidate or his workers or supporters.

Any of the above offences committed on behalf of a candidate cannot but create a feeling of bitterness and resentment in the minds of the other candidates and their supporters. You should secure the active co-operation of the candidates in restraining their over-enthusiastic but misguided supporters, if any, from over stepping the limits of law. You should seek the cooperation of the police in dealing with election offences.

4. COMPULSORY IDENTIFICATION OF VOTERS:

Rule 41(3) of A.P. Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006 stipulates that "every elector shall produce identity card issued to him/her under the provisions of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 made under 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."

In exercise of the powers conferred under the said rule, the State Election Commission issues orders from time to time directing production of **Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC)** or in its absence, any of the alternative photo identity documents notified by the Commission for establishing identity of voter at polling station. The Returning Officer should obtain a copy of the latest order issued by the Commission on compulsory identification of voters in the Gram Panchayat elections and strictly follow it to avoid impersonation and to ensure free and fair poll. Important alternative photo identity documents generally notified by the Commission for identification purpose are listed below.

I) Aadhaar Card.
II) Passport.
III) Driving Licence.

IV) PAN Card (Income Tax).
V) Identity Cards with photographs issued to its employees by State/Central Governments, Public Sector Undertakings, Local bodies or Public Limited Companies.
VI) Pension documents with photographs, such as Pension Payment Order, Ex-serviceman's Pension Book, Ex-serviceman's widow / dependent certificate, Old age Pension Order / Widow Pension Order with photograph (issued on or before the date of election notification for the local body concerned).
VII) Property documents, such as Pattas/Pattadar Passbooks/Registered Deeds, etc., with photographs (documents registered on or before the date of election notification for the local body concerned).
VIII) Passbooks with photographs issued by Public Sector Banks/Post Offices/APCOB/ DCCBs/Kisan Passbooks (accounts opened on or before the date of election notification for the local body concerned).
IX) ATM Cards with photographs issued by Banks (issued on or before the date of election notification for the local body concerned).
X) Ration Cards with photographs (issued on or before the date of election notification for the local body concerned).
XI) Smart Cards issued by the RGI under the scheme of National Population Register (NPR) (issued on or before the date of election notification for the local body concerned).
XII) MGNRGA Job Card (issued on or before the date of election notification for the local body concerned).
XIII) SC/ST/BC Certificates issued by the competent authority with photographs (issued on or before the date of election notification for the local body concerned).
XIV) Freedom Fighter Identity Cards with photographs.
XV) Arms Licences with photographs (issued on or before the date of election notification for the local body concerned).
XVI) Certificate of Physical Handicap with photograph (issued by the competent authority on or before the date of election notification for the local body concerned).
XVII) Membership Cards with photographs issued by Bar Councils (issued on or before the date of election notification for the local body concerned).
XVIII) Health Insurance Scheme Smart Cards with photographs under the scheme of Ministry of Labour (issued on or before the date of election notification for the local body concerned).
XIX) Identity Cards with photographs issued by the Secretariat of the Legislative Assembly/Legislative Council to MLAs / MLCs.
XX) Identity Cards with photographs issued by the Secretariat of Lok Sabha / Rajya Sabha to Members of Parliament.

5. DEATH OF A CANDIDATE BEFORE POLL:

According to rule 17(1) of Conduct of Elections Rules, 2006, if a contesting candidate for the Office of Sarpanch or a Ward Member of Gram Panchayat dies and a report of the death of the candidate is received before the commencement of poll, the Returning Officer shall, upon being satisfied of the fact of death of the candidate, countermand the poll for the office of the Sarpanch or Ward Member, as the case may be, and report the matter to the District Election Authority and State Election Commission. In such cases election proceedings shall be started afresh in all respects as if for a new election.

6. ADJOURNMENT OF POLL:

Under section 225B of A.P. 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, authenticated 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.

The Presiding Officer for such polling station shall announce the adjournment of the poll to a date to be notified later. If a poll is adjourned at any polling station under Section 225B, provisions of Rule 51 to 53 of Conduct of Elections Rules, 2006 shall apply, if the poll was closed at the hour fixed in that behalf.

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.

7. PROCEDURE FOR COMPLETING THE ADJOURNED POLL:

For completing the adjourned poll, you shall -

(i) report the circumstances immediately to the District Election Authority, Election Authority and 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.

Under Rule 54 of Conduct of Elections Rules, 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. You should provide the Presiding Officer of the polling station, at which such adjourned poll is taken, with the sealed packets containing –

(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

Before the 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.

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.

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.

The Returning Officer shall not count votes cast at such election until such adjourned poll has been completed.

8. PROCEDURE FOR HOLDING FRESH POLL IN CASE OF DESTRUCTION OF BALLOT BOXES, ETC.:

Under section 225 C of A.P. Panchayat Raj 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.

You should report the facts forthwith to the State Election Commission through the District Election Authority.

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.

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.

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.

The provisions of A.P. 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.

9. PROCEDURE FOR HOLDING FRESH POLL IN CASE OF BOOTH CAPTURING:

Under Section 231 of A.P. Panchayat Raj Act, 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, the Returning Officer shall forthwith report the matter to the State Election commission. On receipt of that report from the Returning Officer, 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.

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.

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.

10. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST POLLING STAFF:

Wherever specific allegations of serious nature are made in writing against the Presiding Officer or the polling staff about their conduct during polling at an election, the Returning Officer should 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 should exercise his discretion in deciding whether it deserves to be enquired into or not.

CHAPTER-XVI

COUNTING OF VOTES

1. RECEIPT OF BALLOT BOXES, ETC., FROM PRESIDING OFFICERS:

Even while the polling is in progress you may make necessary arrangements for receipt of ballot boxes and other election material from the polling officers of the various wards in the Gram Panchayat and for their safe custody from the time of their receipt till the time of counting. Care should be taken to see that ballot boxes pertaining to different wards are stored separately and do not get mixed up. Ward number may be noted on them to avoid confusion. As the poll hours for Gram Panchayats are from 7.00 AM to 1.00 PM, it will be possible to collect the ballot boxes at a central place and commence counting at 2.00 PM on the same day.

2. DATE, PLACE AND TIME OF COUNTING:

The date of counting will be on the same day on which polling takes place. The date, place and time so fixed should invariably be those indicated in the Election Notices issued under Rule 6 of Conduct of Elections Rules, 2006. You shall commence the counting at the appointed time in the Notification, which is generally at 2.00 P.M.

3. ADJOURNMENT OF COUNTING FOR UNAVOIDABLE REASONS:

You should proceed with the counting non-stop. In case it is necessary to suspend or adjourn the counting before its completion for any unavoidable reason, seal up all the ballot papers in packets, as also all other papers relating to the election and allow every candidate or his agent, if he desires to do so, to place his seal on every packet etc., in which these papers are kept.

N.B.- *It is preferable to keep all the sealed packets, etc., in a steel or strong almirah or in a separate room and have the almirah or the room sealed and secured with the seals of yourself and the candidates or their agents. Alternatively, the candidates may put their own locks in addition to yours on such almirah or room.*

4. COUNTING AFTER ADJOURNED POLL OR FRESH POLL:

If any adjourned poll or fresh poll has been held at a polling station, you should fix the date, time and place for counting the votes recorded in such election as directed by the District Election Authority and give notice of the same to every candidate or his election agent. You shall not count the votes cast at such election until such adjourned poll or fresh poll has been completed.

5. STATIONERY REQUIRED FOR COUNTING:

The following articles of stationery should be provided at the place of counting:

(i) a pen-knife or a razor blade;
(ii) pencils;
(iii) two sheets of paper;
(iv) a strong sharp needle;
(v) a dampened sponge or water in small cup;
(vi) twine;
(vii) one or two paper weights (small pieces of stone will do) &
(viii) rubber bands.

6. ASSISTANCE AT COUNTING:

You may require some persons to assist you in counting of the votes. You may yourself decide the number of assistants you require, in order to complete the counting in reasonable time.

The polling staff can also be used for counting. In employing persons as counting assistants, you should ensure that none of them has been employed by or on behalf of any candidate in connection with the election. The selection of assistants may be on informal basis as no form for their appointment is prescribed. Counting personnel could be drawn from among the local officials besides the polling personnel. In addition to the counting assistants, you may employ sufficient number of Class IV Government servants also to carry the ballot boxes.

7. PERSONS ENTITLED TO BE PRESENT AT THE COUNTING:

The following persons are entitled to be present at the time of counting:

(i) the candidate;
(ii) the election agent of each candidate;
(i) one counting agent of each candidate
(ii) counting assistants including the Class-IV Government Servants drafted for duty by you; and
(iii) persons authorized by the State Election Commission.

8. INSTRUCTIONS TO COUNTING ASSISTANTS:

Before the commencement of counting, read out and explain to the counting assistants, the rules and procedure to be followed in counting the votes. Also, impress upon them the need for being impartial in performing the duties assigned to them.

9. MAINTENANCE OF SECRECY:

Every person inside the counting hall is required by law to maintain, and aid in maintaining, the secrecy of voting and should not communicate to any person any information calculated to violate such secrecy. They should note that any person contravening the provisions of law in this respect is liable to be punished with imprisonment for a term, which may extend to 3 months or with fine or with both (Sec.217 of A.P. Panchayat Raj Act, 1994).

Before commencement of the counting of votes, the Returning Officer will read out and explain the provisions of the above mentioned Sec.217 for the information of all present and for compliance on their part.

10. COUNTING OF VOTES RECEIVED BY POST:

Under Rule 56 of Conduct of Election Rules, the postal ballot papers are to be counted first. You should first deal with the postal ballot papers.

Covers in Form XIX (**Annexure-23 F**) containing postal ballot papers received after the hour fixed for the commencement of the counting of votes should not be opened. They should be rejected and kept in a separate packet and sealed, noting thereon the appropriate particulars.

The covers in Form XIX received in time should be opened one after another. As each cover is opened, you should take out the declaration in Form XVII and the cover in Form XVIII and scrutinize the declaration. If the declaration in Form XVII is not found in the cover or the declaration has not been duly signed and or not attested by an officer competent to do so or is otherwise substantially defective or if the serial number of ballot paper appearing in the declaration is different from the serial number on the cover in Form XVIII, the cover containing the postal ballot paper should not be opened, but the ballot paper should be rejected. Each such rejected cover should be endorsed suitably and the declaration and the cover should be placed in the cover in Form XIX. All such covers in Form XIX should be kept together in a separate packet duly sealed and full particulars, such as the name of the constituency (Ward No. / Sarpanch), the date of counting and a brief description of contents should be noted thereon for easy identification. All the

declarations in Form XVII, which have been found to be in order, should then be kept in separate packet in order to ensure that the secrecy of the postal ballot is kept inviolate. The packet should then be sealed noting thereon the particulars regarding the name and number of the Constituency (Ward No. / Sarpanch), the date of counting and brief description of the contents. This should be done before the covers in Form XVIII containing the ballot papers are opened.

Thereafter, the covers in Form XVIII should be opened one after another and the validity of the ballot papers scrutinized and decisions arrived at. A postal ballot paper should be rejected.

i. if no vote is recorded thereon; or
ii. if votes are given on it in favour of more candidates than one; or
iii. if it is a spurious ballot papers; or
iv. if it is so damaged or mutilated that its identity as a genuine ballot paper cannot be established; or
v. if it is not returned in the cover sent along with it to the elector by you; or
vi. if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such a manner as to make it doubtful to which candidate the vote has been given; or
vii. if it bears any mark (other than the mark to record to vote) or writing by which the voter can be identified.

There is no particular mark required by law to be made by a voter to indicate his vote on a postal ballot paper. Any mark can be accepted as valid so long as it has been so made and so placed on the ballot paper that the intention of the voter to vote for a particular candidate is clear beyond any reasonable doubt. Thus a mark made anywhere in the space allotted to that candidate should be taken as a valid vote in favour of the candidate concerned. Again a vote recorded on a postal ballot paper should 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 should be for a particular candidate clearly appears from the way the ballot paper is marked.

The valid votes should then be counted and each candidate credited with the votes given to him. The total number of postal votes received by each candidate should then be calculated, entered in the Result Sheet in Form-XXVI as in **Annexure-25** in the appropriate place and announced for the information of the candidates.

Thereafter, all the valid ballot papers and all the rejected ballot papers should be separately bundled and kept together in a packet and sealed with your seal and the seals of such of the candidates, their election agents or counting agents as may desire to affix their seals thereon. The particulars such as the name of the constituency (ward No./ Sarpanch), the date of counting and a brief description of the contents should be recorded on the sealed packet for identifying it. Postal Ballot Covers in Form XIX received late, should be sealed separately with endorsement on the top of the packet.

11. GETTING THE BALLOT BOXES ETC., TO THE COUNTING TABLES:

In counting of votes, you should proceed strictly according to the serial numbers of the wards, polling stations and ballot boxes. That is to say, you should begin with the ballot box No. 1 in ward No. 1, and follow that order in respect of all wards in a Gram Panchayat. You should not open more than one ballot box at a time. However, if facilities exist, the votes of different wards can be counted simultaneously at different tables. When the arrangements are complete for counting, get all the ballot boxes relating to a ward and place them on the counting table before you. Keep the ballot paper account in Form XXV **Annexure-26** relating to the ballot boxes handy and ready.

12. CHECKING OF SEALS OF BALLOT BOXES:

Before a ballot box is opened, allow the counting agents and the candidates present to check and satisfy themselves that the seals on the box are intact and have not been tampered with.

13. CANDIDATES AND AGENTS ENTITLED TO CHECK IDENTITY MARKS AND PAPER SEALS:

As each ballot box is opened, allow every candidate or his counting agent present to check the identity of the box with reference to –

(i) the identity marks on the paper seal, and
(ii) the serial number of the paper seal.

14. COMPARISON OF SERIAL NUMBER OF PAPER SEALS:

Where the paper seals are used and they are numbered, the serial number on the paper seal of each box should be compared with the number given in the paper seal account sent to you by the Presiding Officer. Allow the counting agents of the candidates to note these numbers. If you find that the number noted in the paper seal account and the number of the paper seal actually found on a box do not tally, there would be prima facie suspicion that the ballot box has been tampered with or that the paper seal account is incorrect. Decide the question after checking the serial number of the unused paper seals returned by the Presiding Officer and other relevant circumstances. If you find it to be a case of clerical error in writing paper seal account, ignore the discrepancy.

If the paper seals are found to have been tampered with in any box in such a way that the box is no longer secure and its contents are capable of being interfered with, and if you are further satisfied that the box has in fact been tampered with, you should not open the box or empty its contents. Re-seal the box without counting, wrap it up with tape or in cloth or gunny and keep it apart. Report the facts to the State Election Commission though the District Election Authority and on receipt of the orders of the State Election Commission for a re-poll, arrange for a re-poll in the polling station concerned. Do not declare the result of the election until such re-poll has been held and the votes cast at that polling station at such re-poll counted.

15. OPENING OF BALLOT BOXES:

(a) The counting of ballot papers of Ward Members shall be done polling station-wise and the counting of ballot papers of Sarpanch shall be done by mixing after completion of counting of ballot papers of Members of all wards in the Gram Panchayat.
(b) After the identity of the ballot boxes from a polling station has been checked in the manner detailed above and found to be in order, the contents of the ballot boxes should be taken out for counting. Covers containing the tendered ballot papers should not be opened.
(c) Allow the counting agents to satisfy themselves that all the ballot papers have been taken out from the boxes and that they are empty before the boxes are taken away from the counting tables.
(d) The counting assistants should be careful to see that no ballot paper goes astray while being handled by them.

16. COUNTING PROCEDURE:

All the ballot papers of Sarpanch (Pink colour) and Ward Members (White colour) contained in the ballot box or boxes used at a polling station are taken out and sorted. The total number of

ballot papers of Sarpanch and Ward Member in the box at the polling station is ascertained separately. This number shall tally with the ballot paper account of Sarpanch and Ward Member of the polling station as recorded by the Presiding Officer. Thereafter, the ballot papers of Ward Member shall be sorted out candidate-wise and then counted. The ballot paper pertaining to each candidate should be scrutinized for validity. All valid ballot papers should be made out into candidate-wise bundles of 25 each. All apparently invalid and doubtful ballot papers should be made out into another bundle and kept separately for further scrutiny.

While sorting, the ballot papers of Sarpanch, Gram Panchayat with their vertical fold intact are made into bundle of 25 each for convenience of counting and each bundle is kept together by a rubber band tied at both ends. These bundles of ballot papers shall be handed over to the Returning Officer, who shall arrange for their safe custody till the scrutiny for validity and counting is taken up. Counting of ballot papers of all wards shall be taken up in a serial order and the ballot papers of Sarpanch in each ward shall be made into bundles and handed over to the Returning Officer.

After completion of counting of ballot papers of Ward Members of all wards in the Gram Panchayat, the Returning Officer shall take the bundles of ballot papers of Sarpanch, Gram Panchayat and arrange for their mixing in a big drum or other receptacle. After mixing they will be taken up for detailed counting. They shall be counted after sorting them candidate-wise. The ballot paper pertaining to each candidate should be scrutinized for validity. All valid ballot papers should be made out into candidate-wise bundles of 25 each. All apparently invalid and doubtful ballot papers should be made out into another bundle and kept separately for further scrutiny by the Returning Officer personally.

17. GROUNDS FOR REJECTION OF BALLOT PAPERS:

You have to scrutinize all doubtful and apparently invalid votes and decide in each case whether a particular vote is valid, if so in favour of which candidate or it is invalid and if so to be rejected as such.

a) Reject a ballot paper, if –

i) if it bears any mark or writing by which the elector can be identified, or
ii) if it bears no mark at all to indicate the vote, it bears a mark elsewhere than on or near the symbols 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
iii) if votes are given on it in favour of more than one candidate, or
iv) 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
v) if it is a spurious ballot paper, or
vi) if it is so damaged or mutilated that its identity as a genuine ballot paper cannot be established, or
vii) 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 authorized for use at the particular polling station, or
viii) 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 (vii) or clause (viii) 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:

b) You should endorse on each ballot paper which is rejected the word "REJECTED" and the grounds of rejection in abbreviated form enter in your own hand or by means of a rubber stamp and initial such endorsement. Before finally rejecting any ballot paper, give a reasonable opportunity to the candidate or his agent, who desires to do so, to inspect the ballot paper. Do not, however, allow them to handle any ballot paper physically.

c) Do not reject any ballot paper simply because –

(i) more than one mark has been made in the column of one candidate; or
(ii) besides a clear mark in the column of not more than one candidate, there are marks on the back or in shaded area; or
(iii) the mark is only partially within the column of one candidate and the rest of mark is in the blank area or outside the ballot paper; or
(iv) the original mark is patently in the column of one candidate but an impression due to wrong folding appears in the column of another candidate; or
(v) there is a mark in the column of one candidate, but a smudge appears against that of another candidate; or
(vi) the mark indicating the vote is indistinct or made more than once, if the intention of the voter to vote for a particular candidate appears clearly from the way the paper is marked.

18. RECOUNTING OF VOTES - PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED:

As soon as the counting is completed, the Returning Officer will record in the result sheet in Form-XXVI (**Annexure**-**25**), the total number of votes polled by each candidate including NOTA and announce the same. He will then pause for a minute or two, and if during this period, any candidate or, in his absence, his election agent asks for a recount, the Returning Officer will obtain an application in writing giving a reasonable time of 15 minutes. The Returning Officer will not complete and sign the result sheet in Form-XXVI at this stage. When an application for recount is made, he will consider the grounds urged and decide the matter. He may allow the application in whole or in part if it is reasonable or he may reject it in toto if it appears to him to be frivolous or unreasonable. His decision will be final, but in every case he should record a brief statement of his reasons for his decision. If in any case, he allows an application for recount, either wholly or in part, he will have the ballot papers counted again in accordance with his decision. After the recount has been completed, he will amend the result sheet to the extent necessary and announce the amendments so made by him. After the total number of votes polled by each candidate has been announced by him, he will complete and sign the result sheet.

No candidate has a right to demand a recount after the Returning Officer has completed and signed the result sheet in Form-XXVI.

19. EQUALITY OF VOTES:

If two candidates contesting any seat, happen to secure the highest number of votes and their votes are equal in number, the result will have to be decided by lot.

For example, if A, B, C and D are the contesting candidates and the total number of votes they have secured is as follows:

A	:	650
B	:	525
C	:	650
D	:	400

A lot will be drawn between A and C who have secured 650 votes each and the candidate on whom the lot falls will be declared as elected as if the candidate on whom lot falls had received the additional vote.

While drawing lots among the names of the candidates who polled equal number of votes, the Returning Officer should write each candidate's name on five slips of the same colour and size of the paper and all those slips should be folded tightly twice and then jumbled to make them mix beyond recognition. After such mixing, the Returning Officer should draw the slip. The candidate, whose name is first drawn shall be declared to have been elected.

The same procedure for drawing lots should be followed while the candidates secure same/equal votes in Upa-Sarpanch election also.

20. DECLARATION OF RESULT:

(1) You shall complete and sign the result sheet in Form-XXVI (**Annexure**-**25**) and send signed copies thereof to the District Election Authority and the State Election Commission.

(2) You shall also declare in Form-XXVII (**Annexure-27**), the candidate to whom the largest number of valid votes have been polled to be duly elected, for the seat and send signed copies thereof to the District Election Authority, Election Authority and the State Election Commission.

21. RETURN OF ELECTION:

You should complete and certify the Return of Election in Form-XXVIII (**Annexure-28)** and send copies thereof to the State Election Commission, Election Authority and District Election Authority.

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

22. CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION:

As soon as, after a candidate has been declared elected, the Returning Officer should grant to such candidate a Certificate of Election in Form-XXIX (**Annexure**-**29**) under Rule 63 and obtain from the candidate an acknowledgement of its receipt duly signed by the candidate immediately. Thereafter, immediately send this acknowledgement to the District Election Authority.

23. PUBLICATION OF RESULT:

The Returning Officer shall publish on the notice board of the Gram Panchayat concerned, a notification signed by him, specifying the names of the candidates duly elected.

24. SEALING OF COUNTED BALLOT PAPERS:

After counting is over, make into separate bundles the valid ballot papers and rejected or invalid ballot papers including postal ballot papers in respect of each candidate of all Wards and Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat separately.

Then make these bundles into another larger packet and seal it with your seal. Then other packets which have been opened by you for the purpose of counting of votes should also be closed and sealed.

The packets of election papers shall not be opened and their contents shall not be inspected by, or produced before any person or authority except under the order of a competent court. Special care has to be taken for the safe custody of these papers.

In view of the important nature of these election papers, these papers should be sealed with the seal of the Returning Officer.

You shall make packets of candidate-wise and ward-wise of all Wards and Sarpanch separately as mentioned below and the Larger Sealed Packet mentioned in 'A' shall be handed over to the MPDO concerned in a separate counter at reception centre and the other packets 'B' & 'C' and other election materials, if any, may be handed over at other counters as specified by the MPDO & Assistant District Election Authority.

A. Larger Sealed Packet containing:-

(1) Sealed cover containing bundles of counted ballot papers which includes valid and rejected ballot papers (including postal ballot papers whether valid or rejected and postal ballot papers which received lately).

(2) The following sealed self-printed **BROWN** coloured covers:

(i) Ballot Paper Account;
(ii) Declarations by the Presiding Officer before and after Poll;
(iii) Paper Seal Account;
(iv) Diary of the Presiding Officer; and
(v) Visit Sheet.

(3) Sealed **GREEN** coloured superscribed as "**STATUTORY COVERS**" packet containing the following sealed covers (which shall also in the same coloured as **GREEN**):

(i) Marked copy of the Electoral Roll;
(ii) Signed but unused ballot papers with counterfoils;
(iii) Other unused ballot papers with counterfoils;
(iv) Tendered ballot papers and the list in Form-XXIV;
(v) Ballot papers cancelled for violation of voting procedure;
(vi) Other cancelled ballot papers;
(vii) Counterfoils of used ballot papers.

B. The **YELLOW** coloured packet containing the following covers and superscribed as **"NON-STATUTORY COVERS**" (which shall also in the same coloured as **YELLOW**):

(i) Copy or copies of electoral roll (other than the marked copy);
(ii) Appointment letters of Polling Agents;
(iii) Election Duty Certificates;
(iv) List of blind and infirm electors and the declarations of the companions;
(v) Sealed cover containing List of Challenged Votes in Form-XXI;
(vi) Declarations obtained from electors as to their age and the list of such electors;
(vii) Receipt book and cash, if any, in respect of challenged voters;
(viii) Unused and damaged paper seals;
(ix) Any other paper that the Presiding Officer has decided to keep in the sealed cover.

C. Larger Packet (coloured **BLUE**) for the following items:

(i) 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 for marking ballot papers;
(vi) Distinguishing Rubber Stamp.

On sealing of the above packets at the counting place after the counting, you should draw up proceedings mentioning therein:

1. The full particulars of the candidates / agents present in the counting hall;
2. The fact that they were asked to affix their signatures and seals on the packets of used ballot papers, etc., if they so desire; and
3. The particulars of persons who had signed and sealed the packets and the particulars of those persons who had refused to do so.

Then you should sign the proceedings and obtain on it the signatures of such of the candidates / agents who are present and willing to sign. The proceedings should be put inside an envelope which should be sealed and the sealed envelope should be kept along with the packets of used ballot papers. These election records shall be kept in steel trunks, locked and sealed.

As far as possible, the election records shall be preserved in the Sub-Treasury or any other place specified by the District Election Authority.

CHAPTER-XVII

ELECTION OF UPA-SARPANCH

1. DATE, TIME AND PLACE:

You should convene a special meeting for the election of Upa-Sarpanch on the same day of declaration of results of Members and Sarpanch at the time and place indicated in the Election Notice. The place should be the office of the Gram Panchayat, unless some other place has been fixed by the District Panchayat Officer. The notice of the meeting for the election of Upa-Sarpanch shall be given to the Members and Sarpanch by affixture of the same on the notice board of the Gram Panchayat immediately after the publication of the results.

If, for any reason, the election of the Upa-Sarpanch is not held on the date aforesaid, the special meeting for the election of the Upa-Sarpanch shall be held on the next day, whether or not it is a public holiday.

The meeting specially convened for the election of Upa-Sarpanch, shall not be held, unless there shall be present at the meeting not less than one-half of the total number of Members of the Gram Panchayat within one hour from the time appointed for the meeting.

2. WHO SHOULD PRESIDE:

You will preside over the meeting for election of Upa-Sarpanch and conduct the election in the manner prescribed in the Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj (Election of Upa-Sarpanch of a Gram Panchayat) Rules, 2006 issued in G.O.Ms.No.172 PR & RD (E&R) Dt.10.05.2006.

3. RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE MEETING:

You should prepare a record of the proceeding of the meeting and sign it and also permit any Member present at the meeting to affix his signature on it, if he so desires. Every correction in the record should be attested by you.

4. PUBLICATION OF RESULT:

After declaration of the results, publish a notice signed by you stating the name of the person elected as Upa-Sarpanch on the notice board of the Gram Panchayat and send a copy of the notice to the District Election Authority and the Deputy District Election Authority. A copy of such notice shall also be given to the candidate declared elected as Upa-Sarpanch.

CHAPTER-XVIII

ACCOUNT OF ELECTION EXPENSES

1. STATUTORY PROVISIONS:

Section 230, 230 A and 230 B of A.P. Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 deal with matters relating to maintenance, scrutiny, fixing ceiling limits and filing of accounts of elections expenses by candidates contesting in Gram Panchayat elections. There is a penal provision in Section 19 B for failure to lodge election expenditure accounts within the stipulated time and in the manner required by or under the said Act. The above provisions are reproduced below for ready reference.

2. APPLICATION OF CHAPTER (SECTION 230):

This Chapter shall apply to candidates of any election held under this Act.

3. ACCOUNT OF ELECTION EXPENSES (SECTION 230 A):

(1) Every candidate, at any election held under this Act shall, either by himself, or by his election agent, keep a separate and correct account of all expenditure incurred in connection with the election, between the date on which the candidate concerned has been nominated, and the date of declaration of the result of the election, both dates inclusive (hereinafter in this chapter referred to as 'election expenses').

Explanation-I: Election Expenses, for the purpose of this Act, shall mean all expenses in connection with the election –

a) incurred, or authorised by the contesting candidate, or by his election agent;
b) incurred by any association, or body of persons, or by any individual (other than the candidate or his election agent), aimed at promoting or procuring the election of the candidate concerned; and
c) incurred by any political party, by which the candidate is set up, so as to promote or procure his election:

Provided that any expenses incurred by any political party as part of its general propaganda (which is distinguishable from its election campaign, for the promotion or procuring the election of a particular candidate), by words, either written or spoken, or by signs or visible representations, or by audiovisual devises, or through print or electronic media or otherwise, shall not constitute 'election expenses' for the purpose of this Act.

Explanation-II: (1) For the removal of doubts, it is hereby declared that any expenses incurred in respect of any arrangements made, facilities provided or any other act or thing done by any person in the service of the Government and belonging to any of the classes mentioned in clause (7) of Section 211 in the discharge or purported discharge of his official duty as mentioned in the proviso to that clause shall not be deemed to be expenses in connection with the election incurred or authorised by a candidate or by his election agent for the purposes of this sub-section.

(2) The account of election expenses shall contain such particulars, as may by order, be specified by the State Election Commission

(3) The total of the said expenses shall not exceed such amount, as may be order, be specified by the State Election Commission.

4. LODGING OF ACCOUNT WITH THE DISTRICT ELECTION AUTHORITY (SEC. 230B):

Every contesting candidate at an election shall, within forty five days from the date of declaration of the result of the election, lodge with the District Election Authority, an account of his election expenses, which shall be a true copy of the account kept by him, or by his election agent, under section 230 A.

5. DISQUALIFICATION FOR FAILURE TO LODGE ACCOUNT OF ELECTION EXPENSES (SEC. 19B):

If the State Election Commission is satisfied that a person -

(a) has failed to lodge an account of election expenses within the time limit prescribed and in the manner required by or under this Act, and

(b) has no good reason or justification for the failure, the State Election Commission shall, after following the procedure prescribed, by order published in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette, declare him,-

(i) to be ineligible for a period of three years from the date of the said order to contest any election held for any office under this Act, and
(ii) to have ceased to hold office, in case he is elected.

6. INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED BY THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSION:

The State Election Commission issued detailed instructions on maintenance and scrutiny of day to day election expenditure maintained by the candidates in its Order No.104/SEC-B2/2026, dated 26.03.2026 (**Annexure-9**).

7. SCRUTINY OF ELECTION EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS BY RETURNING OFFICER:

The expenditure accounts maintained by the contesting candidates for the office of Sarpanch and Ward Members in the proformas prescribed shall be submitted for scrutiny by the contesting candidates to the Returning Officers concerned or officers authorized by them once in three days from the date of publication of list of contesting candidates. As per the provision of section 232A of the APPR Act, 1994, the State Election Commission also appoints Observers during ordinary elections who are also authorized to inspect the election expenditure accounts maintained by candidates contesting for said offices.

8. MAKING ELECTION EXPENDITURE A PUBLIC DOCUMENT:

The State Election Commission also issued orders in the Order No.104/SEC-B2/2026, dated 26.03.2026 that the daily returns and periodical returns of the expenditure should be made transparent by making them available to the public and other contesting candidates. The Returning Officer shall make available photo copies of the returns to other candidates, any member of the public or Non-Governmental Organizations on demand and on payment of Xeroxing charges or a certified copy as per Section 75 of Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023 and to the media, free of cost, so as to enable them to assist the State Election Commission in effectively implementing the ceiling imposed on election expenditure to be incurred by the contesting candidates.

9. CEILING LIMITS ON ELECTION EXPENDITURE:

The State Election Commission by notification specifies the ceiling limits on election expenditure that can be incurred by contesting candidates for the offices of Sarpanch and Ward Member in Gram Panchayat elections. You shall obtain a copy of the notification from the election authority and circulate among all contesting candidates after obtaining due acknowledgement.

10. FURNISHING COPIES OF THE NOTIFICATIONS, ORDERS ISSUED BY THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSION TO THE CANDIDATES:

The Returning Officer shall furnish a copy of the following documents to all the contesting candidates.

1. Notification issued by the State Election Commission fixing ceiling on election expenditure for the offices of Sarpanch and Member, Gram Panchayat.
2. Orders issued by the State Election Commission on maintenance and scrutiny of election expenditure accounts maintained by candidates in the prescribed proforma.

11. FINAL RETURN OF ELECTION EXPENSES:

As per the provision of section 230 B of APPR Act, 1994 the final return of election expenses shall be lodged with the District Election Authority through Mandal Parishad Development Officer concern within 45 days from the date of publication of results. Such return of election expenses shall be signed by the candidate and his election agent, if any, appointed.

Failure to lodge election expenditure accounts will make the contesting candidate liable for penal action contemplated in Section 19B.

The Returning Officer shall scrupulously follow the provisions of the Act and Rules issued thereunder and instructions issued by the State Election Commission on matters relating to accounts of election expenditure incurred by candidates to curb the role of money power and to ensure free and fair elections.

CHAPTER- XIX

A.P. STATE ELECTION COMMISSION
1st Floor, New HODs Building, M.G. Road, Vijayawada-520010.

Date: 15.05.2025

OVERVIEW OF
STATE ELECTION COMMISSION – ELECTION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Sub: APSEC – Software Modules and Mobile Applications developed for 'SEC-Election Management System' (SEC-EMS) – Overview of SEC-Election Management System – Issued – Reg.

*****

The Government, vide G.O.Rt.No.586, Panchayat Raj and Rural Development (E&R) Department, dated 26.09.2023, accorded administrative and financial sanction to the A.P. State Election Commission for development of Software Modules and Mobile Applications for the Election Management System of Local Bodies and for entrusting the project to the Centre for Good Governance (CGG), Hyderabad.

Accordingly, the Software Modules and Mobile Applications were developed based on the IT initiatives of Election Commission of India and other State Election Commissions and after obtaining due feedback from the field functionaries at various levels and senior officers of the Panchayat Raj and Municipal Administration Departments. These Software Modules and Mobile Applications, collectively known as the SEC-Election Management System (SEC-EMS), have been designed to streamline and standardize election-related processes in Rural Local Bodies (RLBs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).

The SEC-EMS consists of three main components, namely:

1. Electoral Roll Management System (ERMS)
2. Election Process Management System (EPMS)
3. Poll Management System (PMS)

1. Electoral Roll Management System (ERMS)

The Electoral Roll Management System enables generation of Photo Electoral Rolls based on the Assembly Electoral Rolls. It facilitates generation of Ward-wise and Polling Station-wise Electoral Rolls, along with Index Sheets. Through the feature of Door Number Modification, households and family members can be positioned at the correct place, while the Sorting feature enables arrangement of door numbers in proper sequence.

This system ensures uniformity in the Preparation of Electoral Rolls across the entire State, with greater accuracy, transparency, and timeliness. The work of preparing Electoral Rolls, which was earlier entrusted to private agencies in the districts, will now no longer be necessary.

2. Election Process Management System (EPMS)

The Election Process Management System is designed to manage the entire election process relating to local bodies. It facilitates reporting of Ordinary and Casual Vacancies; Publication of Polling Stations; capture of Reservation details of seats and offices; Randomization for appointment of Returning Officers, Polling Personnel, and Counting Personnel; issuance of Election Notifications and Election Schedules; issuance of Election Notices; handling of Nominations, Scrutiny, Appeals,

and Withdrawals of Candidatures; Publication of the List of Contesting Candidates; capturing round-wise Results; and issuance of Election Certificates.

Logins are provided for various stakeholders of RLBs and ULBs, including Extension Officers (PR & RD), Mandal Parishad Development Officers, Divisional Panchayat Officers, District Panchayat Officers, Revenue Divisional Officers, Chief Executive Officers of Zilla Praja Parishads, Ward Secretaries, Town Planning Officers, Municipal Commissioners, District Collectors, Commissioner of Panchayat Raj, Commissioner and Director of Municipal Administration, Returning Officers, and General and Expenditure Observers.

The system provides an end-to-end IT solution for Returning Officers of RLBs and ULBs at all levels, enabling automation of the election process and generation of prescribed Statutory Forms and Reports.

3. Poll Management System (PMS)

The Poll Management System includes a Mobile Application for Presiding Officers to manage Polling Stations, report poll turnout, and record poll-related incidents. Mobile app is also developed for the Micro Observers, Zonal Officers and Route Officers. PMS also provides portals for Voters, Political Parties/Candidates, and Observers.

The Voters' Portal enables Voters to know their Polling Stations, download their Photo Voter Slips, view their Contesting Candidates, and access Election Results. The portal for Political Parties/Candidates provides for online filling of Nominations, seeking permissions online, and appointment of Election, Polling, and Counting Agents. The Observers' Portal facilitates the appointment of General and Expenditure Observers and enables submission of various periodical reports. The Poll Management System also includes a Postal Ballot Module, which facilitates online requisition for Postal Ballots by officers on election duty and certain other categories of voters.

Benefits of Automation

The SEC-Election Management System is designed for systematic, transparent, speedy, and accurate handling of various election processes. It ensures uniform processes, particularly for Preparation of Electoral Rolls and handling of Nominations, Scrutiny, Appeals, and Withdrawals of Candidatures.

Previously, District Administrations relied on private computer agencies to prepare Local Body Electoral Rolls. Now, ERMS ensures confidentiality of the ECI database, standardizes processes statewide, and enhances transparency and accountability in Roll preparation. It also assists Returning Officers throughout the election cycle right from receiving Nominations and publishing Contesting Candidate lists to declaring Results. Through PMS, Presiding Officers and others report poll incidents and voter turnout in real-time. Officers drafted on election duty can apply for Postal Ballots online through the dedicated Postal Ballot Module.

Voters access the Voters' Portal to download Photo Voter Slips, locate Polling Stations, and more. Political parties use the Candidates' Portal for election-related information. The services provided for voters and candidates make participation in the election process more convenient.

Further, the SEC-EMS enables seamless flow of information from Polling Stations to District officers and to the State Election Commission. In addition, election-related data can be preserved in soft copy and retrieved easily whenever required.

This initiative marks a significant step towards efficient, transparent, and technology-driven Local Body Elections in the State.

Sd/- Nilam Sawhney
State Election Commissioner

To
The Commissioner of Panchayat Raj & Election Authority.
The Commissioner & Director of Municipal Administration & Election Authority.
All the Collectors & District Election Authorities.
All the Chief Executive Officers of Zilla Praja Parishads.
All the District Panchayat Officers.
All the Commissioners of Urban Local Bodies.
All the Revenue Divisional Officers (through Collectors & DEAs).
All the Divisional Panchayat Officers (through DPOs).
All the Mandal Parishad Development Officers (through CEOs of ZPPs).
All the Extension Officers (PR & RD) (through DPOs).
All the Panchayat Secretaries (through DPOs).

Copy to:
The Principal Secretary to Government, PR & RD Department.
The Principal Secretary to Government, MA & UD Department.

CHAPTER- XX

RETURNING OFFICER'S ACTIVITIES UNDER STATE ELECTION COMMISSION-ELECTION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SEC-EMS)

INTRODUCTION

The State Election Commission has introduced a software application called the **"State Election Commission - Election Management System"** from this year onwards. This application automates the election process, ensuring greater transparency, faster result generation, cost savings, and easy retrieval of past election data.

Automation of the election process is a tool designed to make the work of the Returning Officer easier and more efficient. **However, it is not intended to circumvent or violate any provisions of the prescribed election laws or rules.**

WEBSITE

The address of the website is **"https://sec-ems.ap.gov.in/apsec/"**

LOGINS

Logins were provided to State Election Commission, Commissioner of Panchayat Raj, Collector, CEO, DPO, RDO, MPDO, Deputy MPDO and for the Returning Officer.

The login ID for the Returning Officer is **ro_xxxxxx** (LGD code of the Gram Panchayat) and the default password is APsec@2026.

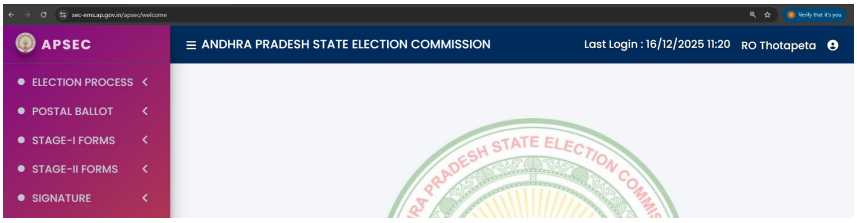
Ex: If the LGD code of Gram Panchayat is 999999, then the login ID for Returning Officer is ro_999999

During the first login, RO must reset the default password to a personal password and update his/her mobile number on the website to enable OTP-based authentication. Resetting the password and updating the mobile number are mandatory, as they enable two-tier authentication.

Users can change their password and update their profile details (such as phone number) multiple times by clicking on the profile photo icon at the top-right corner of the login page. A Logout option is also available within the service.

LOGIN PAGE

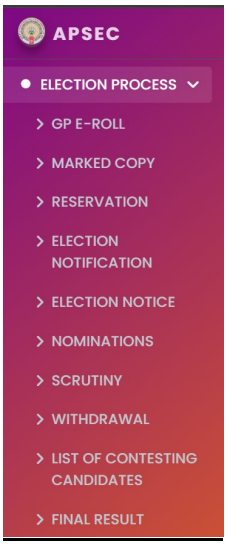
The login page of Returning Officer is as follows…



The left menu displays the main services: Election Process, Postal Ballot, Stage-I Forms, Stage-II Forms, and Signature. Each main service includes several sub-services.

ELECTION PROCESS

The sub-services under "ELECTION PROCESS" are: GP E-Roll, Reservations, Election Notification, Election Notice, Nominations, Scrutiny, Withdrawal, List of Contesting Candidates, Marked Copy, and Final Result Sheet.



GP E-ROLL

A soft copy of the Gram Panchayat voters list is available through this service. RO can view it online and take a printout if required. The soft copy also allows RO to search for a voter easily using the search option.

RESERVATIONS

The reservation details of the Gram Panchayat seats are provided through this service for ready reference. RO may view them online or take a printout if required.

ELECTION NOTIFICATION

Copy of the Election Notification issued by the State Election Commission is available through this service.

ELECTION NOTICE

Based on the Election Notification issued by the State Election Commission and the details entered in the DPO login, Form-I i.e. Election Notice is automatically generated and displayed in this service. RO may take a printout and publish or display the Election Notice on the Notice Board and other prominent places as prescribed.

NOMINATIONS

In the nomination service, there are three sub-services: Sarpanch, Ward Member, and Acknowledgement. Depending on the case, nomination details must be entered under the Sarpanch Service and the Ward Member Service, separately for each post.

First, select the Election field from the dropdown menu. Then, enter either the Nomination Reference ID or the Serial Number of the candidate in the GP voters list. If the candidate has

generated the Nomination using the software and submitted a printed copy, the Nomination Reference ID will be displayed at the top right-hand corner of the Nomination paper. Alternatively, RO may proceed using the Serial Number of the candidate in the GP voters list. After entering either of the above, click "Get Data" to open the nomination entry screen. Some data available in the system will be auto-populated with an edit option. Verify the populated data and proceed if it is correct, or Edit it, if necessary, by clicking the Pen (Edit) icon. The remaining details should be entered as per the Nomination Paper.

Once nomination details are entered, proceed to the Acknowledgement service. Answer the questionnaire to generate the Acknowledgement, Checklist, and Expenditure Declarations at once.

On the last day of receipt of nominations, after ensuring that all nominations have been entered and no entries are pending, go to the View page and click the "Process Completed" button. Then click "View Draft", which will display Form-V. If Form-V is correct and no nominations are left unentered, click the "Confirm" button. **Please exercise extreme caution before confirming. Once the Confirm button is pressed, no further nomination entries or edits can be made.**

SCRUTINY

On the day of scrutiny, click on the name of the candidate. A window will open with some standard questions related to scrutiny that need to be answered. Finally, select Accepted or Rejected for the nomination and save the page. There is no predefined program for scrutiny to declare whether a nomination is accepted or rejected. The decision of the Returning Officer is final regarding whether a nomination is accepted or rejected, in accordance with statutory provisions.

After all nominations have been scrutinized and their acceptance or rejection confirmed, click the "Process Completed" button and then go to "View Draft". Then Form-VI will be displayed. If it is correct, click the "Confirm" button. **Exercise extreme caution before confirming, as no further scrutiny can be performed once the "Confirm" button is pressed**.

If a nomination is rejected, it will be displayed in the RDO login for the appeal process.

WITHDRAWAL OF CANDIDATURE

In this service, all accepted and rejected nominations allowed by the RDO will be displayed. If any candidate submits Form-VII i.e. Notice of Withdrawal of Candidature and its authenticity is verified, RO should update the "Withdrawn" column from "NO" to "YES." By default, the column shows "NO".

After completing the withdrawal process, press the "Process Completed" button, then click "View Draft." In the View Draft section, Form-VIII will be displayed. If the details are correct, press the "Confirm" button. **Be extremely cautious, once the Confirm button is pressed, as no further withdrawals will be allowed**.

LIST OF CONTESTING CANDIDATES

After the withdrawal process is completed, the candidates contesting for **Sarpanch or Ward Member**, as case may be, will be displayed in this service. RO should arrange their names according to the Telugu alphabetical order, as prescribed in Circular No. ___/SEC-B2/2026 dated ___/2026. Assign a serial number to each candidate as it should appear on the ballot paper. The software will automatically display the symbol associated with each serial number in the symbol notification.

Once the entire process is completed, press the "Process Completed" button and then click "View Draft." Form-IX will be displayed in the View Draft section. If the details are correct, press the

"Confirm" button. Be very cautious, once the "Confirm" button is pressed, RO cannot edit or change the serial numbers or symbols in the final list of contesting candidates.

If there is only a single nomination, there is no need to generate Form-IX; the system will automatically generate Form-X i.e. Declaration of the result of Uncontested Election.

MARKED COPY

Once the election process reaches Stage-II, the polling station-wise marked copies will be generated automatically. These marked copies / working copies will be available in this service for viewing and printing, if necessary.

FINAL RESULT SHEET

This service contains two child services: Sarpanch and Ward Member, which function similarly, as applicable.

During the counting process, the Returning Officer fills out the Final Result Sheet, which is similar to Form-XXVI. After completing the counting process, press the "Process Completed" button and then click "View Draft." Form-XXVI will be displayed in the View Draft section. If the details are correct, press the "Confirm" button. **Be very cautious, once the Confirm button is pressed, RO cannot edit or change any counting details.**

Upon entering and confirming the Final Result Sheet i.e. Form-XXVI, the system will automatically generate Form-XXVI, Form-XXVII, Form-XXVIII, and Form-XXIX.

POSTAL BALLOT

There is a service for applying for a Postal Ballot through the Postal Ballot Module. All the applications for Postal Ballot will be displayed in this service.

If the Returning Officer marks "YES" against an application and dispatches the Postal Ballot, manually the "PB" marking on the marked copy will automatically appear as a watermark across the voter details.

STAGE-I FORMS

During the election process, all forms generated at each stage will be made available directly in the service. Form-I, Form-V, Form-VI, Form-VIII, Form-IX and Form-X can be viewed and printed through this service directly without proceeding in each of the above services at later stage.

STAGE-II FORMS

After the completion of counting, Form-XXVI, Form-XXVII, Form-XXVIII, and Form-XXIX will be available in this service for direct viewing and printing.

SIGNATURE

In this service, the Returning Officer shall upload this/her details and scanned signature. This signature will be used within the software wherever required after confirming each form.

NOTE: In addition to the above, detailed User Manual has been placed at top right corner of the login page.

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CHAPTER- XXI

MOBILE APPLICATIONS

The A.P. State Election Commission has developed the Software Modules and Mobile Applications based on the IT initiatives of Election Commission of India and other State Election Commissions and after obtaining due feedback from the field functionaries at various levels and senior officers of the Panchayat Raj and Municipal Administration Departments. These Software Modules and Mobile Applications, collectively known as the SEC-Election Management System (SEC-EMS), have been designed to streamline and standardize election-related processes in both Rural Local Bodies (RLBs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).The SEC-EMS consists of three main components, namely:

1. Electoral Roll Management System (ERMS)
2. Election Process Management System (EPMS)
3. Poll Management System (PMS)

As part of the Poll Management System, Mobile Applications have been developed for Presiding Officer, Micro Observer, Zonal Officer and Route Officer to monitor the poll related activities and incidents. A Circular issued by the State Election Commission on the Mobile Applications is appended as **Annexure – 30.**

ANNEXURE-1

ANDHRA PRADESH STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

1st Floor, New HODs Building, M.G. Road, Vijayawada-520010.

NOTIFICATION

No.72/SEC-B2/2025 **Date:26.03.2026**

In exercise of the powers conferred by Article 243K of the Constitution of India and in pursuance of Rule 3 of Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Elections) Rules and in supersession of all previous orders issued on this subject, the State Election Commission, hereby, appoints the administrative machinery for conduct of elections to various offices and seats in Gram Panchayats, Mandal Praja Parishads and Zilla Praja Parishads in the State of Andhra Pradesh, as follows:-

1. In this notification, unless the context otherwise requires, -

   (i) '**Act**' means, '**The Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994**'.
   (ii) '**Rules**' means, '**The Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006**'.

2. The **Commissioner of Panchayat Raj & Rural Development** shall be the '**Election Authority**'. Subject to the superintendence, direction and control of the State Election Commission, he shall be responsible for coordination and supervision of the preparation, publication and printing of electoral rolls for and the conduct of elections to Gram Panchayats, Mandal Praja Parishads and Zilla Praja Parishads in the entire State of Andhra Pradesh. He shall also perform such other functions as may be entrusted to him by the State Election Commission from time to time in connection with conduct of elections to Panchayats.

3. The **District Collectors** shall be the '**District Election Authorities**' in their respective districts. Subject to the superintendence, direction and control of the State Election Commission, they shall be responsible for conduct, coordination and supervision of all items of work connected with elections to Gram Panchayats, Mandal Praja Parishads and Zilla Praja Parishads in their respective jurisdictions. They shall also perform such functions as may be specified under the Act and Rules and also such other functions entrusted to them by the State Election Commission from time to time in connection with conduct of elections to Panchayats.

4. The **Joint Collectors**, the **Chief Executive Officers of Zilla Praja Parishads** and the **District Panchayat Officers** shall be '**Additional District Election Authorities**' in their respective districts. They shall perform such functions as may be assigned to them by the District Election Authorities concerned. The District Election Authorities may authorise in writing the Additional District Election Authorities to exercise any powers and functions vested on them in any local area of the district in regard to any Gram Panchayat, Mandal Praja Parishad or Zilla Praja Parishad in that area.

5. The **Revenue Divisional Officers** or the **Sub-Collectors**, as the case may be, shall be '**Deputy District Election Authorities**' in their respective jurisdictions. They shall perform such functions as may be assigned to them by the District Election Authorities concerned. The District Election Authorities may authorise in writing the Deputy District Election Authorities to exercise any powers and functions vested on them in any local area of the district in regard to any Gram Panchayat, Mandal Praja Parishad or Zilla Praja Parishad in that area.

6. The **Tahsildars** and the **Mandal Parishad Development Officers** shall be '**Assistant District Election Authorities**' in their respective jurisdictions. They shall perform such functions as may be assigned to them by the District Election Authorities concerned.

7. (a) For every election to fill the seats of Members of Mandal Praja Parishad and Members of Zilla Praja Parishad, the District Election Authority shall appoint a **Returning Officer** for every **Mandal Praja Parishad or Zilla Praja Parishad**, as the case may be, who shall, as far as possible, be a **Gazetted Officer not below the rank of Mandal Parishad Development Officer**.

   (b) For every election to fill the seats of Members and Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat, the District Election Authority shall appoint a **Returning Officer** for **one or more Gram Panchayats**, who shall be **an officer of the State Government or a local authority**.

8. (a) The District Election Authority may appoint one or more persons as **Assistant Returning Officers** to assist any Returning Officer;

   Provided that every such person shall be **an officer of the State Government or of a local authority**.

   (b) Every Assistant Returning Officer shall, subject to the control of the Returning Officer, be competent to perform all or any of the functions of the Returning Officer:

   Provided that no Assistant Returning Officer shall perform any functions of the Returning Officer, which relate to the Scrutiny of nominations, unless the Returning Officer is unavoidably prevented from performing such function.

9. It shall be the general duty of the Returning Officer, at any election, to do all such acts and things as may be necessary, for conducting the election in the manner provided under the Act and Rules or orders made thereunder.

10. (a) The District Election Authority shall, subject to such directions as may be issued by the State Election Commission, provide as many polling stations as are necessary, for the conduct of election and shall publish in such manner, as the State Election Commission may direct, a list showing the polling stations and the areas or groups of voters, for which they have respectively been provided.

    (b) The District Election Authority, or any other officer authorised by him, shall appoint a **Presiding Officer for each polling station**, and such other **Polling Personnel** as he thinks necessary, subject to the condition that he shall not appoint any person, who has been employed by or on behalf of, or has been otherwise working, for a candidate in connection with the election;

    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 connection with the election, to be the polling officer and inform the Returning Officer about such appointment.

    (c) 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.

    (d) If a 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 authorised by the Returning Officer, to perform such functions during any such absence.

(e) It shall be the general duty of the Presiding Officer at the polling station to keep and maintain public order there at, and to see that the poll is taken in a fair manner.

Sd/- Nilam Sawhney
State Election Commissioner

To
The Commissioner, PR & RD and Election Authority.
The Collectors and District Election Authorities.
The Joint Collectors and Additional District Election Authorities.
The Chief Executive Officers of ZPPs and Additional District Election Authorities.
The District Panchayat Officers and Additional District Election Authorities.
The Revenue Divisional Officers / Sub-Collectors and Deputy District Election Authorities.
The Divisional Development Officers and Deputy District Election Authorities.
The Tahsildars and MPDOs and Assistant District Election Authorities.
Copy to the Special Chief Secretary to Government, PR & RD, Department.

ANNEXURE-2

A.P. STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

1s Floor, New HODs Building, M.G. Road, Vijayawada-520010.

Date: 21-05-2025

CIRCULAR-I (SEC-Election Management System)

Sub: APSEC - Software Modules and Mobile Applications developed for 'SEC-Election Management System'(SEC-EMS) - Overview of SEC-Election Management System Operational Guidelines for generation of Electoral Rolls for Rural Local Bodies - Issued - Reg.

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The Government vide G.O. Rt. No. 586, Panchayat Raj and Rural Development (E & R) Department, dt.26.08.2023 accorded administrative and financial sanction to the A.P. State Election Commission for development of Software Modules and Mobile Applications for Election Management System of Local Bodies and to award the project to the Centre for Good Governance (CGG), Hyderabad.

Accordingly, the Software Modules and Mobile Applications were developed by the CGG after taking due feedback from various field functionaries and officers concerned in Panchayat Raj and Municipal Administration Departments.

This Circular includes an Overview of the Election Management System of Local Bodies to be henceforth known as 'SEC-Election Management System'(SEC-EMS) and also the Operational Guidelines for generation of Electoral Rolls for Rural Local Bodies using the newly developed Software.

(A) An Overview of the SEC-Election Management System (SEC-EMS)

1. Features of the SEC-Election Management System.

The Software Modules and Mobile Applications for SEC-Election Management System can be divided into three parts, i.e., (1) Electoral Roll Management System, (2) Election Process Management System and (3) Poll Management System, which are explained below.

1.1. Electoral Roll Management System:

The Electoral Roll Management System enables generation of the Photo Electoral Rolls based on the Assembly Electoral Rolls, wherein both Ward-wise and Polling Station-wise Electoral Rolls are generated along with the Index Sheets. Using the feature of 'Door Number Modification', households and family members can be positioned at the right place, while the feature of 'Sorting' enables arrangement of Door Numbers in a proper sequence. The Electoral Roll Management System ensures uniformity in generation of Electoral Rolls in the entire State with greater accuracy and transparency and also ensures timely generation of Electoral Rolls. This exercise was hitherto being entrusted to private agencies identified in the Districts, which will now not be necessary.

1.2. Election Process Management System:

The Election Process Management System is meant for Reporting of Ordinary and Casual Vacancies; Publication of Polling Stations; Capturing of Reservation detail of seats / offices;

Randomization for appointment of Returning Officers, polling and Counting Personnel; Issuance of Election Notification and Election Schedule; Issuance of Election Notice; Handling Nominations, Scrutiny, Appeals, Withdrawal of Candidatures; Publication of List of Contesting Candidates; Capturing Round-wise Results; and Issuance of Election Certificates.

Logins are provided for the various stakeholders of Rural Local Bodies (RLBs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), viz., Extension officers (PR & RD) (EO-PR & RD), Mandal Parishad Development Officers (MPDOs), Divisional Panchayat Officers (DLPOS), District Panchayat Officers (DPOs), Revenue Divisional Officers (RDOs), Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of Zilla Praja Parishads, Ward Secretaries, Town planning Officers, Municipal Commissioners, District Collectors, Commissioner of Panchayat Raj (CPR) and Commissioner & Director of Municipal Administration (CDMA). Logins are also provided for Returning officers, General & Expenditure observers.

The Election Process Management System also provides an end-to-end IT solution for the Returning Officers of RLBs and ULBs at all levels for automation of the election process and for generation of the prescribed Statutory Forms and Reports.

1.3. Poll Management System:

The Poll Management System includes the Mobile Application for presiding Officers to manage Polling Booth, report Poll Turnout and Poll related incidents. This system also provides Portals for Voters, Political Parties / Candidates and Observers. The Voter Portal enables the voters to know their Polling Stations, download their Photo Voter Slips, know their Contesting Candidates and to know the Results of Election. The Portal for Political Parties / Candidates provides for online Filing of Nominations, for seeking Permissions online and for online appointment of Election / Polling / Counting Agents. The Observers Portal facilitates the SEC to appoint General / Expenditure Observers and obtain various periodical reports from them. The poll Management System also includes the Postal Ballot Module which facilitates requisition for Postal Ballots by the officers appointed on election duty and certain other category of voters.

2. Benefits of the Automation

The SEC-Election Management System is designed for systematic, transparent, speedy and accurate handling of the various election processes. It ensures that uniform processes are applied particularly for preparation of Electoral Rolls and handling of Nominations / Scrutiny / Appeals / Withdrawals of Candidatures. Services provided for Voters and Candidates make it convenient for them to participate in the election process. Further, the SEC-Election Management System enables seamless flow of information from Polling Stations to District Officers and to the SEC. Besides, election related data can be preserved in a soft copy, which can then be retrieved easily.

(B) Generation of Electoral Rolls for Gram Panchayats

1. Introduction

As a first step, the Commission intends to generate the Photo Electoral Rolls for the casual vacancies of Sarpanchas & Ward Members of Gram Panchayats, MPTCs and ZPTCs. As of now, the Commission would obtain the Assembly Electoral Roll Database from the Election Commission of India (ECI), which in turn was provided to the officials deputed from the District Panchayat Offices along with external hard disks on which the relevant Assembly Electoral Roll Database was copied. These hard disks were handed over to the identified private computer agencies or NIC units in the Districts, where the Panchayat Secretaries would get their respective Gram Panchayat Electoral Rolls generated and published after due approval of the District Panchayat Officer. This system faced a lot of challenges besides compromising on data confidentiality. Moreover, different methods were followed by different Districts for generation of electoral rolls.

Using the newly developed Software, the Electoral Rolls can be prepared in the entire State with uniformity. The Assembly Electoral Roll Database is dumped into the Servers of the Commission at the State Data Centre and hence officials need not be deputed from the Districts with hard disks and they can easily access the Assembly Electoral Roll through the Software and start working on generation of Electoral Rolls. Provision is also given for Door Number Modification, which enables positioning of households and family members at the right place and for the Door Number Sorting, which enables arrangement of Door Numbers in a proper sequence. The Gram Panchayat Electoral Rolls can be generated Ward-wise with or without photographs with Index Sheets (Mukhapatrams). Provision is also made in the Software for entry of Caste particulars of voters, which can then be used for finalization of Reservation of seats and offices. Electoral Rolls can be generated both Ward-wise and Polling Station-wise with Index Sheets. Marked Copies of Electoral Rolls and ASD (Absentee, Shifted, Dead or Duplicate) Voters List can also be generated. After publication of Electoral Rolls, the Voters can download their Photo Voter Slips through the Voters' Portal.

Based on the Gram Panchayat Electoral Rolls, the Electoral Rolls of Mandal Parishad Territorial Constituencies (MPTCs) and Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituencies (ZPTCs) can be generated Polling Station-wise by the MPDOs and the CEOs of Zilla Praja Parishads (ZPPs) concerned.

2. Activities to be performed by various authorized Officers

2.1. State Election Commission

- Masters have to be created by filling up details of the Districts, Divisions, Mandals and Gram Panchayats using the service 'Administrative Units (RLBs)'.
- After such entry in the Masters, Logins will get created for Collector, CEO of ZPP, DPO and RDO.
- On obtaining the Assembly Electoral Roll Database from the ECI, the database has to be dumped into the dedicated Servers located at the State Data Centre.
- The relevant Assembly Electoral Roll database has to be allocated/mapped to a particular District using the service 'Data Segregation'.
- Thereafter, Notification for preparation and publication of Photo Electoral Rolls of Gram Panchayats, MPTCs & ZPTCs has to be issued using the relevant service.

2.2. District Panchayat Officer:

- Mandal logins have to be created for MPDOs and EOs (PR & RD) by entering the required details of Mandals in the Masters using the service 'Add Mandal'. The same service has to be used to allocated/map Assembly Constituency Polling Stations (part Nos.) to each and every Mandal in the District.
- After receiving the Draft Electoral Roll from the DLPO, the DPO has to either approve the Electoral Roll of rollback, if found defective. In case of rollback, the EO (PR & RD) has to modify the Draft Electoral Roll and resubmit the same through the DLPO to the DPO for approval.
- After DPO approves the Draft Electoral Rolls, the Final Electoral Roll can be viewed / downloaded in the logins of Collector, DPO, RDO, DLPO, MPDO and EO (PR & RD) by using the service 'GP E-Roll'.

2.3. Divisional Panchayat Officer:

- After receiving the Draft Electoral Roll from the EO (PR & RD), the DLPO has to confirm the Draft Electoral Roll or rollback, if found defective. In case of rollback, the EO (PR & RD) has to modify the Draft Electoral Roll and resubmit the same through the DLPO to the DPO for approval.

2.4. Extension Officer (PR & RD):

- As an initial step for generation of the Electoral Roll of Gram Panchayat, the EO (PR & RD) has to prepare the 'Data Input Sheet' as per the format enclosed with assistance of the concerned Panchayat Secretary.
- Population particulars of the Gram Panchayat have to be entered using the service 'Add Population' in the Masters.
- Using the service 'Mapping of AC Parts to Gram Panchayat in the Masters, the number of Wards in the Gram Panchayat and the short name of the Gram Panchayat have to be entered and the relevant AC Polling Stations (Parts) (Full or Partially) have to be allocated/mapped to the Gram Panchayat.
- In the Masters, Village / Habitation names, have to be entered in the same order in which they appear in the Index Sheet of Electoral Roll (Mukhapatram) of the previous election.
- There is a provision to view the Polling Station-wise (Part-wise) of Assembly Electoral Roll using the service 'AC Voter List' in the service 'Electoral Roll'.
- Thereafter, the Assembly voters have to be allocated/mapped to the Village / Habitation in the Gram Panchayat using the service 'Mapping of AC Parts to Village'.
- Identification of the irregular door numbers can be done by carrying out initial Sorting using the service 'Door Number Sorting'. The irregular door numbers will appear at the bottom of the Electoral Roll list for the village.
- The service 'Door Number Modification 'enables to position the household and family members in the right sequence and also enables rectification of the irregular door numbers. Door numbers as they appear in the AC Roll will not change, but will get positioned in the right place in the Gram Panchayat Roll as per the modifications.
- After preparation of the Draft Electoral Roll, the EO (PR & RD)has to submit the same to the DLPO for confirmation and to the DPO for approval. If the Draft Roll is rolled back either by the DLPO or the DPO, the EO (PR & RD) has to check the Roll once again and resubmit the same to the DLPO for confirmation and to the DPO for approval using the service 'E-Roll Submission'.
- After approval by the DPO, the final Electoral Roll of the Gram Panchayat can be generated with or without photographs of the voters using the service 'Generate Final GP-wise ER'.
- Provision is also made in the Software for entry of Caste particulars of the voters using the service 'Caste Mapping'. This information / mapping can then be used for finalization of reservations.

3. DOs& DON'T's

- Immediately after the authorized officer logs in for the first time, he/she should change the Password in order to prevent unauthorized access.
- It is necessary to check names of all the Districts, Divisions, Mandals and Gram Panchayats in both English and Telugu. If there is any correction to be carried out or if there is any addition or deletion, the same must be informed immediately to the SEC.

- It is also necessary to verify whether all the relevant Assembly Constituencies and Polling Station Nos. (Part Nos.) have been mapped as per requirement. In case of any discrepancy, it has to be reported to the SEC.
- EO (PR & RD) should thoroughly check the Draft Electoral Rolls for the Gram Panchayat before forwarding it to the DLPO for confirmation.
- Similarly, the DLPO should thoroughly verify the Draft Electoral Roll for the Gram Panchayat before sending it to the DPO for approval.
- DPO should also thoroughly verify the Draft Electoral Roll for the Gram Panchayat before approval.
- User credentials should not be revealed to anyone as the election data is vital and confidential and can have serious consequences, if the same is compromised.

4. Display of Electoral Roll

After the Electoral Roll for the Gram Panchayat is approved by the DPO and is duly published, the soft copy of the Ward-wise Gram Panchayat Electoral Roll without photographs will be available for viewing by all the stakeholders including the general public for verification and downloading.

5. Queries / Clarifications

Queries / Clarifications may be sent by email to secems.ap@gmail.com or the following persons in SEC can be contacted.

- Sri VenkaiahPathapati, System Analyst (Mobile: 9949591686).
- Sri G.S. Narayana Rao, A.S.O. (Mobile: 9948768555).
- Sri Nagesh Kumar Karri, S.C.S. (Mobile: 9550292729).
- Sri K. Samba Murty, A.S. (PR) (Mobile: 9989774472).

The above Guidelines of the Commission should be brought to the notice of all the officers concerned for their information and strict compliance.

(BY ORDER AND IN THE NAME OF THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSIONER)

Sd/- K R B H N Chakravarthi, IAS
Principal Secretary

To
The Commissioner of Panchayat Raj & Election Authority.
The Commissioner & Director of Municipal Administration & Election Authority.
All the Collectors & District Election Authorities.
All the Chief Executive Officers of Zilla Praja Parishads.
All the District Panchayat Officers.
All the Revenue Divisional Officers (through Collectors & DEAs).
All the Divisional Panchayat Officers (through DPOs).
All the Mandal Parishad Development Officers (through CEOs of ZPPs).
All the Extension Officers (PR & RD) (through DPOs).
All the Panchayat Secretaries (through DPOs).
Copy to:
The Principal Secretary to Government, PR & RD Department.
The Principal Secretary to Government, MA & UD Department.

ANNEXURE-3

A.P. STATE ELECTION COMMISSION
1st Floor, New HODS Building, M.G. Road, Vijayawada-520010.

Date: 28.07.2025

CIRCULAR-2 (SEC-Election Management System)

Sub: APSEC-Software Modules and Mobile Applications developed for 'SEC- Election Management System' (SEC-EMS) - Operational Guidelines for Election Process Management System for Rural Local Bodies – Issued - Reg.

Ref: APSEC Circular-1 (SEC-EMS), Date: 21.05.2025.

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In the reference cited, an "Overview of the Election Management System of Local Bodies known as **'State Election Commission Election Management System' (SEC-EMS)"** and also the "Operational Guidelines for generation of Electoral Rolls for Rural Local Bodies" using the newly developed Software was communicated. To reiterate the SEC-EMS is divided into 3 parts i.e., 1) Electoral Roll Management System; 2) Election Process Management System; and 3) Poll Management System.

Vide this Circular, the Operational Guidelines for various Election Processes viz., Reporting of Vacancies; Publication of Polling Stations; Capturing of Reservation details of Seats / Offices; Randomization for appointment of Returning Officers, Polling and Counting Personnel; Issuance of Election Notification and Election Schedule; Issuance of Election Notice; Handling Nominations, Scrutiny, Appeals, Withdrawal of Candidatures; Publication of List of Contesting Candidates; Capturing Round-wise Results; and Issuance of Election Certificates, all of which are part of the Election Process Management System are detailed below.

Reporting of Ordinary / Casual Vacancies:

1. The vacancies of Gram Panchayats and Mandal Praja Parishads are to be reported by the MPDO using his/her login. The entry of vacancies made in the MPDO login are automatically reflected in the DPO login in respect of GPs and in the CEO login in respect of Mandal Praja Parishads. The DPO / CEO have to thereafter confirm the vacancies and forward the same to the Commissioner, Panchayat Raj (CPR). The CPR has to in turn confirm and forward the same to the State Election Commission (SEC). The syntaxes for the MPDO/DPO / CEO/ CPR logins are as given below:

Syntax for MPDO Login	***mpdo_Mandal LGD code_District LGD code***
Syntax for DPO Login	***dpo_District LGD code***
Syntax for CEO Login	***ceo_District LGD code CPR***
Syntax for CPR Login	***CPR***

2. Similarly, the Zilla Praja Parishad vacancies are to be entered by the CEO using the CEO Login and the same are to be confirmed and forwarded by the CPR to the SEC.

Publication of Polling Stations:

For Publication of Polling Stations, various details of the identified Polling Stations have to be entered and thereafter the list has to be approved by the Collector. Once such details have

been captured, Polling Station-wise Marked Copies, the Photo Voter Slips and ASD Lists (Absentee, Shifted, Dead/Duplicate) can be generated.

Capturing of Reservation details of seats / offices:

1. The Reservation details of seats / offices are to be entered using the MPDO login both for GPs & MPTCs. The Reservation details entered in the MPDO login are automatically reflected in the DPO login in case of GPS and CEO login in the case of MPTCs.

2. Thereafter the DPO / CEO have to confirm the reservation details, upload the signed Gazette copies of GPS & MPTCs and forward the same to the CPR.

3. Similarly, the CEO has to enter the details of reservation to the posts of ZPTCS and Presidents of MPPS, upload the signed Gazette copies and forward the same to the CPR.

4. The CPR in turn has to confirm the reservation details forwarded by the DPOS & CEOS and forward the same to the SEC.

5. The reservation details of Chairman of ZPPs are to be entered at the CPR level and the CPR has to upload the signed Gazette copy and forward the same to the SEC.

Randomization:

Randomization for appointment of Returning Officers, Polling and Counting Personnel can be carried out using the module for the same.

Issuance of Election Notification and Election Schedule:

Upon confirmation of the vacancies forwarded by the CPR, the Commission will issue the Election Notification with detailed Election Schedule.

Returning Officer (RO) Login:

1. Using the login provided, the RO can generate the Election Notice; enter the Nomination particulars, handle Scrutiny, Withdrawal and Publication of List of Contesting Candidates; Capture round-wise Results; and issue Election Certificates to the elected representatives. Appeals against rejection of Nominations are to be handled by the RDO concerned/District Collector. The syntaxes for RO logins for the GP, MPP and ZPP are given below:

Syntax for RO (GP) Login	***ro_Gram Panchayat LGD Code***
Syntax for RO (MPP) Login	***ro_Mandal LGD Code_ District LGD Code***
Syntax for RO (ZPP) Login	***ro_zpp_District LGD Code***

2. After generation of the Election Notification by the SEC, Form-I (GP) / Form-II (MPTC/ZPTC) is to be generated by the RO using his / her login and thereafter the RO has to verify the Form-I / Form-II, as the case may be, sign it and publish the same on the date of Election Notice as per the Election Schedule.

3. On the dates appointed for Receipt of Nominations, the RO after receipt of Nomination from the Candidate or his/her Proposer along with Self-Declaration, has to note the date and time of receipt on the Nomination and give serial number to the Nomination. Thereafter, the RO has to enter the details of Nominations in the Nomination and Acknowledgment Services. With the entry of these details, Acknowledgment and Check List can be generated. Form-V is to be generated in RO login on the scheduled date.

4. On the last date of receipt of nominations, the RO has to check once again whether all the Nominations are entered or not and can then press the buttons 'Process Complete', 'View Draft', 'Confirm' (if all details are fed) and 'Print'. RO has to then take a print of the Form-V, sign it and publish the same on the Notice Board.

5. As per the details entered and confirmed in the Nomination service, Scrutiny can be conducted one by one for all the Nominations and as per the procedure prescribed clicking on the name of each of the candidates. The process of scrutiny has been designed in such a way that the RO has to select 'Yes' or 'No' for the various fields and finally select the button 'Accepted' or 'Rejected'.

6. Thereafter the Form-VI is to be generated by pressing the buttons 'Process Complete', 'View Draft', 'Confirm' (if all details are intact) and 'Print'. The RO has to then take a print of the Form-VI, sign it and publish the same on the Notice Board.

7. In case the RO selects the 'Rejected' option during the Scrutiny, the reason has to be typed in the box provided and deliver the same to the candidate to facilitate filing of an Appeal, if he/she so desires, before the concerned RDO, who is the Appellate Authority in case of Sarpanch/Ward Member of GP and MPTC. All the rejected nominations are reflected in the RDO login for which the syntax is given below:

Syntax for RDO Login	***rdo_district LGD Code*** followed by Division Serial No. in ascending order in 3 digits (001, 002,...) **(Ex: rdo_744001, rdo 744002).**

8. Similarly, provision has been made to handle the Appeals for the ZPTC by the District Collector. The syntax for the Collector login is given below.

Syntax for Collector Login	***coll _district LGD Code***

9. Only on the rejected nominations, Appeal can be filed by a candidate along with supporting documents. On thorough examination of the appeal, the RDO can allow or reject the appeal by clicking 'Allow' or 'Reject' buttons displayed in the Appeal service and also upload the copy of Speaking Order / Proceedings on the 'Disposal of Appeal' service. The allowed appeals will then appear in the 'Withdrawal' service in RO login.

10. While handing the 'Withdrawal' service, the RO has to select 'Yes' against the candidate's name, if he/she has withdrawn the candidature. After completion of Withdrawal process, the RO has to press the buttons 'Process Complete', View Draft', 'Confirm' (if all details are intact) and then 'Print'. The RO has to then take a print of Form-VIII, sign it and publish the same on the Notice Board.

11. After completion of Withdrawal process, i.e., after 3:00 PM on the date appointed for this purpose, the RO has to generate the Final List of Contesting Candidates by giving the serial number as per the Telugu alphabetic order of the names against each candidate, after which symbols will be allotted to them automatically in case of Gram Panchayat as per the order of symbols specified in the Symbol Notification issued by the Commission.

12. Similarly, the symbols for MPTC/ZPTC candidates will be first allotted party-wise for Candidates of Recognized Political Parties; similarly for candidates of Registered Political Parties with a reserved symbol; then to candidates of Registered Political Parties without a

reserved symbol; and finally to the Independent candidates as per guidelines for allotment of symbols.

13. After allotment of symbols to the candidates, the RO has to press the buttons 'Process Complete', 'View Draft', 'Confirm' (if all details are intact) and then 'Print'. The RO has to then take a print out of Form-IX, sign it and publish the same on the Notice Board.

14. At the time of Counting, the RO has to enter the data relating to votes in the Ballot Box/EVM; Votes secured by each Candidate, NOTA, Invalid Votes and Postal Ballot for Polling Station-wise / EVM-wise in the Final Result Sheet.

15. By entering the data in Final Result Sheet, Form-XXVI, Form-XXVII, Form- XXVIII & Form-XXIX can be generated. The RO will take print outs, sign and publish the same on the Notice Board. The Certificate of Election can be then generated and issued to the elected candidate.

The Election Process Management System thus provides an end-to-end IT solution for the Returning Officers for automation of the election processes and for generation of the prescribed Statutory Forms and Reports.

Queries/Clarifications

Queries / Clarifications may be sent by email to secems.ap@gmail.com or the following persons in the Commission's office can be contacted.

- Sri Venkaiah Pathapati, System Analyst (Mobile: 9949591686).
- Sri G.S. Narayana Rao, A.S.O. (Mobile: 9948768555).
- Sri Nagesh Kumar Karri, S.O. (Mobile: 9550292729).
- Sri K. Samba Murty, A.S. (PR) (Mobile: 9989774472).

The above Guidelines of the Commission should be brought to the notice of all the officers concerned for their information and strict compliance.

(BY ORDER AND IN THE NAME OF THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSIONER)

Sd/- G.V. Sai Prasad
SECRETARY (FAC)

To
The Commissioner, PR & RD and Election Authority.
The Collectors & District Election Authorities of Chittoor, East Godavari, Palnadu, Prakasam, SPSR Nellore & YSR Kadapa.
The Chief Executive Officers, Zilla Praja Parishads of Chittoor, Palnadu, SPSR Nellore & YSR Kadapa.
The District Panchayat Officers of East Godavari & Prakasam.
The Revenue Divisional Officers concerned (through Collectors & DEAs).
The Divisional Panchayat Officers concerned (through DPOS).
The Mandal Parishad Development Officers concerned (through CEOs of ZPPs).
The Dy. MPDOS concerned (through DPOS).
The Panchayat Secretaries concerned (through DPOs).

Copy to: The Principal Secretary to Government, PR & RD Department.

ANNEXURE-4

ELECTION / POLLING MATERIAL

STATUTORY FORMS (FOR STAGE-I ELECTION PROCESS)

1.	Notice for Election of Member/Sarpanch, Gram Panchayat (**Form-I**)	5 per GP
2.	Nomination Paper (**Form-III**)	100 per GP
3.	List of Nominations received (**Form-V**)	20 per GP
4.	List of Validly Nominated Candidates (**Form-VI**)	20 per GP
5.	Notice of Withdrawal of Candidature (**Form-VII**)	40 per GP
6.	Publication of Notice of Withdrawal of Candidature (**Form-VIII**)	20 per GP
7.	List of Contesting Candidates (**Form-IX)** (RO shall supply filled Form-IX @ 2 per PS)	30 per GP
8.	Appointment of Election Agent (**Form-XI**)	40 per GP
9.	Declaration of the Result of Uncontested Election (**Form-X**)	5 per GP

NON-STATUTORY FORMS (FOR STAGE-I ELECTION PROCESS)

1.	Checklist for Nomination Paper (To be issued by RO to candidate, wherever required, at the time of submission of nomination papers, if RO found any defects in nomination paper or if candidate did not submit required documents along with nomination)	200 per GP
2.	Declaration by candidates on Criminal Antecedents, Assets and Liabilities and Educational Qualifications to be submitted along with Nomination Paper	100 per GP
3.	Declaration by candidates on Accounts of Election Expenditure to be submitted along with Nomination Paper	100 per GP
4.	Maintenance of Election Expenditure by contesting candidates (Proformas-I to IV) (to be supplied to contesting candidates)	100 per GP

STATUTORY FORMS / COVERS (FOR STAGE-II ELECTION PROCESS)

BEFORE POLL PROCESS:		
1.	Application for Postal Ballot Paper (**Form-XIV**)	30 per GP
2.	Application for Election Duty Certificate (**Form-XV**)	5 per GP
3.	Election Duty Certificate (**Form-XVI**)	5 per GP
4.	Declaration by Elector (Postal Ballot) (**Form-XVII**)	30 per GP
5.	**Cover 'A'** for Postal Ballot (**Form-XVIII)** (Small size) (Pink colour for Sarpanch & White colour for Ward Member)	30 per GP
6.	**Cover 'B'** for Postal Ballot (**Form-XIX)** (Medium size) (Pink colour for Sarpanch & White colour for Ward Member)	30 per GP
7.	Instructions for Guidance of Elector (Postal Ballot) (**Form-XX**)	30 per GP
8.	**Outer Cover** for Postal Ballot Paper (Big Size)	30 per GP

NON-STATUTORY FORMS (FOR STAGE-II ELECTION PROCESS)

BEFORE POLL PROCESS:		
1.	Model Code of Conduct (to be supplied to the Contesting Candidates)	70 per GP
2.	Photo ID Card for Contesting Candidate	120 per GP
3.	Vehicle Permit (for Sarpanch only) (to be issued by Tahsildar concerned)	10 per GP
4.	Photo ID Card for Polling Staff (same format as counting staff also)	40 per GP
5.	Photo ID Card for Polling Agents	120 per GP
6.	Photo ID Card for Counting Agents	50 per GP

DURING POLL PROCESS:		
1.	Photo ID Card for Counting Staff (same format for polling staff also)	40 per GP
2.	Report to be given by RO u/s 225 (Removal of ballot papers or ballot boxes from polling stations)	10 per GP
3.	Report to be given by RO u/s 225B (Adjournment of Poll in emergencies like riot, natural calamity, etc.)	10 per GP
4.	Report to be given by RO u/s 225C (Destruction of ballot boxes)	10 per GP
5.	Report to be given by RO u/s 225D (Destruction, loss, etc., of ballot papers at the time of counting)	10 per GP
6.	Report to be given by RO u/s 231 (Booth capturing)	10 per GP

REQUIREMENT OF POLLING MATERIALS USED AT POLLING STATION

PART-I

LIST OF POLLING MATERIALS:		
1.	Ballot Box (Note: One or two ballot boxes may also be kept as reserve for each Gram Panchayat depending upon the number of voters allotted to the polling station, number of contesting candidates and size of the ballot boxes)	1
2.	Ballot Papers	As per requirement
3.	Copies of Electoral Rolls (1 Marked copy + 3 Working copies)	4
4.	Indelible Ink Phials (10 CC for 500 voters)	1
5.	Paper Seals for Ballot Box(es)	4
6.	Address Tags for Ballot Box(es)	4
7.	Label for Ballot Box(es)	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 (Card Board)	2
16.	Poster Notice specifying Polling Area	1
17.	Poster showing List of Contesting Candidates and Symbols allotted to them	1 for Sarpanch & 1 for Ward Member

STATUTORY FORMS AND OTHER ELECTION PAPERS:		
1.	Final List of Contesting Candidates (**Form-IX**) (Sarpanch & Ward Member)	2
2.	Appointment of Polling Agent (**Form-XII**)	20
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.	Declaration by the companion of blind and infirm voter (**Form-XXII)**	2

NON-STATUTORY FORMS AND OTHER ELECTION PAPERS:		
1.	Paper Seal Account	2
2.	Receipt Book for deposit of Challenged Book Votes Fee	5
3.	Letter to Station House Officer (Police)	2
4.	Declaration by the presiding Officer before the commencement of Poll and at the end of Poll (Part-I to III)	2
5.	Form of Declaration by Elector about his/her age	2
6.	Declaration by PO about the age of electors List of electors who voted after giving declaration (Part-I) / List of electors who refused to give declaration (Part-II)	2
7.	Presiding Officer's Diary	2
8.	Visit Sheet	2
9.	Format containing specimen signature of Contesting Candidates and their Election Agents	2
10.	Passes for Polling Agents	10

SIGN BOARDS FOR POLLING STATION:		
1.	Presiding Officer	1
2.	Polling Officer	2
3.	Entry	1
4.	Exit	1
5.	Polling Agents	1

STATIONERY REQUIRED FOR A POLLING STATION:		
1.	Ordinary Pencil	1
2.	Ballpoint Pen	1 Blue & 1 Red
3.	Plain Foolscap Paper	2 Sheets
4.	Pins	10 pieces
5.	Drawing Pins	20 pieces
6.	Sealing wax	2 sticks
7.	Gum Bottle (small)	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.	Cup/empty Tin/plastic for holding indelible ink bottle	1
19.	Rubber bands	10
20.	Cello Tape	1
21.	Canvas Bag	1
22.	Ribbon or Tape for tying sealed Ballot Boxes	6 metres
23.	Gunny Bag	1
24.	Checklist for Polling Material	2

PART-II

LIST OF COVERS REQUIRED BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER FOR SEALING TO BE MADE (STATUTORY & NON-STATUTORY)

S.No.	Cover Name	Requirement per PS	
A.	**Self-printed BROWN coloured covers:**		
1.	Cover for Ballot Paper Account (Form XXV)	Medium size	2 per PS
2.	Cover for Declarations by Presiding Officer before and after Poll	Medium size	2 per PS
3.	Cover for Paper Seal Account	Medium size	2 per PS
4.	Cover for the Diary of the Presiding Officer	Small size	2 per PS
5.	Cover for Visit Sheet	Small size	1 per PS
B.	**Statutory Covers (GREEN coloured) containing the following sealed covers which shall also in the same colour, i.e. GREEN:**	Big size	1 per PS
1.	Cover containing the Marked Copy of Electoral Roll	Medium size	2 per PS
2.	(a) Cover containing the signed but unused Ballot Papers with counterfoils (Sarpanch)	Medium size	1 per PS
	(b) Cover containing the signed but unused Ballot Papers with counterfoils (Ward Member)	Medium size	1 per PS
3.	(a) Cover containing other unused Ballot Papers with counterfoils (Sarpanch)	Medium size	1 per PS
	(b) Cover containing other unused Ballot Papers with counterfoils (Ward Member)	Medium size	1 per PS
4.	(a) Cover containing the Tendered Ballot Papers and the List in Form-XXIV (Sarpanch)	Small size	1 per PS
	(b) Cover containing the Tendered Ballot Papers and the List in Form-XXIV (Ward Member)	Small size	1 per PS
5.	(a) Cover containing the Ballot Papers cancelled for violation of voting procedure (Sarpanch)	Small size	1 per PS
	(a) Cover containing the Ballot Papers cancelled for violation of voting procedure (Ward Member)	Small size	1 per PS
6.	(a) Cover(s) containing other cancelled Ballot Papers (Sarpanch)	Small size	1 per PS
	(b) Cover(s) containing other cancelled Ballot Papers (Ward Member)	Small size	1 per PS
7.	(a) Cover containing Counterfoils of used Ballot Papers including Tendered Ballot papers (Sarpanch)	Medium size	1 per PS
	(b) Cover containing Counterfoils of used Ballot Papers including Tendered Ballot papers (Ward Member)	Medium size	1 per PS

C.	**Non-Statutory Covers (YELLOW coloured) containing the following sealed covers which shall also in the same colour, i.e. YELLOW:**	Big size	1 per PS
1.	Cover containing the copy or copies of Electoral Roll (other than the Marked copy)	Medium size	2 per PS
2.	Cover for Appointment Letters of Polling Agents	Medium size	2 per PS
3.	Cover for Election Duty Certificate	Small size	2 per PS
4.	Cover for Challenged Votes & list in Form XXI	Small size	2 per PS
5.	Cover for List of Blind and Infirm electors & declarations of companions.	Small size	2 per PS
6.	Cover for Declarations obtained from electors as to their age and the list of such electors	Small size	2 per PS
7.	Cover for Receipt Book and Cash, if any, in respect of Challenged voters	Small size	2 per PS
8.	Cover for Unused and Damaged Paper Seals	Small size	2 per PS
9.	For any other paper that the Presiding Officer has decided to keep in the sealed cover	Medium size	2 per PS
10.	Plain covers	Medium size	5 per PS
D.	**Cover (BLUE coloured) for following items:**	Big size	1 per PS
1.	Handbook for Presiding Officer		
2.	Self-inking Pads		
3.	Metal Seal of the Presiding Officer		
4.	Arrow Cross Mark Rubber Stamp		
5.	Distinguishing Rubber Stamp		
E.	**Empty Cover (WHITE coloured):**	Big size	1 per PS

(Whether 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).

Note: The packets containing (i) Ballot Paper Account (in Form-XXV), (ii) Paper Seal Account, (iii) Declarations by the Presiding Officer before the commencement of Poll-during the poll and after close of poll, (iv) Presiding Officer's Diary, and (v) Visit Sheet, should be put in separate covers.

Size of Covers

Big Cover : 16" X 12"
Medium Cover : 14" X 10"
Small Cover : 11" X 5"

LIST OF POLLING MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR COUNTING OF VOTES TO THE OFFICES OF SARPANCH AND WARD MEMBERS OF GRAM PANCHAYATS TO BE HELD BY THE RETURNING OFFICER (STAGE-II)

A.	**STATUTORY FORMS AND OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR COUNTING AND DECLARATION OF RESULTS:**	
1.	Appointment of Counting Agent (**Form-XIII**)	50 per GP
2.	Received Covers-B (**Form-XIX**) contains Postal Ballot Paper and Declaration of Elector (to be opened before counting of votes)	--
3.	Sealed Ballot Box(es) along with Ballot Paper Account (**Form-XXV**) and Paper Seal Account	--
4.	Final Result Sheet (**Form-XXVI**)	20 per GP
5.	Declaration of Result of Election (**Form-XXVII**)	20 per GP
6.	Return of Election (**Form-XXVIII**)	30 per GP
7.	Certificate of Election (**Form-XXIX**)	20 per GP
B.	**STATIONERY REQUIRED FOR COUNTING:**	
1.	A pen-knife or a razor blade	10 per GP
2.	Pencils	1 per GP
3.	Ballpoint Pen of Blue ink	1 per GP
4.	Two sheets of paper	25 per GP
5.	A dampener sponge or water in small cup	30 per GP
6.	Paper weights (small pieces of stone will also do)	1 or 2 per GP
7.	Rubber bands (Big size and Small size)	100+50 per GP
8.	Plastic trays	10 per GP
9.	Gum Bottle	1 per GP
10.	Covers required for packing of bundles of Counted Ballot Papers (Ward-wise and Candidate-wise)	70 per GP
11.	Trunk Box for storage purpose	1 per GP
12.	Sealing wax	50 per GP

PART-IV

LIST OF ELECTION MATERIAL REQUIRED FOR CONDUCT OF UPA-SARPANCH ELECTION TO BE HELD BY THE RETURNING OFFICER (STAGE-II)

1.	Notice in **Form-I** for conduct of election of Upa-Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat to be served to all elected Ward Members and Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat concerned.	15 per GP
2.	Register for recording Minutes of Meeting	1 per GP

ANNEXURE-5

FORM-I

[See Rule 6]

NOTICE FOR THE ELECTION OF MEMBER / SARPANCH

(i) Name of the Gram Panchayat
(ii) Name of the Mandal Parishad
(iii) Number of Members inclusive of Sarpanch
(iv) Number of the wards for which the Members are to be elected.
(v) Reservation particulars where the office of Sarpanch is reserved:
(vi) Reservation particulars of Ward Members

Category	Ward Nos.
ST(W)	
ST(G)	
SC (W)	
SC (G)	
BC (W)	
BC(G)	
Women	

(vii) Nomination papers shall be presented
  (a) On (dates)
  (b) Time (hours) from to
  (c) Place
  (d) To (Whom)
(viii) Scrutiny of nomination papers
  (a) Place
  (b) Date
  (c) Time
(ix) Withdrawal of candidature
  (a) Place
  (b) Last Date
  (c) Time
(x) Polling shall be held
  (a) Place
  (b) Date
  (c) Time
(xi) Counting of votes
  (a) Place
  (b) Date
  (c) Time
(xii) Declaration and publication of results
  (a) Place
  (b) Date
  (c) Time
(xiii) Meeting for the election of Upa-Sarpanch
  (a) Place
  (b) Date
  (c) Time

RETURNING OFFICER

ANNEXURE-6

FORM-III

[See Rule 8 (1)]

GRAM PANCHAYAT .....
(Scheduled Area / Non-Scheduled Area)

NOMINATION PAPER

Part-I

1.	Name of the Office	:	Member / Sarpanch
2.	Name or number of the ward	:	
3.	Whether the ward is reserved for	:	(a) SCs (b) STs (c) BCs (d) Women
4.	Full name of the candidate	:	
5.	Father's /Mother's/Husband's name	:	
6.	Serial Number of candidate in the electoral Roll	:	
7.	Age	:	
8.	Sex	:	
9.	Occupation and Address	:	
10.	Full name of the proposer	:	
11.	Serial Number of proposer in the electoral roll	:	
12.	Signature of the proposer	:	

Part-II

(CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION)

I, the candidate mentioned in Part-I assent to this nomination and hereby declare.

(a) that I have completed _____ years of age

(b) that the code of conduct prescribed by the State Election Commission has been read by me/ read over to me and I will abide by it.

(c) that my name and my father's /mother's /husband's name have been correctly spelt out above in Telugu language.

(d) that to the best of my knowledge and belief, I am qualified and not also disqualified for being chosen to fill the seat.

Signature of the candidate

Part-III

(Declaration in case of SC/ST/BC candidate)

I hereby declare that I am a member of the …… ……Caste / Tribe which is a Scheduled Caste / Scheduled Tribe / Backward Class in the State of Andhra Pradesh is relation to …… District or area in the State.

Signature of Candidate

The above declaration is solemnly affirmed before me (name of the officer in block letters) by ……who is personally known to me / who has been identified to my satisfaction by……of……

Signature of the Gazetted Officer or any other
officer of the Revenue Department
not below the rank of a MRO (Tahsildar).

(Seal of office)

Full designation
Date

Part-IV

(To be filled by the Returning Officer)

Serial No. of Nomination Paper ----------

This nomination paper was delivered to me at my office at ---------- (hour) on ---------- (date) by the candidate / proposer.

Signature of the Returning Officer or other authorised person

Part-V

(Decision of Returning Officer accepting or rejecting the nomination paper)

I have examined this nomination in accordance with rule 12 of APPR (Conduct of elections) Rules, 2006 and decide as follow:

Accepted / Rejected

Dat:

Returning Officer

---------- (Perforation) ----------

Part-VI

RECEIPT FOR NOMINATION PAPER AND NOTICE FOR SCRUTINY

(To be handed over to the person presenting the nomination paper)

Serial No. of Nomination Paper……

The Nomination paper of…….a candidate for election of Sarpanch / Member of ward no.---------- of---------- Gram Panchayat was delivered to me at ……(hour) on……(date) by the ……..candidate / proposer.

All nomination papers will be taken up for scrutiny at…….. (hour)…….. on…… (date) at…….(place).

Date: **Returning Officer**

ANNEXURE-7

A.P. STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

1st Floor, New HODs Building, M.G. Road, Vijayawada-520 010.

ORDER

No.62/SEC-B2/2026 Date: 18.03.2026

Sub: APSEC – Ordinary elections to Rural Local Bodies – Filling up the Nomination Forms through the "Candidates' Portal" in the Election Management System software – Reg.

***

The five year term of the Gram Panchayats is due to expire on 02.04.2026 and that of the Mandal Praja Parishads & Zilla Praja Parishads on 23.09.2026 and 24.09.2026 respectively.

Rule 8 of the A.P. Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006 stipulates that every Nomination paper shall be in Form-III for Gram Panchayat. This shall be presented by the candidate or by his proposer in person between the hours specified and signed by the candidate and by the proposer. The candidate shall sign the declaration on the nomination paper expressing his willingness to stand for the election.

Rule 9(3) of the said Rules stipulates that every candidate shall, along with the Nomination paper also file a declaration with regard to his criminal antecedents, assets and liabilities and educational qualifications as required by the State Election Commission and in the prescribed format attested by two witnesses.

The State Election Commission has developed the Software Modules and Mobile Applications for Election Management System. As part of these software modules, the "Candidates' Portal" has been developed. This can be accessed through the URL: "https://sec-ems.ap.gov.in/apsec/".

Through the above "Candidates' Portal" in the SEC-EMS, the State Election Commission has provided a facility for the candidates, who wish to contest for the Ward Member or Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat or for MPTC or ZPTC, to fill their Nomination paper online. After filling the Nomination paper online, the same has to be downloaded and candidate and proposer have to affix their signatures with pen at the required places. Then such online filled in and signed Nomination paper along with self-declaration and other required documents shall be presented to the Returning Officer either by the candidate or by his/her proposer, as the case may be, between the hours and dates specified for filing of Nomination papers in the Election Notification/Election Notice.

Sd/- Nilam Sawhney, IAS
State Election Commissioner

To
All the candidates.
All the Returning Officers (through DPOs / CEOs concerned).
All the District Panchayat Officers.
All the Chief Executive Officers of ZPPs.
All the Collectors & District Election Authorities.
Copy to:
The Recognised / Registered Political Parties.
The Commissioner, PR & RD and Election Authority.
The Special Chief Secretary to the Government, PR & RD Department.

ANNEXURE-8

ANDHRA PRADESH STATE ELECTION COMMISSION
1st Floor, New HODs Building, M.G. Road, Vijayawada-520010.

C I R C U L A R

No.82/SEC-B2/2026 **Date: 23.06.2026**

Sub: Ordinary elections to Gram Panchayats – Filing of Nominations – Preliminary examination of Nomination Papers – Checklist of documents prescribed to ensure proper filing of nominations – Reg.

***

Every candidate contesting for the office of Sarpanch or Ward Member in the Gram Panchayat elections shall file certain documents / declaration along with nomination papers. It is generally noticed during local body elections that considerable number of nominations are being rejected due to improper filing of nominations or failure on the part of candidates to file required documents causing unnecessary litigation by candidates intending to contest elections. In order to curtail scope for rejection of nominations on non-filing of documents, the State Election Commission decided to prescribe a format of checklist of the documents to be filed by a candidate in order to ensure transparency and accountability and to streamline the procedure of filing nominations and scrutiny of nomination papers.

The Returning Officer shall also make a quick verification whether the candidate and proposer have affixed their signatures at the places prescribed in the nomination paper and point out orally to the proposer or candidate submitting the nomination papers to rectify it and bring it back to him for filing.

The preliminary examination of each of the nomination filed is to be taken up by the Returning Officer then and there on the following aspects.

1) A candidate contesting for the office of Ward Member shall be a registered voter in any Ward of that Gram Panchayat. But, the proposer shall be a registered voter in the concerned Ward for which the candidate is contesting. (Example: 'X' is contestant and 'Y' proposer. Gram Panchayat has 10 Wards. 'Y' intended to propose 'X' to contest as Member of Ward No. 5. 'X' should be a voter in any of the 10 Wards of the Gram Panchayat. 'Y' shall be a voter in Ward No. 5).

2) A candidate contesting for the office of Sarpanch shall be enrolled as a voter in the electoral roll of that Gram Panchayat. The proposer shall also be registered as a voter in that Gram Panchayat.

3) Check whether the declaration is submitted by the candidate along with his nomination paper giving information on his criminal antecedents, assets and liabilities and educational qualifications. Also check whether the declaration is signed by him and attested by two witnesses.

4) Check whether all the columns of the above declaration are filled in by the candidate as incomplete declaration is liable to be rejected, leading to rejection of his nomination paper. In case of any of the columns is kept blank by the candidate, the Returning Officer shall make a note in the checklist and hand over to candidate under proper acknowledgement.

A format of checklist is enclosed to this circular. The Returning Officer or the Assistant Returning Officer concerned shall check the nomination paper and the documents

enclosed to it and fill the checklist. The RO / ARO should also make an endorsement about the defects, if any, found in the nomination paper and the documents submitted along with it. The checklist should be prepared in duplicate – original should be kept with the nomination paper and the duplicate to be handed over to the candidate or his proposer who delivers the nomination papers to the RO / ARO.

Sd/-Nilam Sawhney
State Election Commissioner

To
All Collectors & District Election Authorities.
All District Panchayat Officers.
All Returning Officers (through C & DEAs).

Copy to:
The Special Chief Secretary to Government, PR & RD Department.
The Commissioner, PR & RD and Election Authority.

ORIGINAL / DUPLICATE
(Original to be kept with nomination paper and
Duplicate to be handed over to the candidate)

ELECTIONS TO GRAM PANCHAYATS
CHECK LIST IN CONNECTION WITH FILING OF NOMINATION

Name of the Gram Panchayat :.....
Name of the Candidate :.....
Name of the office being contested : Sarpanch / Ward Member
Name or Number of the Ward :.....
Date and time of filing nomination paper :.....
Serial No. of nomination paper :.....

Sl. No.	Documents to be enclosed	Whether filed (write Yes or No) (if there is any defect / shortcoming, the same should be specified)
1	Whether the Serial No. of the Candidate mentioned in the Nomination Paper is tallying with the Serial No. in the Gram Panchayat Electoral Roll?	
2	Whether the name of the Candidate mentioned in the Nomination Paper is tallying with the name in the Gram Panchayat Electoral Roll?	
3	Whether the Serial No. of the Proposer mentioned in the Nomination Paper is tallying with the Serial No. in the Gram Panchayat Electoral Roll?	
4	Whether the name of the Proposer mentioned in the Nomination Paper is tallying with the name in the Gram Panchayat Electoral Roll?	
5.	Declaration regarding S.C. / S.T. / B.C. in Part-III of Form-III (Nomination Form) made before an Officer not below the rank of Tahsildar of the Revenue Department (or) copy of Caste Certificate issued by competent authority (with regard to SC/ST/BC candidates) is enclosed?	
6	Whether Security Deposit has been paid or not?	
7	Declaration on criminal antecedents, assets and liabilities and educational qualifications in the format prescribed by the State Election Commission signed by the candidate and attested by two witnesses. (a) Whether all the columns are filled up. (b) If not, which are blank columns (specify)	
8	Whether the Candidate signed the Declaration before the Returning Officer with regard to maintenance of election expenditure accounts in the format prescribed by the State Election Commission?	

The following documents, which have not been filed, should be filed as indicated below:

(a) _____ should be filed latest by_____
(b) _____ should be filed latest by_____

Received:

(Signature of Candidate/Proposer) **(Signature of RO / ARO)**

Date & time:_____
Place :_____

NOTE:

1. All Forms, Declarations and Certificates mentioned above shall be filed before 5:00 P.M. on the last date for filing of nominations.
2. Declaration regarding criminal antecedents, assets and liabilities, etc., duly filled in all columns shall be filed latest by 5:00 P.M. on the last date for filing of nominations. (Candidates are advised not to leave any column blank. If there is no information to be furnished against any item, appropriate remarks such as 'nil' or 'not applicable' as may be applicable shall be indicated in such column).
3. Security deposit should be made either before filing nomination paper or at the time of filing of nomination paper. Therefore, there is no question of issuing notice for making the security deposit.

ANNEXURE-9

ANDHRA PRADESH STATE ELECTION COMMISSION
1st Floor, New HODs Building, M.G. Road, Vijayawada-520010.

O R D E R

No. 104/SEC-B2/2026 **Date:26.03.2026**

Sub: Elections – Elections to Sarpanch and Ward Members of Gram Panchayats, Member MPTC and Member ZPTC – Maintenance and Scrutiny of Election Expenditure Accounts – Formats and instructions – Issued.

***

PROVISIONS OF LAW:

Sub-section (1) of Section 230-A of Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 stipulates that every contesting candidates at any election held under Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act shall, either by himself or by his election agent, keep a separate and correct account of all expenditure incurred in connection with election between the date on which the candidate concerned has been nominated and the date of declaration of results of the election both days inclusive.

Sub-section (2) of section 230-A stipulates that the account of election expenditure shall contain such particulars as may, by order, be specified by the State Election Commission.

Sub-section (3) of section 230-A empowers the State Election Commission to specify the ceiling limits on election expenditure to be incurred by the candidates for various seats in elections to Panchayat Raj Bodies. The maximum ceiling limits which can be incurred by the candidate contesting elections to ZPTC & MPTC and Gram Panchayats shall be as specified by the State Election Commission by notification.

Section 230-B of A.P.P.R. Act, 1994 stipulates that every contesting candidate at an election shall, within 45 days from the date of declaration of result of election, lodge with the District Election Authority an account of his election expenses, which shall be a true copy of the account kept by him or by his election agent under section 230-A. The final return under the sections shall be submitted by the contesting candidates within 45 days from the date of declaration of result to the District Election Authority through MPDOs.

Under Section 19-B of the A.P.P.R. Act, 1994, the State Election Commission is empowered to disqualify a candidate from contesting election for a period of 3 years for failure to lodge an account of election expenses within the time and in the manner required under the said Act and in case the candidate is elected, he is liable for cessation of office for such failure.

For the purpose of clarity, the explanations given under Section 230-A of A.P.P.R. Act, 1994 for the election expenses are reproduced below.

Explanation-I:- *' **Election expenses'** for purpose of this Act shall mean all expenses in connection with the election,-*

(a) incurred, or authorized by the contesting candidate, or by his election agent;

(b) incurred by any association, or body of persons, or by any individual (other than the candidate or his election agent) aimed at promoting or procuring the election of the candidate concerned; and

(c) incurred by any political party, by which the candidate is set up, so as to promote or procure his election:

Provided that any expenses incurred by any political party as part of its general propaganda, (which is distinguishable from its election campaign, for the promotion or procuring the election of a particular candidate), by words, either written or spoken, or by signs or visible representations, or by audio-visual devises, or through print or electronic media or otherwise shall not constitute 'election expenses' for purposes of this Act.

***Explanation-II**:- (1) For the removal of doubts, it is hereby declared that any expenses incurred in respect of any arrangements made, facilities provided or any other act or thing done by any person in the service of the Government and belonging to any of the classes mentioned in clause (7) of section 211 in the discharge or purported discharge of his official duty as mentioned in the proviso to that clause shall not be deemed to be expenses in connection with the election incurred or authorized by a candidate or by his election agent for the purposes of this sub-section.*

FORMATS FOR MAINTENANCE OF ACCOUNTS OF ELECTION EXPENSES BY CANDIDATES:

In exercise of the powers conferred under subsection (2) of section 230-A of the A.P.P.R. Act, 1994, in supersession of all earlier instructions issued in this subject, the State Election Commission, hereby, specifies the formats and guidelines for maintenance of accounts of election expenses by candidates in elections to Panchayat Raj Bodies.

A) FORMATS:

1) The accounts of election expenditure shall be maintained in a separate register consisting of the following particulars.

2) The **Cover Page** of the register shall be in **Proforma-I** depicting the details of election, name of the contesting candidate and total expenditure incurred etc. (Proforma-I is appended to this order).

3) The **Index Page** of the register shall be in **Proforma-II** showing the day-wise election expenditure abstract. (Proforma-II is appended to this order).

4) **Main Pages** of the register shall be in **Proforma-III** containing the day-to-day account of election expenditure of the contesting candidates. (Proforma-III is appended to this order).

5) An **Acknowledgment** shall be given as in **Proforma-IV** as a proof of submission of the accounts of election expenses by the candidate. A copy of the same shall be retained with the office of the Authorized Officer for record to eliminate scope for any complaints. (Proforma-IV is appended to this order).

B) GUIDELINES:

1) The 'day-to-day' true account of election expenditure incurred by contesting candidate or his election agent and also by his supporters, any political party, or body or association or other individuals supporting the candidature or for furthering

chances of the candidate in the election shall be recorded in the main pages as in Proforma-III.

2) The day to day expenditure account so maintained in Proforma-III shall be supported by proper vouchers, failing which it will not be treated as true account of election expenditure as required under the law, save in cases where it is not possible to obtain vouchers.

3) Each of the supporting vouchers, enclosed with the account of election expenditure, shall bear the signature in full of the contesting candidate or his election agent.

4) The candidate or his authorized agent shall prepare an index / contents of the expenditure periodically during the campaign period in the Proforma-II enclosed to this order and the same shall be duly signed by the candidate or his election agent certifying its correctness and shall be submitted to the designated authorities for inspection and scrutiny.

5) The original acknowledgment should be issued to the candidate on submission of the accounts. A copy of it shall be retained in the office of the receiving officer for the record purpose.

6) The State Election Commission directs that for concurrent monitoring, the "day-to-day basis" true account of expenditure in Proforma-III should be submitted to the Returning Officer or a person authorized by him, once in every three days from the date of publication of list of contesting candidates, by the candidate / election agent or a messenger authorised by the candidate. The Returning Officer shall see that these day-to-day accounts of expenditure submitted are published and to make them available to anybody who intends to verify them.

7) The final of return of election expenditure in the Proformae-I, II, III & IV attached to this order shall be submitted by the contesting candidates through the Mandal Parishad Development Officer within 45 days from the date of declaration of the results of the office for which they had contested.

REQUIREMENT UNDER SECTION 176 OF BHARATIYA NYAYA SANHITA, 2023:

The attention of all political parties and contesting candidates is, hereby, drawn to the provisions of Section 176 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, which reads as follows:

"**176. Illegal payments, in connection with an election:-** Whoever without the general or special authority in writing of a candidate incurs or authorises expenses on account of the holding of any public meeting, or upon any advertisement, circular or publication, or in any other way whatsoever for the purpose of promoting or procuring the election of such candidate, shall be punished with fine which may extend to five hundred rupees:

Provided that if any person having incurred any such expenses not exceeding the amount of ten rupees without authority, obtains within ten days from the date on which such expenses were incurred the approval in writing of the candidate, he shall be deemed to have incurred such expenses with the authority of the candidate".

Thus, from the above provision of law, it may be noted that the expenditure incurred by the supporters in connection with election of a candidate, without the knowledge or consent of the contesting candidate, is a criminal offence under the above law and persons, supporters, political

parties, body or associations are liable for prosecution. And if such expenditure has been incurred, with the knowledge or with the consent of the candidate, then the same should be included in the account of election expenses of the candidate.

DIRECTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED:

In order to put effective curbs on the incurring or authorising of expenditure, in violation of the statutory provisions of the above-referred Section 176 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and in the interests of free and fair electors, the State Election Commission, in exercise of its powers under Article 243K of the Constitution and Section 230-A of A.P.P.R. Act 1994, hereby, directs as follows:

(i) No political party or any other association, body or individual, shall put up any cut-outs, hoardings, wall paintings, flags, banners, buntings, advertisements in newspapers, electronic media etc., without the general or special authority (in writing) of the candidate whose election is sought to be promoted by such cut-outs, hoardings, etc., as is statutorily and mandatorily required under Section 176 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. Strict penal action against those offending the above provisions of law will be taken and prosecutions launched against them.

(ii) Since elections to Gram Panchayats are conducted on non-party basis, the contesting candidates or their supporters shall not put up any cut-outs, hoardings, wall paintings, banners etc., of the political parties in support of any candidate contesting in Gram Panchayat elections.

(iii) Subject to clause (iv) below, a political party or association or body may put up any cut-outs, hoarding, etc., referred in clause (i) above as part of its general propaganda, which is a distinguishable from its election campaign for the promotion the election of a particular candidate. For example, if the poster, banner etc., appeals to the voter to vote for a party in words or picture or photo of party office bearers, only then it is a case of general publicity. But if a poster, banner etc., also appeals to vote for a particular candidate in words or picture or photo, then the cost thereof should be counted towards the expenditure of that candidate.

(iv) No political party, contesting candidate, association, body or individual shall put up any cut-outs, hoarding etc., either under clause (i) or under clause (iii) above, unless prior written permission of the concerned Government authorities or local authorities like Zilla Parishad, Mandal Parishad and Gram Panchayat has been obtained under the relevant local laws before putting up such cut-outs, hoarding etc.

(v) Before granting any permission as envisaged in clause (iv) above, the concerned Government authorities or the local authorities mentioned above shall thoroughly examine the applications of the parties, association, bodies or individuals with a view to satisfying themselves that the putting up of such cut-outs, hoardings etc., on the proposed site does not compromise the safety and security of the general public and does not result in traffic and other hazards in any manner whatsoever. Such authorities shall also examine whether any authorisation from a particular candidate is required by the applicant in terms of clause (i) & (ii) above and, if so, whether such authorisation has been obtained by the applicant.

(vi) It shall be the responsibility of the Government authorities and local authorities mentioned above to ensure that no cut-outs, hoardings etc., are put up by any political party, association, body or individual on any highways, roadsides, traffic intersection and crossings, government buildings and property, like electricity and telephone poles, etc., without prior written permission of the concerned department or local body and

the written authorisation of the candidate, where required, as mentioned above. Any cut-out, hoardings, etc., which have been put up without the required permission and authorisation should be got removed/demolished forthwith at the cost of the party, association, body or individual responsible for the unauthorised putting up of the same.

(vii) Penal action shall also be initiated forthwith against such defaulting parties, associations, bodies or individuals by the aforementioned authorities under section 176 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and section 4 and 5 of "A.P. Prevention of Disfigurement of Open Places and Prohibition of Obscene and Objectionable posters and Advertisements Act, 1997 (Act 28 of 1997)" the provisions whereof have been violated by the putting up of such unauthorised cut-outs, hoardings etc.

(viii) If any such instances either come, or are brought, to the notice of the Election Expenditure Observer, District Election Authorities, Returning Officers or other authorities concerned with the conduct of elections, including the Police authorities, they shall take up forthwith the matter with the aforementioned authorities for prompt action as directed in clauses (vi) and (vii) above.

The Commission, hereby, warns all concerned that any violation of the above directions will be viewed by the Commission with the utmost gravity and most stringent action possible under the law will be taken against the parties, associations, bodies or individuals responsible for such violations.

If any Officer is found to have failed to take prompt and expeditious action as envisaged above, he will render himself liable to strict disciplinary action for failure to discharge the official duty.

SCRUTINY OF ACCOUNTS DURING ELECTION PERIOD (CONCURRENT MONITORING):

The State Election Commission directs that the day-to-day basis true account of expenditure in the Proforma-III should be submitted by the contesting candidate / election agent or a messenger authorised by the candidate to the Returning Officer or an officer authorised by him once in every three days from the date of publication of list of contesting candidates. The Returning Officer may determine and inform the place and time at which the candidates can submit the accounts of election expenses for inspection and scrutiny.

The Observers appointed by the State Election Commission under Section 232-A of A.P.P.R. Act, 1994 may also undertake inspection / scrutiny of accounts of election expenses of candidates.

With a view to minimize the possibility of contesting candidates, their supporters, political parties, bodies or associations incurring expenditure in excess of the ceilings prescribed by the State Election Commission, it is felt necessary that the daily returns and the periodical returns of expenditure should be made transparent by making them available to the public and the other contesting candidates, who, can help the Election Commission to effectively check the veracity of the returns with actual expenditure being incurred by the contesting candidates and their supporters. It is, therefore, decided that the designated officers should make photocopies of these returns available to other contesting candidates, any member of the public or Non-Governmental Organisation, on demand and on payment of xeroxing charges or a certified copy as per Section 75 of the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023 and to the media, free of cost, so as to enable them to assist the State Election Commission in effectively implementing the ceilings imposed on the expenditure to be incurred by the contesting candidates for various offices. The Commission is of the considered opinion that this exercise in bringing transparency in election expenditure will enhance the purity of elections and help in conduct of free and fair elections.

SUBMISSION OF FINAL ACCOUNT OF ELECTION EXPENSES:

The final of account of election expenses maintained by the candidate in the Proformae prescribed by the State Election Commission shall be submitted by the candidate to the District Election Authority through MPDO concerned within 45 days from the date of declaration of result of the office for which he/she had contested. The date of submitting the return / final account in the office of the MPDO shall be deemed to be the date of filing the return / final account under Section 230-B of A.P.P.R. Act, 1994. The MPDO shall forward all returns / final accounts received by him to the District Election Authority immediately on expiry of 45 days from the date of declaration of results. The District Election Authority shall make these returns public and further action shall be taken as per the procedure prescribed in Rule 101, 102 and 103 of A.P.P.R. (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006.

The District Election Authority shall also take follow up action in respect of candidates, who failed to lodge election expenditure accounts within the time and in the manner required by or under the APPR Act, 1994, as per the procedure envisaged in sub rules (2) and (7) of Rule 103 of A.P.P.R. (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006.

The return / final account of election expenses rendered by the candidate would be considered as having been filed in the manner required by or under A.P.P.R. Act, 1994 only when it fulfills the following conditions.

(i) The expenditure account should be complete and true. An expenditure report which does not contain all the expenditure incurred will be considered incomplete and untrue and would be acted upon as per the provisions of the Act and Rules.

(ii) An expenditure account that is in the format and proformae prescribed by the State Election Commission will only be treated as being in the manner required by or under the A.P.P.R. Act, 1994. Any deviation from the format and proformae will be treated as non-submission.

The Returning Officers are directed to furnish a copy of this order to the contesting candidates under acknowledgement for strict compliance.

Sd/- Nilam Sawhney
State Election Commissioner

To
All Collectors & District Election Authorities.
All Chief Executive Officers of Zilla Praja Parishads.
All District Panchayat Officers.
All Mandal Parishad Development Officers (Through C & DEAs).
All Returning Officers (Through C & DEAs).

Copy to:
The Special Chief Secretary to Government, PR & RD Department.
The Commissioner, PR & RD and Election Authority.

PROFORMA-I: COVER PAGE

ELECTIONS TO SARPANCH AND WARD MEMBERS OF GRAM PANCHAYATS / MEMBER MPTC / MEMBER ZPTC, 20___

REGISTER FOR MAINTAINANCE OF ACCOUNT OF ELECTION EXPENSES BY CONTESTING CANDIDATES

(a) Name of the Election (Ordinary election / Casual election) and Year of election :

(b) Name of the Contesting Candidate :

(c) Serial number in the List of Contesting Candidates :

(d) Office contested for * : Sarpanch / Ward Member of Ward No_____ of _____ Gram Panchayat.

Member, _____ MPTC of _____ Mandal Praja Parishad.

Member, _____ ZPTC of _____ Zilla Praja Parishad.

(e) Date of Nomination :

(f) Date of Result :

(g) Total amount of expenditure incurred : Rs.

* Strike out which is not applicable.

PROFORMA-II: INDEX / CONTENTS

S.No.	Date	No. of Expenditure items incurred on the day	Amount incurred (Rs.)	Inspection by RO/Observer etc., if any (Yes/No)	Pages in Proforma-III
1	2	3	4	5	6

PROFORMA – III: MAIN PAGES OF ACCOUNT OF ELECTION EXPENSES

Candidate: _____ Page number :_____

Sl. No.	Date	Item of expense and its details such as quantity, number etc.,	Amount incurred (Rs.)	No. of the voucher / bill	Expenditure authorised by*	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

* Candidate / Election Agent / Party / Others.

DECLARATION:

Certified that the particulars given above are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of the Contesting Candidate

(Original / Office Copy)

PROFORMA – IV: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

(Original to be issued to the Candidate and the Office copy to be retained)

The Account of Election Expenses of Sri/Smt/Kum…….. contested for election to the office of …….. (Ward Member / Sarpanch / Member MPTC / Member ZPTC) in …….. Gram Panchayat / Mandal Praja Parishad / Zilla Praja Parishad held in the …… (month/year) as filed by Sri/Smt./Kum…….. is received by me today, i.e., …… (dd/mm/yyyy).

Date:

Signature of the Authorised Officer / Employee
Office of the Mandal Parishad
…….. Mandal Praja Parishad
…… District

Office Seal

ANNEXURE-10

FORM-V

[See rule 11]

LIST OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED

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

Sl.No. of Nomination Paper	Name of Candidate	Father's or Husband's Name	Age of the candidate	Occupation & Address	Particulars of Caste or Tribes for candidates belonging to SC or ST or BC	Electoral Roll number of Candidate	Name of the Proposer	Electoral Roll No. of Proposer
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

The nomination papers will be taken up for scrutiny at ……A.M./ P.M. on …….. (date) at …….(place).

Place :

Date :

Signature of the Returning Officer or other authorised person

ANNEXURE-11

ANDHRA PRADESH STATE ELECTION COMMISSION
1st Floor, New HODs Building, M.G. Road, Vijayawada-520010.

O R D E R

No. 79/SEC-B2/2026 **Date: 26.03.2026**

Sub:- Ordinary elections to Gram Panchayats – Disclosure of information relating to Criminal Antecedents, Assets and Liabilities and Educational Qualifications along with Nomination Paper by the candidates contesting in Gram Panchayat elections – Format for filing self-declaration – Orders – Issued – Reg.

***

Sub-rule (3) of Rule 9 of Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006 stipulates that every candidate shall, along with the nomination paper, also file a declaration with regard to his criminal antecedents, assets and liabilities and education qualifications as required by the State Election Commission and in the prescribed format attested by two witnesses.

The State Election Commission decided to prescribe a separate format of declaration to be filed by candidates contesting in Gram Panchayat elections in pursuance of the said rule as these elections are held on non-party basis.

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred under Article 243K of the Constitution of India and in pursuance of sub-rule (3) of Rule 9 of Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006 and all other powers hereunto enabling it in this behalf and in supersession of all orders issued earlier on this subject, the State Election Commission, hereby, prescribes the format for disclosure of information by the candidates contesting in elections to Gram Panchayats as follows.

1. Every candidate contesting in elections to the office of Member or Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat shall, along with the nomination paper, also file a self-declaration in the format prescribed in Annexure to this order and attested by two witnesses. Full and complete information shall be furnished with regard to all the matters specified in the format.

2. Failure on the part of the candidate to file declaration or filing incomplete declaration makes the nomination of the candidate liable for rejection by the Returning Officer as per relevant rules. While filling the declaration, all columns should be filled up and no column should be left blank. If there is no information in respect of any column, either 'Nil' or 'Not applicable', as the case may be, shall be mentioned.

3. When the prescribed self-declaration has been filed in complete form, then the nomination should not be rejected by the Returning Officer on the sole ground that the information furnished in the declaration is false or defective.

4. The information so furnished by each candidate in the aforesaid declaration shall be disseminated by the concerned Returning Officer by displaying a copy of the declaration on the notice board of his office and also by making copies thereof available to all other candidates on demand and to the representatives of the print and electronic media.

5. If any rival candidate furnishes information to the contrary, by means of a declaration attested by two witnesses, then such declaration of the rival candidate shall also be disseminated along with the declaration of the candidate concerned in the manner directed above.

The Returning Officers shall be directed to ensure that the copy of this order along with Annexure is delivered to every contesting candidate along with the nomination paper.

Sd/- Nilam Sawhney
State Election Commissioner

To
All Collectors & District Election Authorities.
All District Panchayat Officers.
All Returning Officers (through C & DEAs concerned).

Copy to:
The Special Chief Secretary to Government, PR & RD Department.
The Commissioner, PR & RD and Election Authority.

ANNEXURE

(to APSEC Order No..79SEC-B2/2026, Date: 26.03.2026)

(Self-declaration, attested by two witnesses, to be furnished to the Returning Officer along with Nomination Paper by the candidate contesting in elections to Gram Panchayats)

For election to the office of Sarpanch / Member of ..... Ward of ..... Gram Panchayat in ..... Mandal Praja Parishad.

I, ..., son / daughter / wife of ....., aged ..... years, resident of ..... (mentioned full postal address), a candidate at the above election, do hereby solemnly affirm and state on oath as under:-

(1) Details of PAN (Permanent Account Number) and status of filing of Income Tax Return:

S.No.	Names	Permanent Account Number (PAN)	Financial Year for which the last Income Tax Return has been filed	Total income shown in Income Tax Return (in Rupees)
1.	Self			
2.	Spouse			
3.	Dependent – 1			
4.	Dependent – 2			
5.	Dependent – 3			

(2) The following case(s) is/are pending against me in which cognizance has been taken by the court:-

S.No.	Details of cases where the court has taken cognizance, Sections of the Act and Description of the offence for which cognizance taken	Name of the Court, Case No. and Date of Order taking cognizance	Details of Appeal (s) / Application (s) for revision (if any) filed against the above order (s)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1.			
2.			
3.			

(3) Cases in which I have been convicted by a Court of Law:-

S.No.	Details of Cases, Sections of the Act and Description of the offence for which cognizance taken	Name of the Court (s), Case No. and Date (s) of Order (s)	Punishment (s) imposed
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1.			
2.			
3.			

(4) Details of Assets (movable and immovable) of self, spouse and all dependents (including the assets in foreign countries):-

A. <u>Details of Movable Assets:-</u>

Note:-

1. Assets in joint name indicating the extent of joint ownership will also have to be given.
2. In case of deposit / investment, the details including Serial No., Amount, Date of Deposit, Scheme, Name of Bank / Institution and Branch, etc., are to be given.
3. Value of Bonds/Shares/Debentures, etc., as per the current market value in Stock Exchange in respect of listed companies and as per books in case of non-listed companies, should be given.

4. 'Dependent' means, a person substantially dependent on the income of the candidate.
5. Details including amount is to be given separately in respect of each investment.

Sl. No.	Description	Self	Spouse	Dependent-1	Dependent-2	Dependent-3
(i)	Cash in hand					
(ii)	Details of Deposits in Bank accounts (FDRs, Term Deposits and all other types of Deposits including Savings Accounts), Deposits with Financial Institutions, Non-Banking Financial Companies and Cooperative societies and the amount in each such deposit					
(iii)	Details of investments in Bonds, Debentures / Shares and Units in companies / Mutual Funds and others and the amount.					
(iv)	Details of investment in NSS, Postal Savings, Insurance Policies and investment in any Financial Instrument in Post Office or Insurance Company and the amount.					
(v)	Personal loans / advances given to any person or entity including firm, company, trust, etc., and other receivables from debtors and the amount.					
(vi)	Motor Vehicles / Aircrafts / Yachts / Ships (details of make, registration number, etc., year of purchase and amount).					
(vii)	Jewelry, bullion and valuable things (details of weight and value).					
(viii)	Any other assets such as value of claims / interest.					
(ix)	**Value of Total Movable Assets: (i) to (viii) above.**					

B. <u>Details of Immovable Assets:-</u>

Note:-

1. Properties in joint ownership indicating the extent of joint ownership will also have to be indicated.
2. Each land or building or apartment should be mentioned separately in this format.

Sl. No.	Description	Self	Spouse	Dependent-1	Dependent-2	Dependent-3
(I)	**Agricultural Land:**					

	Location(s), Survey No.(s).					
	Area (Total measurement in areas)					
(a)	Inherited property, Extent					
(b)	Self-acquired Property					
(i)	Extent					
(ii)	Date(s) of Purchase					
(iii)	Cost of Land (in case of acquired land) at the time of purchase.					
(c)	Any investment on the land by way of development, construction, etc.					
(d)	Approximate Current Market Value (a)+(b)					
(II)	**Non-Agricultural Land:** Location(s), Survey No.(s).					
	Area (Total measurement in areas)					
(a)	Inherited property, Extent					
(b)	Self-acquired Property					
(i)	Extent					
(ii)	Date(s) of Purchase					
(iii)	Cost of Land (in case of acquired land) at the time of purchase.					
(c)	Approximate Current Market Value (a)+(b)					
(III)	**Commercial Buildings:** (including apartments) Location(s) Survey No.(s).					
	Area (Total measurement in Sq. ft.)					
	Built up area (Total measurement in Sq. ft.)					
(a)	Inherited Property details					
(b)	Self-acquired Property					
(i)	Extent					
(ii)	Date(s) of Purchase					
(iii)	Cost of Property at the time of purchase.					
(c)	Approximate Current Market Value (a)+(b)					
(IV)	**Residential Buildings:** (including apartments) Location(s) Survey No.(s).					
	Area (Total measurement in Sq. ft.)					
	Built up area (Total measurement in Sq. ft.)					
(a)	Inherited Property details					
(b)	Self-acquired Property					
(i)	Extent					
(ii)	Date(s) of Purchase					
(iii)	Cost of Property at the time of purchase.					

(c)	Approximate Current Market Value (a)+(b)					
(V)	**Others:** (such as interest in property)					
(VI)	**Total of Current Market Value of (I) to (V) above**					

(5) I give herein below the details of liabilities / dues to public financial institutions and government:-

(Note: Give separate details of name and Bank, Institution, Entity or individual and amount for each item).

Sl. No.	Description	Self	Spouse	Dependent-1	Dependent-2	Dependent -3
(I)	**Loan or dues to Bank / Financial Institution (s)** Name of Bank or Financial Institution(s), Amount outstanding and Nature of Loan					
	Loan or dues to any individuals / entity other than mentioned in (i) above.					
(a)	Name(s)					
(b)	Amount outstanding					
(c)	Nature of Loan					
	Any other liability					
	Grand Total of Liabilities					
(II)	**Government Dues:**					
	Dues to departments dealing with government accommodation					
	Dues to departments dealing with supply of water					
	Dues to departments dealing with supply of electricity					
	Dues to departments dealing with supply of telephones / mobiles					
	Dues to departments dealing with government transport (including aircrafts and helicopters)					
	Income Tax Dues					
	Service Tax Dues					
	Municipal / Property Tax Dues					
	Sales Tax Dues					
	Any other dues					
	Grand Total of all Government dues					

(6) Details of Profession or Occupation:-

(a) Self .....
(b) Spouse .....

(7) My educational qualifications are as under:-

(Give details of highest School / University education with full form of the certificate / diploma / degree course. Name of the School / College / University and the year in which the course was completed)

S.No.	Certificate / Diploma / Degree course passed	School / College / University studied	Year in which the course completed	Remarks
1.				
2.				
3.				

DECLARATION

I do, hereby, declare that the contents of this self-declaration are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, no part of it is false and nothing material has been concealed therefrom.

This declaration is made on the day of ..... (date to be mentioned).

DECLARANT

Signature of the Witnesses (with Names and Addresses):

1)

2)

Note:

1. Self-declaration with two witnesses should be filed along with nomination paper. If any candidate fails to file self-declaration along with nomination, he / she should file it latest by 5.00 PM on the last date of making nomination.
2. All the columns should be filled up and no column should be left blank. If there is no information to furnish in respect of any item, either 'Nil' or 'Not Applicable', as the case may be, should be mentioned.
3. The self-declaration should be either typed or written legibly and neatly.
4. For the measurements in various items in the part relating to assets, the locally used and accepted units of measurements should alone be given.

ANNEXURE-12

DECLARATION TO BE FILED BY THE CANDIDATE FILING NOMINATION ON ACCOUNTS OF ELECTION EXPENDITURE

I……, S/o……., Resident of……. having filed the nomination for the office of Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. …… Gram Panchayat of …….. Mandal Praja Parishad, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with a copy of the State Election Commission's Order No. ____/SEC-B2/2026, dated ___.___.2026 relating to maintenance of accounts of election expenditure by the contesting candidates and also the Notification prescribing maximum limit on expenditure which can be incurred by the contesting candidates for the said offices.

I hereby declare and undertake to keep my election expenditure within the limit prescribed and also to maintain true and day to day accounts of the expenditure in the manner prescribed.

I, further, declare that I am fully conversant with the legal provisions contained in A.P. Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 and rules issued thereunder dealing with election expenses and I hereby undertake to act in accordance with these provisions of Law and the rules made thereunder and in the true spirit of democracy while contesting the election for the above mentioned office.

Signature of the Contesting Candidate

The above declaration is signed before me.

Returning Officer

ANNEXURE-13

EXTRACTS OF STATUTORY PROVISIONS RELATING TO QUALIFIATIONS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS

Extracts of Sections 17, 18, 19, 19A, 19B, 20 of the Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 and extract of Section 8 of the Representation of People Act, 1951.

17. Qualification of candidates:- No person shall be qualified for election as a member of a Gram Panchayat unless his name appears on its electoral roll and he is not less than twenty-one years of age.

18. Disqualification of certain office holders etc:- (1) No village servant and no officer or servant of the Government of India or any State Government or of a local authority or an employee of any institution receiving aid from the funds of the Government and no office-bearer of any body constituted under a law made by the Legislature of the State or of Parliament shall be qualified for being chosen as or for being a member of a Gram Panchayat.

Explanation: For the purpose of this section the expression "Village Servant" means in relation to, -

(i) the Andhra Area, any person who holds any of the village offices of nearaganti, neeradi, vetti, kawalkar toti, talayar, tandalagar, sathsindhi or any such village office by whatever designation it may be locally known;

(ii) the Telangana Area, any person who holds any of the village offices of neeradi, kawalkar, sathsindhi or any such village office by whatever designation it may be locally known.

(2) A person who having held an office under the Government of India or under the Government of any State or under any local authority has been dismissed for corruption or for disloyalty to the State or to the local authority shall be disqualified for a period of five years from the date of such dismissal.

(3) For the purposes of sub-section (2), a certificate issued by the State Election Commissioner to the effect that a person having held office under the Government of India or under the Government of State or under any local authority has or has not been dismissed for corruption or for disloyalty to the State or to the local authority shall be conclusive proof of that fact:

Provided that no certificate to the effect that a person has been dismissed for corruption or for disloyalty to the State or to the local authority shall be issued unless an opportunity of being heard has been given to the said person.

(4) [Omitted by Act 37 of 2001].

(5) Apart from the disqualifications specified in sub-sections (1) and (2) of this section and Sections 19 and 20, a person shall be disqualified for being chosen as and for being, a member of a Gram Panchayat, if he is otherwise disqualified by or under any law for the time being in force for the purposes of elections to the Legislature of the State:

Provided that no person shall be disqualified on the ground that he is less than twenty-five years of age, if he has attained the age of twenty-one years;

Provided further that where a person is convicted for an offence specified under sub-section (1) or sub-section (2) of section 8 of the Representation of Peoples Act, 1951 (43 of 1951), or under Section 19 of this Act, while he is a member or office bearer of a Gram Panchayat, Mandal Praja Parishad or Zilla Praja Parishad, the disqualification arising out of such conviction shall not take effect until the expiry of the time for filing an appeal against such conviction and where an appeal is filed until the disposal of the appeal;

Provided also that a person convicted for an offence under sub-section (1) of Section 8 of the Representation of People Act, 1951 (43 of 1951), shall be disqualified for being chosen as or for continuing as a member of a Gram Panchayat, Mandal Praja Parishad or a Zilla Praja Parishad for a period of six years from the date of conviction and a person convicted under sub-section (2) thereof shall be disqualified for a period of six years from the date of conviction and for a further period of five years from the date of release.

19. Disqualification of Candidates:- (1) A person who has been convicted by a Criminal Court, –

(a) for an offence under the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 (22 of 1955); or
(b) for an offence involving moral delinquency; shall be disqualified for election as a Member for a period of five years from the date of conviction or where he is sentenced to imprisonment while undergoing sentence and after a period of five years from the date of expiration thereof.

(2) A person shall be disqualified for being chosen as a member if on the date fixed for scrutiny of nominations for election, or on the date of nomination under sub-section (2) of section 16 he is –

(a) of unsound mind and stands so declared by a competent court;
(b) a deaf-mute;
(c) an applicant to be adjudicated an insolvent or an undischarged insolvent;
(d) interested in a subsisting contract made with, or any work being done for, the Gram Panchayat, Mandal Praja Parishad, Zilla Praja Parishad or any State or Central Government;

Provided that a person shall not be deemed to have any interest in such contract or work by reason only of his having a share or interest in –

(i) a company as a mere shareholder but not as a director;
(ii) any lease, sale or purchase of immovable property or any agreement for the same; or
(iii) any agreement for the loan of money or any security for the payment of money only; or
(iv) any newspaper in which any advertisement relating to the affairs of the Gram Panchayat is inserted.

Explanation:- For the removal of doubts, it is hereby declared that where a contract is fully performed it shall not be deemed to be subsisting merely on the ground that the Gram Panchayat, Mandal Praja Parishad, Zilla Praja Parishad, the State or Central Government has not performed its part of the contractual obligations;

(dd) already a member of a Nagar Panchayat or a Municipality constituted under the Andhra Paradesh Municipalities Act, 1965 or a member of a Municipal Corporation constituted under any law relating to Municipal Corporations for the time being in force in the State of Andhra Pradesh;
(e) employed as paid legal practitioner on behalf of the Gram Panchayat or as legal practitioner against the Gram Panchayat;
(f) employed as a manager or secretary of any Company or Corporation (Other than a Co-operative Society) in which not less than twenty-five per cent of the paid up share capital is held by the State Government;
(g) an honorary Magistrate under the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 [Corresponding provision in BNSS, 2023 shall apply] with jurisdiction over any part of the village;
(h) already a member of the Gram Panchayat whose term of office will not expire before his fresh election can take effect or has already been elected as a member of the Gram Panchayat whose term of office has not yet commenced;
(i) in arrears of any dues including the sums surcharged otherwise than in a fiduciary capacity, to the Gram Panchayat upto and inclusive of the previous year, in respect of which a bill or notice has been duly served upon him and the time, if any, specified therein for payment has expired:

Provided that where any person has paid such dues into the Government treasury or into a bank approved by the Government to the credit of the Gram Panchayat Fund and obtained a

challan or receipt therefore in token of such payment, he shall not be disqualified to become a member of the Gram Panchayat on and from the date of such payment.

(3) Omitted. *[Act No.1 of 2025, A.P.P.R. (Amendment) Act, 2024, dt.11.02.2025].*

19A. Disqualification on ground of corrupt practice or election offences:- Any person who is convicted of any offence punishable under Chapter IX of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (Chapter IX A IPC 1860), and any person against whom a finding of having indulged in any corrupt practice is recorded in the verdict in an election petition filed in accordance with section 233, or any person convicted of an offence punishable under Chapter II of Part V of this Act, shall be disqualified for contesting in any election held under this Act, for a period of six years from the date of such conviction or verdict, as the case may be.

Provided that such convicted person shall cease to hold office in case he is already elected. *[Ins. by Act No. 1 of 2021 – A.P.P.R. (Amendment) Act, 2020, dt.20.02.2020**].***

19B. Disqualification for failure to lodge account of election expenses:- If the State Election Commission is satisfied that a person,

(a) has failed to lodge an account of election expenses within the time, in the manner required by or under this Act; and

(b) has no good reason or justification for the failure, the State Election Commission shall, after following the procedure prescribed, by order published in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette, declare him;

(i) to be ineligible for a period of three years from the date of the said order to contest any election held for any office under this Act" and

(ii) to have ceased to hold office; in case he is elected.

20. Disqualification of members:- Subject to the provisions of Section 22, a member shall cease to hold office as such if he –

(a) is or becomes subject to any of the disqualifications specified in Section 19;

(aa) is elected as a member to a ward/office reserved for Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes or Backward Classes on the basis of a community certificate and subsequently the said community certificate is cancelled under Section 5 of the Andhra Pradesh (Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes) Regulation of issue of Community Certificates Act, 1993.

(b) absents himself from the meetings of the Gram Panchayat for a period of ninety days, reckoned from the date of the commencement of his term of office, or of the last meeting which he attended, or of his restoration to office as member under sub-section (1) of Section 21, as the case may be, or if within the said period, less than three ordinary meetings have been held, absents himself from three consecutive ordinary meetings held after the said date:

Provided that in the case of a woman member, a period of not more than four months at a time shall be excluded in reckoning the period of absence aforesaid, if for reasons of physical disability due to advanced stage of pregnancy and delivery, such member absents herself from meetings after giving a written intimation to the Executive Authority of the date from which she would be absent:

Provided further that no meeting from which a member absented himself shall be counted against him under this clause if –

(i) due notice of that meeting was not given to him in the prescribed manner; or

(ii) the meeting was held on a requisition of members.

Explanation: For the purpose of this clause,

(i) "Ordinary meeting" shall mean a meeting held after giving a notice of at least three days before the day of the meeting;

(ii) Where a meeting other than an ordinary meeting intervenes between one ordinary meeting and another ordinary meeting, those two ordinary meetings shall be regarded as being consecutive to each other.

***

EXTRACT OF SECTION 8 OF REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT, 1951 DISQUALIFICATION ON CONVICTION FOR CERTAIN OFFENCES:-

Section 8. Disqualification on conviction for certain offences:- (1) A person convicted of an offence punishable under –

(a) section 153A (offence of promoting enmity between different groups on ground of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony) or section 171E (offence of bribery) or section 171F (offence of undue influence or personation at an election) or sub-section (1) or sub-section (2) of section 376 or section 376A or section 376B or section 376C or section 376D (offences relating to rape) or section 498A (offence of cruelty towards a woman by husband or relative of a husband) or sub-section (2) or sub-section (3) of section 505 (offence of making statement creating or promoting enmity, hatred or ill-will between classes or offence relating to such statement in any place of worship or in any assembly engaged in the performance of religious worship or religious ceremonies) of the Indian Penal Code (45 of 1860) [Note: The corresponding Sections in the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 shall be applied for the provisions of Indian Penal Code, 1860 referred in this sub-section]; or

(b) the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 (22 of 1955) which provides for punishment for the preaching and practice of "untouchability", and for the enforcement of any disability arising therefrom; or

(c) section 11 (offence of importing or exporting prohibited goods) of the Customs Act, 1962 (52 of 1962); or

(d) sections 10 to 12 (offence of being a member of an association declared unlawful, offence relating to dealing with funds of an unlawful association or offence relating to contravention of an order made in respect of a notified place) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (37 of 1967); or

(e) the Foreign Exchange (Regulation) Act, 1973 (46 of 1973); or

(f) the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (61 of 1985); or

(g) section 3 (offence of committing terrorist acts) or section 4 (offence of committing disruptive activities) of the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, 1987 (28 of 1987); or

(h) section 7 (offence of contravention of the provisions of sections 3 to 6) of the Religious Institutions (Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1988 (41 of 1988); or

(i) section 125 (offence of promoting enmity between classes in connection with the election) or section 135 (offence of removal of ballot papers from polling stations) or section 135A (offence of booth capturing) of clause (a) of sub-section (2) of section 136 (offence of fraudulently defacing or fraudulently destroying any nomination paper) of this Act; or

(j) section 6 (offence of conversion of a place of worship) of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991; or

(k) section 2 (offence of insulting the Indian National Flag or the Constitution of India) or section 3 (offence of preventing singing of National Anthem) of the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971 (69 of 1971); or

(l) the Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987 (3 of 1988); or

(m) the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (49 of 1988); or

(n) the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002 (15 of 2002), shall be disqualified, where the convicted person is sentenced to—

(i) only fine, for a period of six years from the date of such conviction;

(ii) imprisonment, from the date of such conviction and shall continue to be disqualified for a further period of six years since his release.

(2) A person convicted for the contravention of —

(a) any law providing for the prevention of hoarding or profiteering; or

(b) any law relating to the adulteration of food or drugs; or

(c) any provisions of the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 (28 of 1961); and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than six months, shall be disqualified from the date of such conviction and shall continue to be disqualified for a further period of six years since his release.

(3) A person convicted of any offence and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than two years [other than any offence referred to in sub-section (1) or sub-section (2)] shall be disqualified from the date of such conviction and shall continue to be disqualified for a further period of six years since his release.

Explanation: In this section,–

(a) "law providing for the prevention of hoarding or profiteering" means any law, or any order, rule or notification having the force of law, providing for—

(i) the regulation of production or manufacture of any essential commodity;

(ii) the control of price at which any essential commodity may be bought or sold;

(iii) the regulation of acquisition, possession, storage, transport, distribution, disposal, use or consumption of any essential commodity;

(iv) the prohibition of the withholding from sale of any essential commodity ordinarily kept for sale;

(b) "drug" has the meaning assigned to it in the Durgs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 (23 of 1940);

(c) "essential commodity" has the meaning assigned to it in the Essential Commodity Act, 1955 (10 of 1955);

(d) "food" has the meaning assigned to it in the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 (37 of 1954).

ANNEXURE-14

FORM-VI

[See Rule 12(4)]

LIST OF VALIDLY NOMINATED CANDIDATES

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

S.No.	Name of the Candidate	Father's / mother's / husband's name	Address of Candidate
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Place :

Date : **Returning Officer**

ANNEXURE-15

FORM-VII

[See Rules 14 (1)]

NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL OF CANDIDATURE

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

To
The Returning Officer,

……

I, …… a candidate validly nominated at the above election do hereby give notice that I withdraw my candidature.

Place :
Date : **Signature of Candidate**

This notice was delivered to me at my office at …….. (hour) on …… (date) by …… (name) *the candidate / candidate's proposer / candidate's election agent who has been authorised in writing by the candidate to deliver it.

Date : **Returning Officer**

RECEIPT FOR NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL

(To be handed over to the person delivering the notice)

The notice of withdrawal of candidature by ---------- a validly nominated candidate at the election to the office of the Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. ……. of ……. Gram Panchayat of ……. Mandal Parishad was delivered to me by the *candidate/ candidates proposer / candidate's election agent who has been authorised in writing by the candidate to deliver it at my office at ---------- (hour) on ---------- (date).

Returning Officer

* Strike off the inappropriate alternatives.

ANNEXURE-16

FORM-VIII

[See Rules 14 (2)]

PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL OF CANDIDATURE

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

Notice is hereby given that the following validly nominated candidate / candidates at the above election withdraws / withdraw his candidature / their candidature today.

S.No.	Name of Validly Nominated Candidate	Address of Validly Nominated Candidate	Remarks
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
Etc.			

Date: **Returning Officer**.

ANNEXURE-17

FORM-IX

[See Rule 15]

LIST OF CONTESTING CANDIDATES

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

S.No.	Name of Candidate	Address of the Candidate	Symbol Allotted
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
Etc.			

Place :
Date :

Returning Officer

ANNEXURE-18

Model Ballot Paper and also Model Postal Ballot Paper for Sarpanch, Gram Panchayat Election conducted with Ballot Boxes
(Postal Ballot Paper to be issued along with Form-XX)

గ్రా.పం.సా.ఎ. 2026

గ్రా.పం. పేరు:..... వార్డు నెం. ..... పోలింగ్ స్టేషన్ నెం.....

ఓటరు లిస్టు నందు ఓటరు క్రమ సంఖ్య: .....

No. F 123456 ఓటరు సంతకం / వేలిముద్ర

1



F 123456 గ్రా.పం.సా.ఎ. 2026

2



3



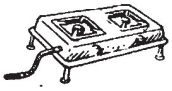
4



5



6



7



8



(పైనది ఏది కాదు)

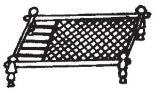
Model Ballot Paper and also Model Postal Ballot Paper for Ward Member, Gram Panchayat Election conducted with Ballot Boxes
(Postal Ballot Paper to be issued along with Form-XX)

గ్రా.పం.సా.ఎ. 2026

గ్రా.పం. పేరు:..... వార్డు నెం. ..... పోలింగ్ స్టేషన్ నెం.....

ఓటరు లిస్టు నందు ఓటరు క్రమ సంఖ్య: .....

No. F 123456 ఓటరు సంతకం / వేలిముద్ర

1 

F 123456 గ్రా.పం.సా.ఎ. 2026

2 

3 

4 

5 

6 

7 

8 

(పైనది ఏది కాదు)

Annexure - IV (This is not to correct measurements)

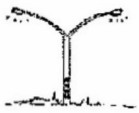
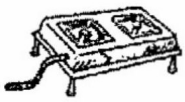
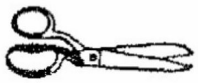
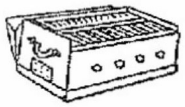
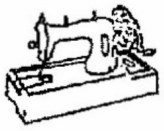
గ్రా.పం.సా.ఎ.2026

గ్రా.పం.పేరు ..... వార్డ్ నెం ..... పోలింగ్ స్టేషను నెం .....

ఓటరు లిస్టు నందు ఓటరు క్రమ సంఖ్య.....

No. J 037254

ఓటరు సంతకం/వేలిముద్ర

1		7	
2		8	
3		9	
4		10	
5		11	
6		12	 (పైనది ఏదీ కాదు)

No. J 037254 గ్రా.పం.సా.ఎ.2026

Annexure - V (This is not to correct measurements)

గ్రా.పం.సా.ఎ. 2026

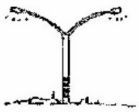
గ్రా.పం.పేరు ..... వార్డ్ నెం ..... పోలింగ్ స్టేషను నెం .....

ఓటరు లిస్టు నందు ఓటరు క్రమ సంఖ్య.....

No. I 0037254

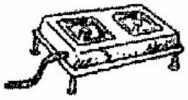
ఓటరు సంతకం/వేలిముద్ర

1 

7 

No. I 0037254 గ్రా.పం.సా.ఎ.2026

2 

8 

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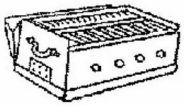
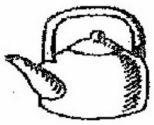
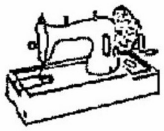
9 

4 

10 

5 

11 

(పైనది ఏదీ కాదు)

6 

ANNEXURE-19

FORM-X

[See Rule 16]

DECLARATION OF THE RESULT OF UNCONTESTED ELECTION

In accordance with Rule 16 of the Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Elections) Rules 2006, I declare that the following candidate has been duly elected for the office of Sarpanch / Member of Ward No……. of ……. Gram Panchayat of ……. Mandal Praja Parishad.

Name:

Address:

Place:

Date: **Signature of the Returning Officer**

ANNEXURE-20

FORM-XI

[See Rule 18]

APPOINTMENT OF ELECTION AGENT

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

To

The Returning Officer,

……

I, …… of …….. a candidate at the above election do hereby appoint …….. of …… as my election agent from this day at the above election.

Place :

Date : **Signature of Candidate.**

I accept the above appointment.

Place :

Date : **Signature of Election Agent.**

Approved

Signature and seal of the Returning Officer

ANNEXURE-21

FORM-XII

[See Rule 19]

APPOINTMENT OF POLLING AGENT

Election to Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. ……. of …….. Gram Panchayat of ……. Mandal 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 …….. 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**

ANNEXURE-22

FORM-XIII

[See Rule 20]

APPOINTMENT OF COUNTING AGENT

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

To
The Returning Officer,

……

I, ……. a candidate / the election agent of ……. who is a candidate at the above election, do hereby appoint the following persons as my counting agents to attend the counting of votes at …….

Name of the Counting Agent	Address of the Counting Agent.
1.	
2.	
3.	

Signature of Candidate / Election Agent

I/We agree to act as such counting agents.

1.
2.
3.

Place :
Date : Signature of the Counting Agents

Declaration of counting agents

We hereby declare that at the above election we will not do anything for bidden by section 217 of the Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 which we have read/ has been read over to us.

1
2
3

Signature of counting agent

Signed before me

Date: **Returning Officer**

ANNEXURE-23 A

FORM-XIV

[See Rule 25 (1)]

APPLICATION FOR POSTAL BALLOT PAPER

To
The Returning Officer,

…….. Gram Panchayat / Mandal Parishad / Zilla 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 of …….. Mandal Parishad.

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

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

…….

…….

…….

Yours faithfully

Place :

Date :

ANNEXURE-23 B

FORM - XV

[See Rule 25 (2)]

APPLICATION FOR ELECTION DUTY CERTIFICATE

To
The Returning Officer,

…… Gram Panchayat.

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 of ……..…… Mandal 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 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.

…….

…….

…….

Yours faithfully,

Place :

Date :

ANNEXURE-23 C

FORM-XVI

[See Rule 25 (2)(a)]

ELECTION DUTY CERTIFICATE

Certified that …….. is an elector in the …….. Gram Panchayat …….. Mandal 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 of Mandal Parishad as the case may be) he may be on duty on the date of poll.

Place :

Date :

Signature ----------
Returning Officer
(Seal)

ANNEXURE-24 D

FORM-XVII

[See rules 27 (1) (a), 28 (2), 29 (2) & 57]

DECLARATION BY ELECTOR

Election to the Sarpanch/ Member of Ward no. …….. of ……..Gram Panchayat of ……..…….. Mandal Parishad

(This side is to be used only when the elector signs the declaration himself)

I hereby declare that I am the elector to whom the postal ballot paper bearing serial number ……. has been issued at the above election.

Date…….

Signature of Elector.

Address……..

Attestation of Signature

The above has been signed in my presence by …… (elector) who is personally known to me/has been identified to my satisfaction by ……..…… (identifier) who is personally known to me.

Signature of Attesting Officer,

Signature of identifier, if any ……..

Designation ……

Address ……

Address ……

Date ……

(This side is to be used when the elector cannot sign himself)

I hereby declare that I am the elector to whom the postal ballot paper bearing serial number …….. has been issued at the above election.

Signature of Attesting Officer on behalf of elector.

Date …….

Address of Elector ……

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that –

1. the above named elector in Ward No..... of ..... Gram Panchayat of ..... Mandal Praja Parishad is personally known to me/has been identified to my satisfaction by ..... (identifier) who is personally known to me;
2. I am satisfied that the elector in Ward No. ..... of ..... Gram Panchayat of ..... Mandal Praja Parishad is illiterate/ suffers from ..... (infirmity) and is unable to record his vote himself or sign his declaration:
3. I was requested by him to mark the ballot paper and to sign the above declaration on his behalf; and
4. the ballot paper was marked and the declaration signed by me on his behalf in his presence and in accordance with his wishes.

Signature of Attesting Officer .....

Signature of identifier, if any..... Designation.....

Address ..... Address .....

Date .....

ANNEXURE-23 E

FORM-XVIII

[See Rules 27 (1) (b), 28 (1) & 57]

POSTAL BALLOT PAPER COVER 'A'

COVER 'A'	**NOT TO BE OPENED BEFORE COUNTING**

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

POSTAL BALLOT PAPER

Serial number of the ballot paper:

ANNEXURE-23 F

FORM-XIX

[See rules 27(1)(c) & 57]

POSTAL BALLOT PAPER COVER 'B'

COVER **[Service unpaid]**

'B'

ELECTION – IMMEDIATE

POSTAL BALLOT PAPER

For election to the Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. ..... of .....Gram Panchayat of ..... Mandal Parishad.

(NOT TO BE OPENED BEFORE COUNTING)

To

The Returning Officer

.....

Signature of sender .....

ANNEXURE-23 G

FORM XX

[See rules 27 (1) (d), 28(1) & 31(1)]

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GUIDANCE OF ELECTORS

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

Part-I

The postal ballot paper for election to Sarpanch / Ward Member of Gram Panchayat contain only symbols. For the information of elector, the names of the contesting candidates and the symbols allotted to them in the election to the said office are listed below.

Sl.No.	Name of the candidate	Symbol allotted

Record your vote in the postal ballot paper by placing clearly a mark on the symbol allotted to candidate you wish to vote

The mark should be so placed as to indicate clearly and beyond doubt to which candidate you are giving your vote. If the mark is so placed as to make it doubtful to which candidate you have given your vote, your vote will be invalid.

The number of members to be elected is one. Please remember that you have only one vote. Accordingly you should not vote for more than one candidate. If you do so, your ballot paper will be rejected.

Do, not put your signature or write any word or mark any mark, sign or writing whatsoever on the ballot paper other than the mark required to record your vote.

After you have recorded your vote on the ballot paper, place the ballot paper in the smaller cover marked 'A' sent herewith. Close the cover and secure it by seal or otherwise..

(1) You may then sign the declaration in From-XVII also sent herewith in the presence of a stipendiary magistrate and obtain the attestation of your signature by such stipendiary magistrate.

(2) If you are a member of the armed forces of the Union or of an armed police force of a State but is serving outside that State, the attestation may be obtained by such officer as may be appointed in this behalf by the Commanding Officer of the Unit, ship or establishment in which you or your husband, as the case may be, are employed.

(3) If you are employed under the Government of India in a post outside India the attestation may be obtained by such officer as may be appointed in this behalf by the diplomatic or consular representative of India in the country in which you are resident:

(4) If you hold an office like the office of the (I) President, (ii) Vice-President (iii)Governors of State, (iv) Cabinet Ministers of the Union or of any State, (v) The Deputy Chairman and Members of the Planning Commission, (vi) The Ministers of State of the Union or of any State, (vii) Deputy Minister of the Union of any State, (viii) The Speaker of the House of the People or of any State Legislative Assembly, (ix) The Chairman of any State Legislative Council (x) Lieutenant Government of Union territories, (xi) The Deputy Speaker of the House of the People or of any State Legislative Assembly, (xii) The Deputy Chairman of the Council of States or of any State Legislative council, (xiii) Parliamentary Secretaries of the union or of any State, the attestation may be obtained by an officer not below the rank of a Deputy Secretary to the Government of the Union or the State, as the case may be.

(5) If you are on an election duty, attestation may be obtained by any gazetted officer or by the Presiding Officer of the polling station in which you are on election duty.

(6) If you are under preventive detention, the attestation may be obtained by the Superintendent of the jail or the Commandant of the detention camp in which you are under detention.

In all the above cases you may take the declaration to the authorised officer and sign it in his presence after he has satisfied himself about your identity. The officer will attest your signature and return the declaration to you. You must not show your ballot paper to the attesting officer nor tell him how you have voted.

If you are unable to mark the ballot paper and sign the declaration yourself in the manner indicated above by reason of illiteracy, blindness or other infirmity, you are entitled to have your vote marked and declaration signed on your behalf by any of the authorised officer mentioned above. Such an officer will, at your request mark the ballot paper in your presence and in accordance with your wishes. He will also complete the necessary certificate in this behalf.

Part-II

After your declaration has been signed and your signature has been attested, place the declaration in Form XVII as also the smaller cover marked 'A' containing the ballot paper in the larger cover marked 'B'. After closing the larger cover, send it to the Returning Officer by post or by messenger. You have to give full signature in the space provided on the cover marked 'B'.

No postage stamp need to affixed by you, if the cover is posted in India. If, however, you are an elector employed under the Government of India in a post outside India, you should return the cover to the Returning Officer concerned direct by air mail service after the requisite postage stamp is duly affixed thereon by the office in which you are serving except where it is sent by diplomatic bag.

You must ensure that the cover reaches the Returning Officer before …..…… on ……..……

Please note that:-

(i) if you fail to get your declaration attested or certified in the manner indicated above, your ballot paper will be rejected; and

(ii) if the cover reaches the Returning Officer after …….. on ……, your vote will not be counted.

ANNEXURE-23 H

A.P. STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

1st Floor, New HODs Building, M.G. Road, Vijayawada-520 010.

CIRCULAR

No.63/SEC-B2/2026 Date: 18.03.2026

Sub: APSEC – Ordinary Elections to Rural Local Bodies – Postal Ballots to the officers and staff drafted on election duty – Reg.

***

Sub-rule (1) of Rule 25 of A.P. Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Elections) Rules, 2006 issued under the A.P. Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 stipulates that a voter on election duty who wishes to vote by post at an election shall send an application in Form-XIV to the Returning Officer so as to reach him atleast seven days or such shorter period as the Returning Officer may allow before the date of poll and if the Returning Officer is satisfied that the applicant is such public servant and voter on election duty, he shall issue a postal ballot paper to him. The Returning Officer shall then mark 'P.B.' against his name in the marked copy of the electoral roll to indicate that a postal ballot paper has been issued to him.

In this regard, the State Election Commission has operationalised the SEC-Election Management System (SEC-EMS), wherein the "Postal Ballot" service has been made available. Hence, for the voters, who are on election duty for the purpose of Postal Ballot Paper have to now onwards apply online to the Returning Officer, using the "Postal Ballot" module in the website "https://sec-ems.ap.gov.in/apsec/". The employee needs to register with his/her mobile number, which will be the username. The default password is "Nomsec@2026", which needs to be changed in the first login. The work flow for using the EMS software for using the Postal Ballot module is appended at Annexure.

Upon receipt of the online application, the Returning Officer will check the details of the employee and he can either Accept or Reject the application. On acceptance, he has to issue the Postal Ballot Paper through physical mode, either through post or in person to the concerned. On acceptance of the Postal Ballot to a person, 'P.B.' will get marked against name of the person in the Marked Copy of the electoral roll to indicate that a postal ballot paper has been issued to him/her. A person who has been issued a Postal Ballot shall cast his/her vote through the Postal Ballot mode only and not in the Polling Station.

All officers/staff drafted on election duty are requested to go through the appended Annexure and apply only online for issuance of Postal Ballot Papers to them.

Sd/- Nilam Sawhney, IAS
State Election Commissioner

To
All the Returning Officers (through Collectors & DEAs).
All the Officers/Staff drafted on election duty (through ROs).
Copy to:
The MPDOs and Asst. District Election Authorities.
The District Panchayat Officers and Addl. District Election Authorities.
The Chief Executive Officers of ZPPs and Addl. District Election Authorities.
The Collectors and District Election Authorities.
The Commissioner, PR & RD and Election Authority.
The Special Chief Secretary to Government, PR & RD Department.

ANNEXURE

To apply for the Postal Ballot vote, the user needs to open the browser and enter the **URL:https://sec-ems.ap.gov.in/apsec/**

Click on **Postal Ballot** as shown in the below Fig.1

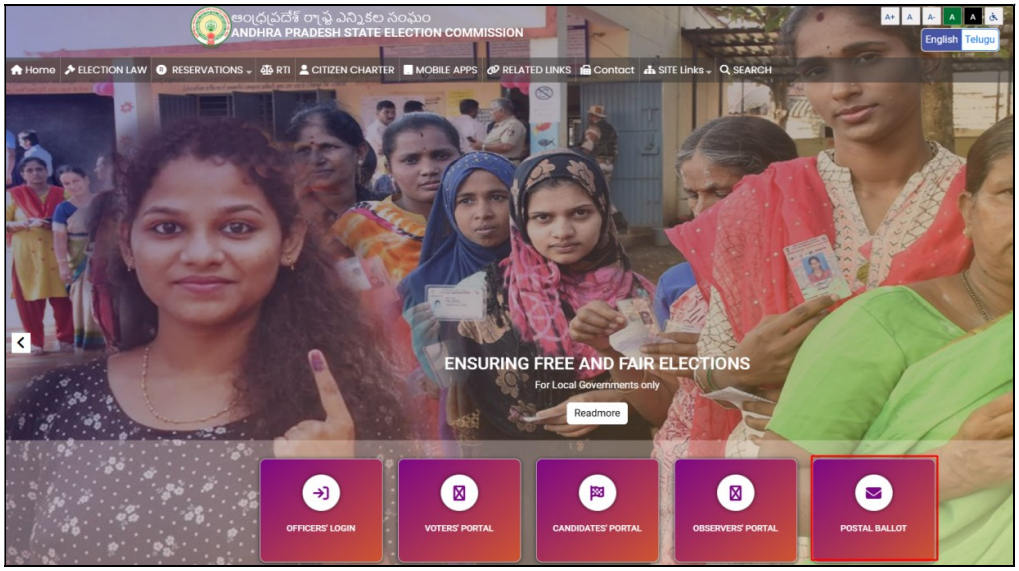


Fig.1

The first-time user has to register on the portal.

For New Registration click on **Sign Up** as shown in Fig.2

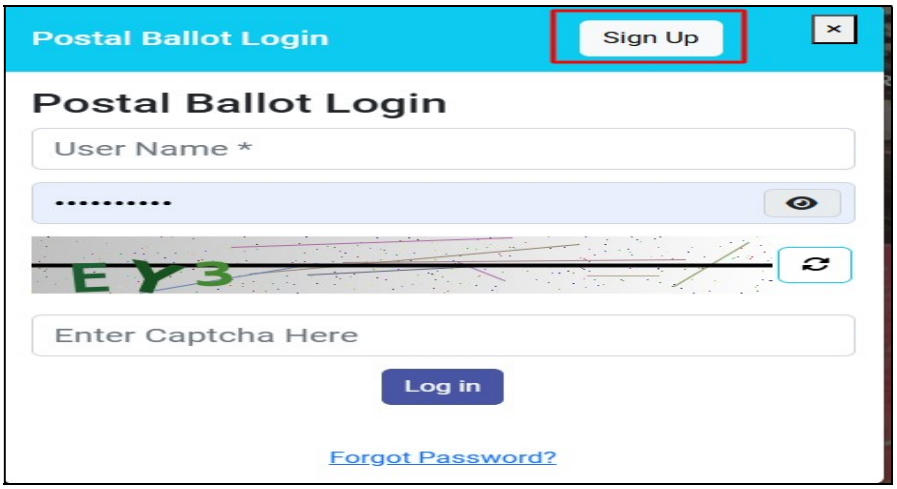


Fig.2

Enter the required fields, such as Personal Details, District, and Mandal. Then enter the Captcha and click on the **Submit** button, as shown in Fig. 3.

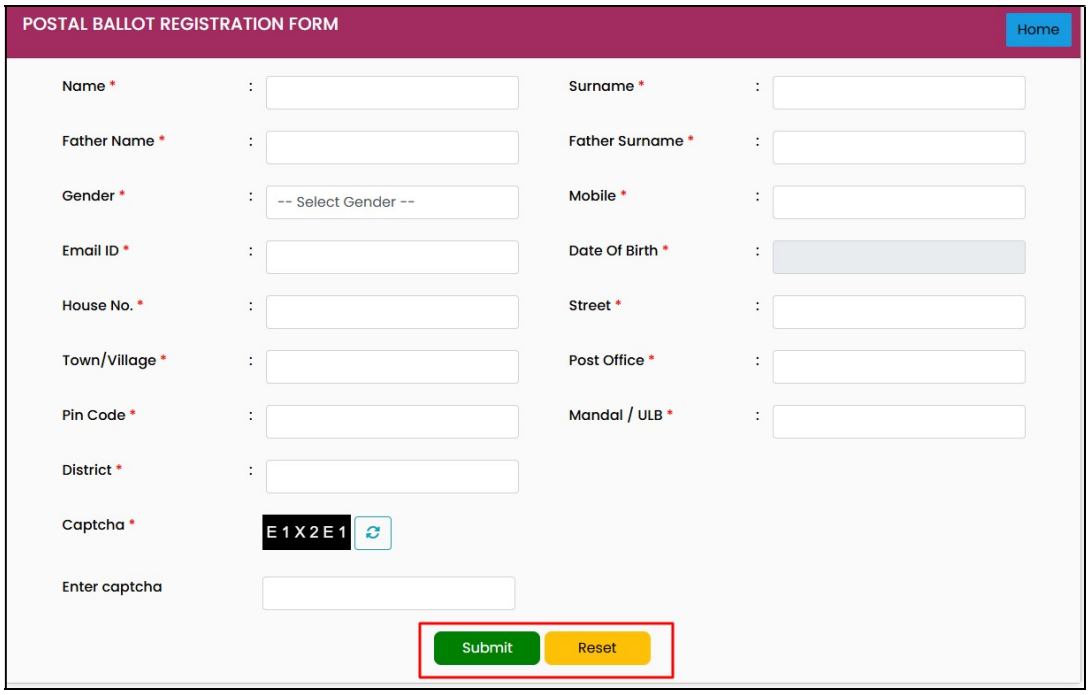


Fig.3

After successful registration, enter your login credentials and click on the Login button.

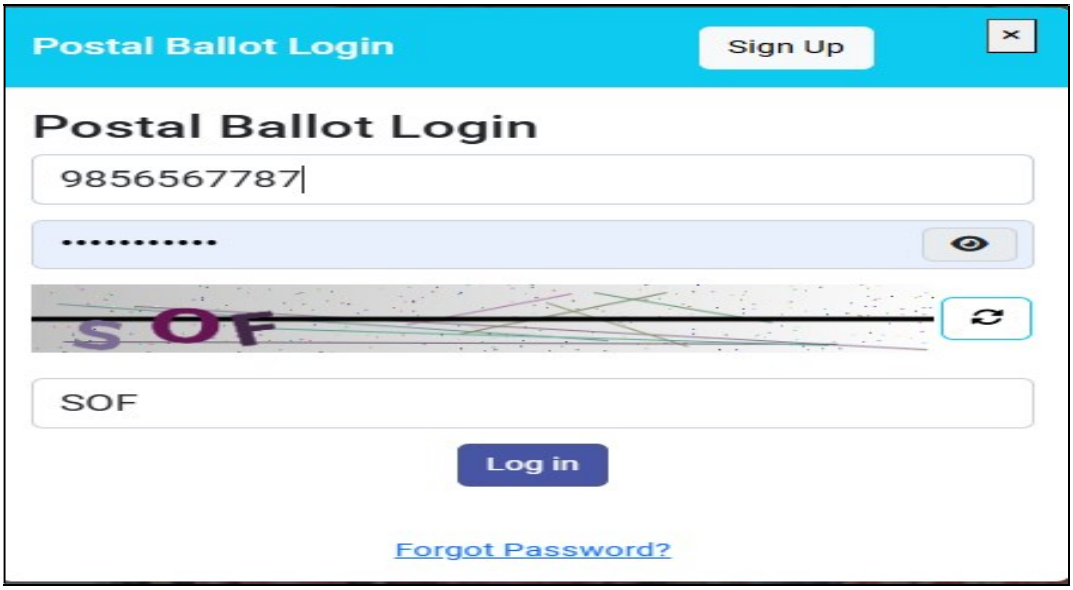


Fig.4

Upon first login, the system prompts the user to change the password. The current password will be the default password. The user is required to enter a new password and click the 'Change Password' button, as shown in Fig. 5.

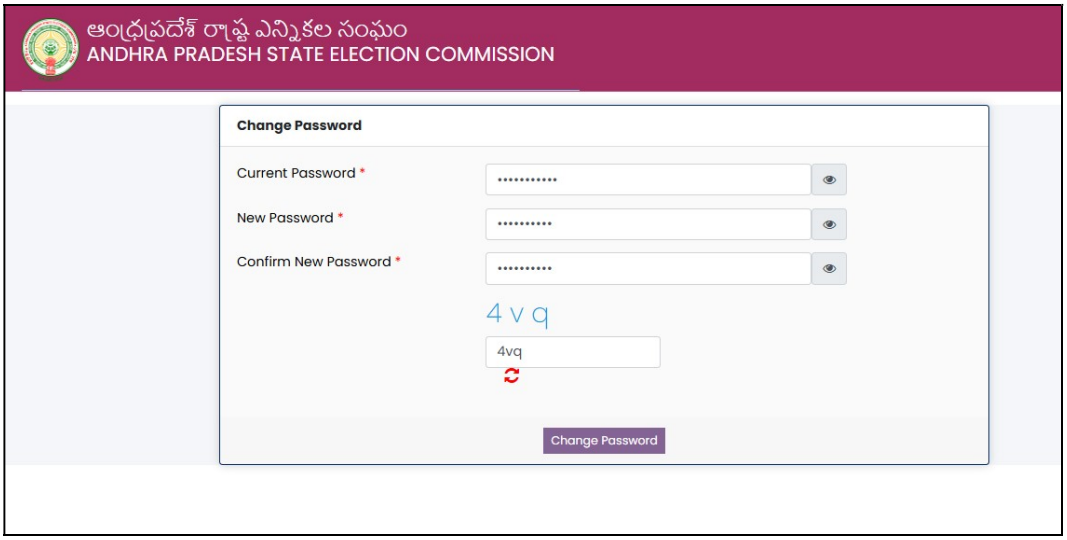


Fig.5

After successfully changing the password, the user is required to log in again using the new password. Upon login, the user can select the election type as shown in Fig.6.

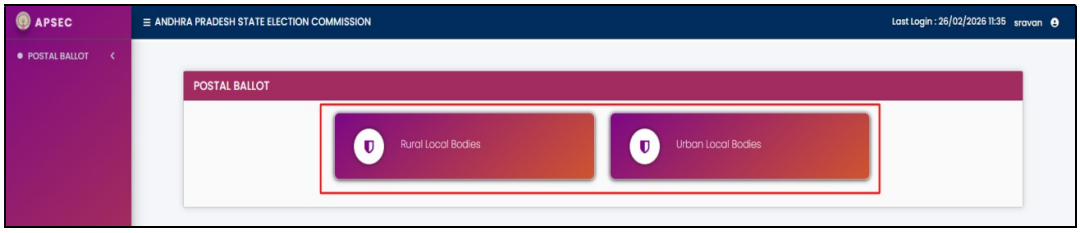


Fig.6

Upon selecting 'Rural Local Bodies,' the system displays Sarpanch/Ward and MPTC/ZPTC options. Upon selecting 'Urban Local Bodies,' the system displays Nagar Panchayat, Municipality, Municipal Corporation, VMC, and GVMC options as shown in Fig. 7

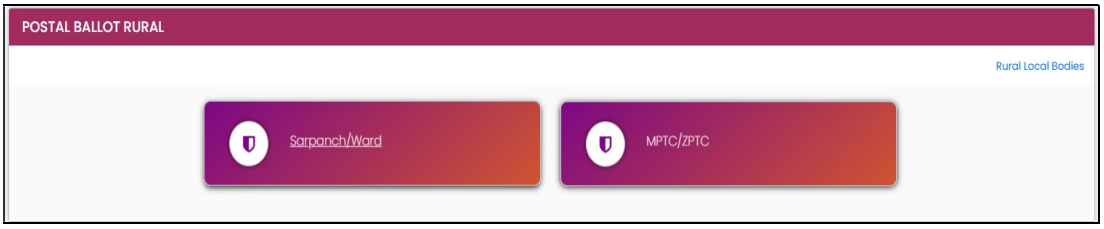


Fig.7

After selecting an Election Type, the respective Election screen will be displayed, as shown in the figure below.

Click on the 'Apply for Postal Ballot' service and select 'Election For' from the dropdown list as shown in Fig.8.

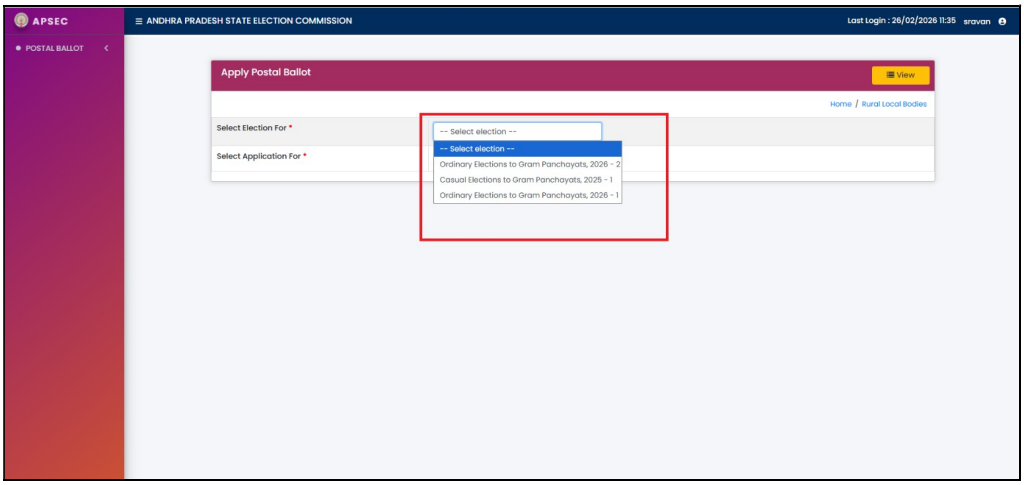


Fig.8

Select Category of Application as Employee/Senior Citizen

Employee Login

Select Employee below screen will be displayed as shown in Fig.9

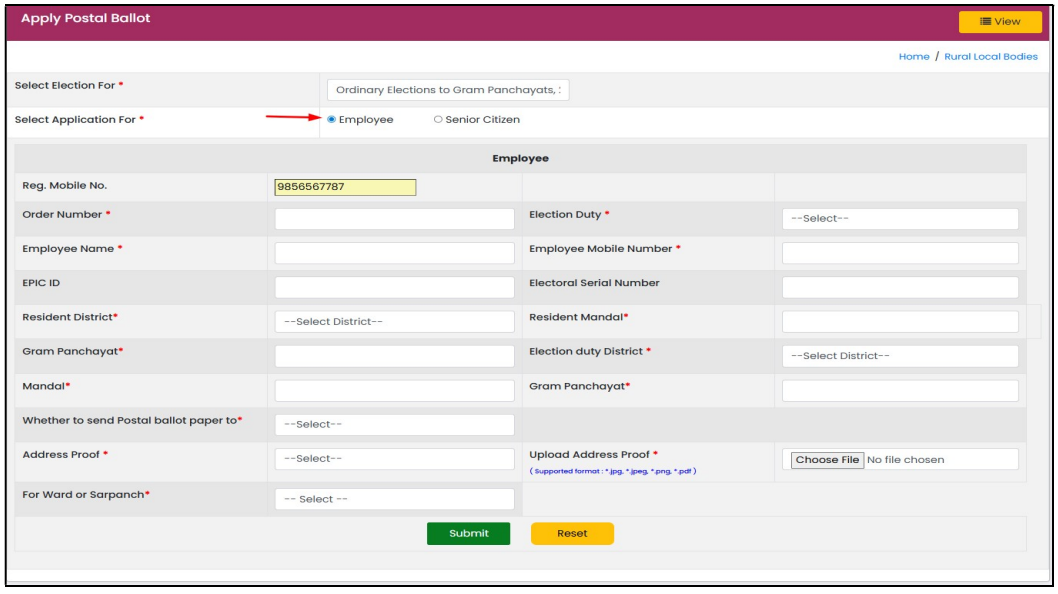


Fig.9

Enter the required Fields then click on **Submit** button as shown in Fig, 10.

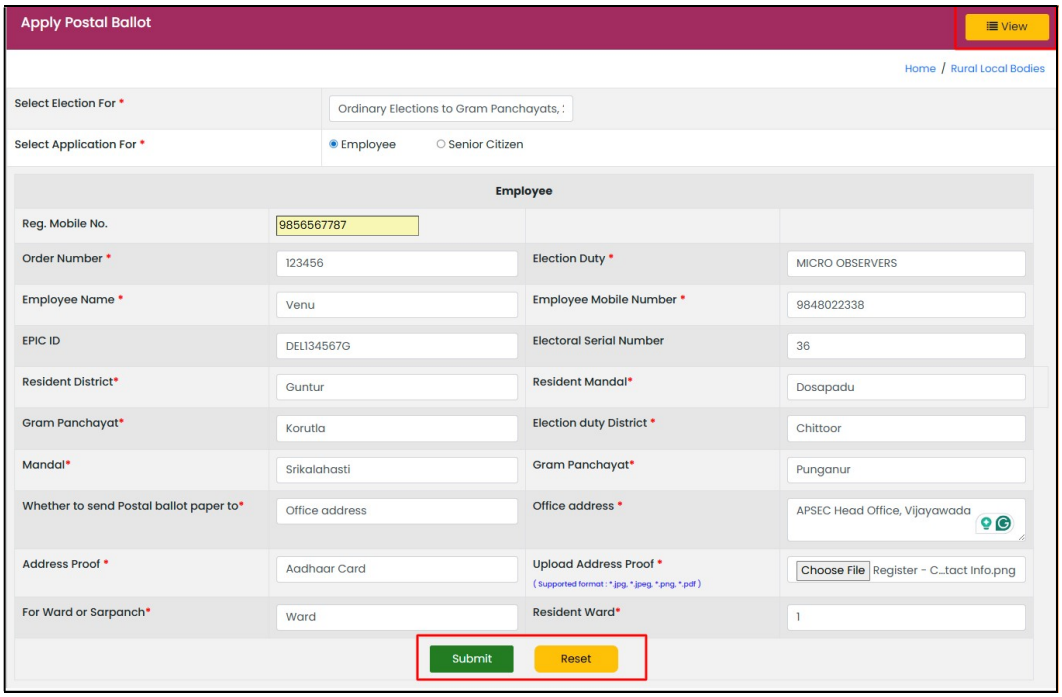


Fig.10

Enter the required Fields then click on **Submit** button. After successful submission system will generate Application ID as shown in Fig.11.

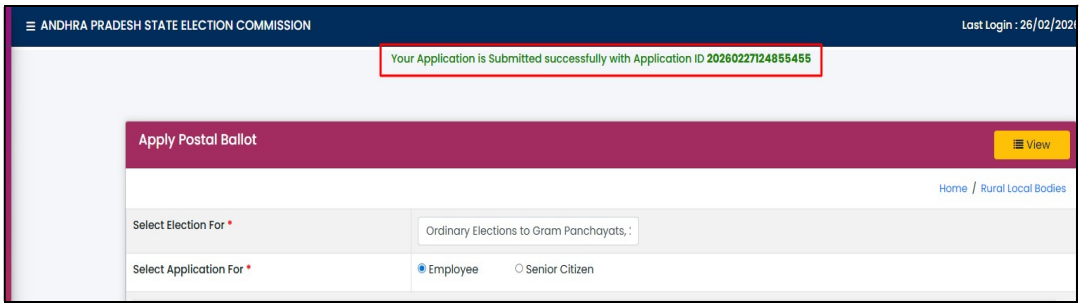


Fig.11

To view your application, click on "View".

Once the click on the view button, below screen will be displayed, it consists of Application ID and the applied postal applications details along with Status. Action button is also provided, to view the Form as shown in Fig. 12.

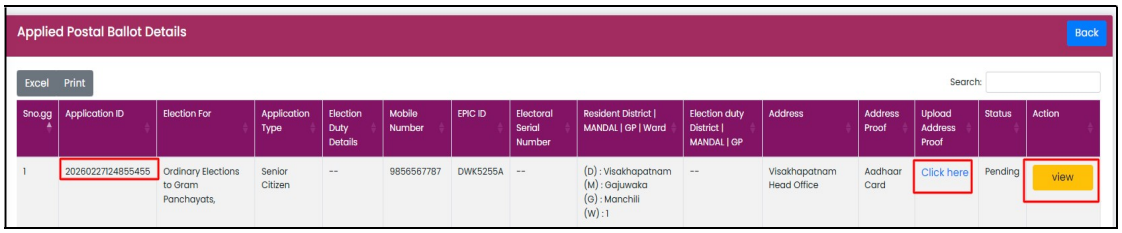
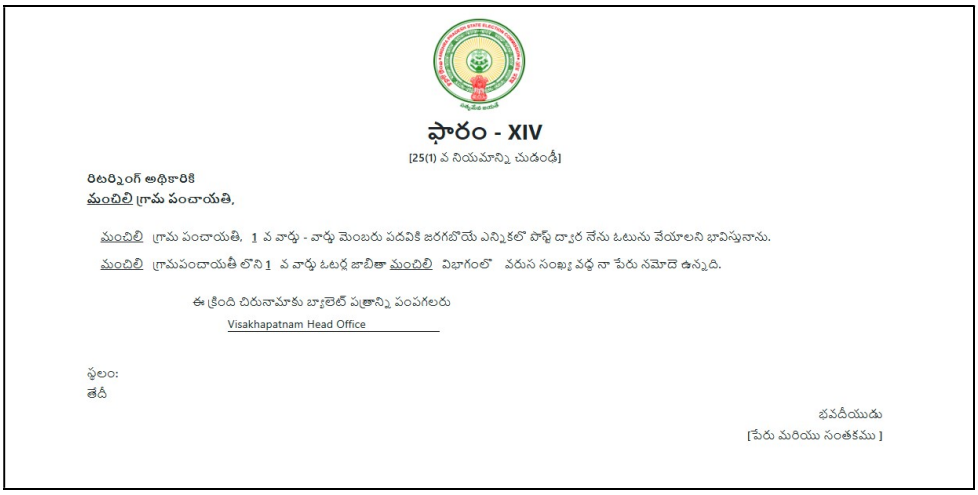


Fig.12

If the user clicks on the View on the action column, the Form XIV is generated as shown in the Fig 13.



ఫారం - XIV

[25(1) వ నియమాన్ని చుడండీ]

రిటర్నింగ్ అధికారికి

మంచిలి గ్రామ పంచాయతి,

మంచిలి గ్రామ పంచాయతి, 1 వ వార్డు - వార్డు మెంబరు పదవికి జరగబోయే ఎన్నికలో పోస్ట్ ద్వార నేను ఓటును వేయాలని భావిస్తునాను.

మంచిలి గ్రామపంచాయతీ లోని 1 వ వార్డు ఓటర్ల జాబితా మంచిలి విభాగంలో వరుస సంఖ్య వద్ద నా పేరు నమోదై ఉన్నది.

ఈ క్రింది చిరునామాకు బ్యాలెట్ పత్రాన్ని పంపగలరు

Visakhapatnam Head Office

స్థలం:

తేదీ

భవదీయుడు

[పేరు మరియు సంతకము]

Fig.13

After the successful registration and submission of the Postal Ballot application, the Returning Officer will verify and approve or reject the application.

If the application is approved by the RO, the concerned officer will send the postal ballot-related documents to the registered address. The Citizen/Employee must then cast his/her vote and re-post or submit the Postal Ballot to the concerned RO.

If the application is rejected, the Citizen/Employee will have the option to reapply for the Postal Ballot.

Returning Officer Login

After a voter applies for a **Postal Ballot Vote**, the concerned Returning Officer needs to verify the request received from the voter.

Navigation: Postal Ballot → Postal Ballot Process

The Returning Officer must log in and review all the requests received from voters. First, the user needs to select the **Election Type** from the dropdown. Based on the selected election type, the applications concerned received will be displayed, as shown in Fig.14.

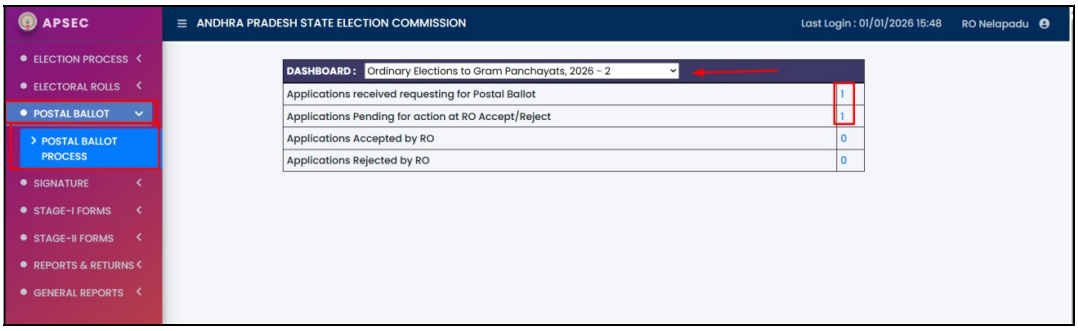


Fig.14

If the user wants to check the request applications, they need to click on the **"Applications Received Requesting for Postal Ballot"** hyperlink. Once the hyperlink is clicked, the page below will be displayed, as shown in Fig. 15.



Fig.15

The user needs to verify all the applications along with the attached address proof. If all the details are correct, the Returning Officer (RO) must click on the **Accept All** button. If the application is incorrect or any details are missing, the RO needs to click on the **Reject All** button.

After taking the appropriate action, the user must click on the **Submit** button. Once the **Submit** button is clicked, a popup message stating that the applications have been processed successfully will be displayed, as shown in Fig.16.

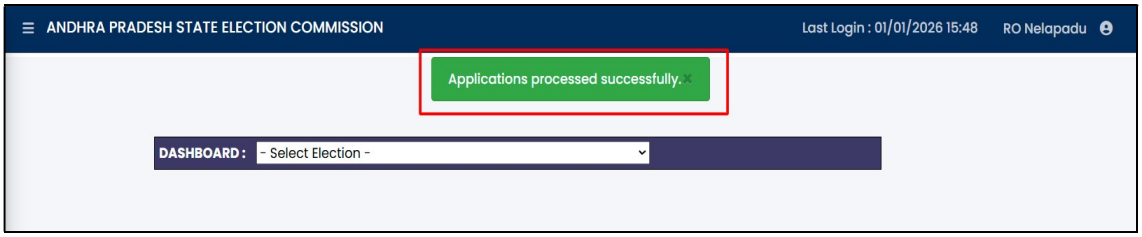


Fig.16

Once the RO accepts the application, it will move to **Applications Accepted by RO**. If the RO rejects the application, it will move to **Applications Rejected by RO**, as shown in Fig.17.

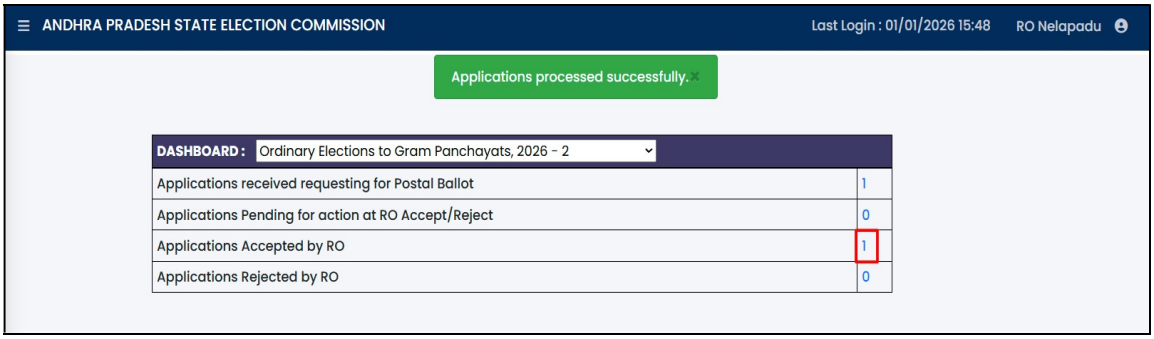


Fig.17

If the user wants to check the accepted or rejected applications, they need to click on the respective hyperlink. Once the hyperlink is clicked, the page below will be displayed. It shows the status of the application along with the application details, as shown in the Fig.18.

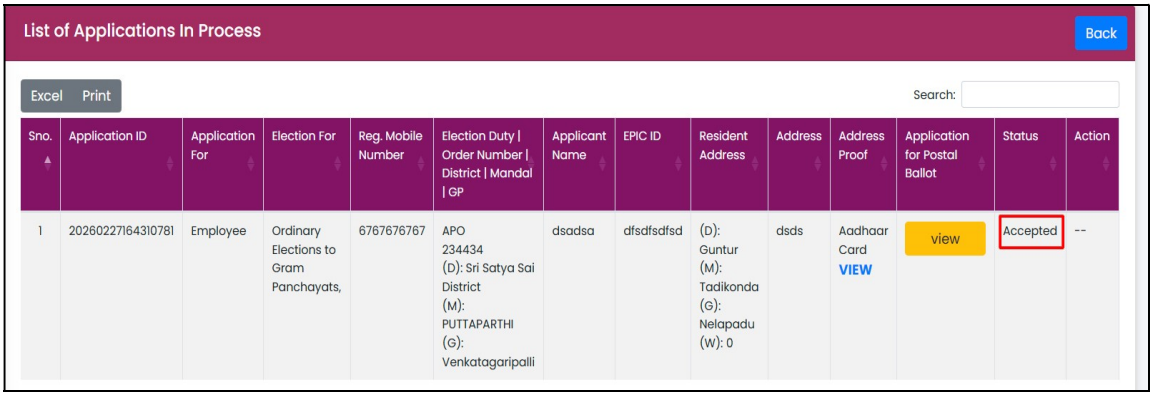


Fig.18

Once the Returning Officer accepts or rejects the application, the details will be displayed as shown in the Fig.19.

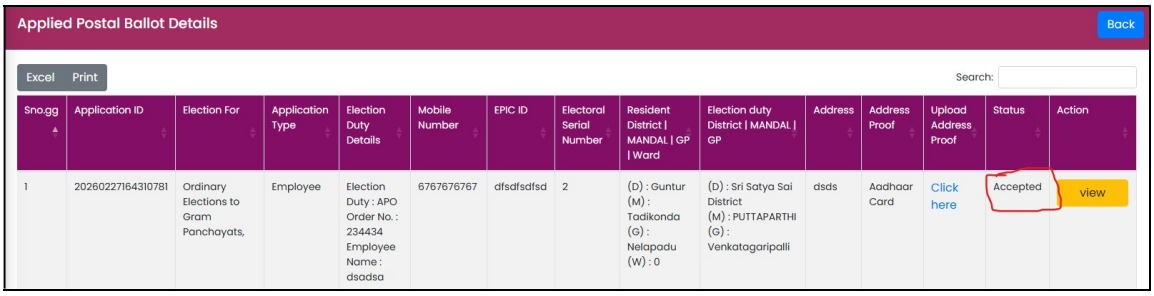


Fig.19

ANNEXURE-24

ANDHRA PRADESH STATE ELECTION COMMISSION
1st Floor, New HODs Building, M.G. Road, Vijayawada-520 010.
CIRCULAR

No.73 /SEC-B2/2025 **Date:26.03.2026**

Sub: Elections – Ordinary elections to Gram Panchayats – Setting up of Polling Stations for election to Sarpanch and Ward Member of Gram Panchayats – Guidelines – Issued.

***

Ordinary elections to Gram Panchayats are to be held as the term of the existing elected bodies expires on 02.04.2026. The Collector and District Election Authority is responsible for providing sufficient number of Polling Stations and for the publication of the list of Polling Stations for the conduct of elections to Gram Panchayats. The preliminary arrangements for the setting up of Polling stations should be initiated well in advance. The Mandal Parishad Development Officer and Tahsildars concerned should be entrusted with the work of identification of Polling Stations, preparation of list of Polling Stations, publication of draft and final list of Polling Stations. The Collectors & DEAs should obtain the lists from the concerned Mandal Parishad Development Officers, scrutinize and approve them before their final publication. The Mandal Parishad Development Officer and Tahsildars concerned should be instructed to physically check up the buildings proposed for Polling Stations in all the Gram Panchayats in their respective Mandals.

In pursuance to the Notification issued by the APSEC on 06.02.2026, the Gram Panchayat Photo Electoral Rolls are to be published by the District Panchayat Officers on 09.03.2026. Although the sorting process has been completed considerably, some Collectors & District Election Authorities and the District Panchayat Officers have sought additional time for verification and extension for publication of Ward-wise Photo Electoral Rolls. Accordingly, the date of Publication of Ward-wise Photo Electoral Rolls of Gram Panchayats has been postponed from 09.03.2026 to 18.03.2026 vide the Commission's Order dated 07.03.2026. The next activity is the publication of the 'List of Polling Stations' in the Gram Panchayats.

The APSEC, hereby, issues the Guidelines for Publication of List of Polling Stations for Ordinary Elections to Gram Panchayats.

1. DETERMINATION OF THE NUMBER OF POLLING STATIONS:

(1) Each Ward in a Gram Panchayat should be provided with at least one polling station. However, more than one polling station can be set up in a ward based on following guidelines. Ordinarily a polling station should be set up for about 650 voters.

(2) If the number of voters in a Ward exceeds 650, set up two polling stations in that ward and allot approximately equal number of voters to each polling station.

(3) If the number of voters is more than 1300 in a ward, set up three polling stations and distribute the voters equally among all the polling stations.

The polling station number will be same as ward number. If there is more than one polling station in a ward, suffix the polling station number with A, B or C.

2. LOCATION OF POLLING STATIONS:

a) All polling stations relating to a Gram Panchayat (having no hamlets) should, as far as possible, be located in one building provided there is sufficient accommodation. The construction of temporary structure should be avoided, as far as possible.

b) In respect of Gram Panchayat having hamlets, the Polling Stations relating to the ward covering the hamlets of the main village should as far as possible be located in the hamlet. The polling stations relating to the remaining wards shall be located in one public building in the main village. As far as possible, each polling station should be located in a separate room in the same building. If sufficient rooms are not available in the building, more than one polling station can be accommodated in one hall by making partitions.

c) If the number of voters of SC and ST communities in a ward exceeds 1/3rd of the total number of voters in the ward, the polling stations should invariably be located in the SC/ST locality to enable the weaker sections of the society to exercise their franchise freely.

d) The actual site of each Polling Station should be chosen carefully in advance and arrangements have to be made in order to make the polling station satisfy the requirements of practical convenience. Provision of all requirements should be completed at least one day before the day of Poll.

e) To the extent practicable, Polling Stations should be located at the same place where it was located in the last ordinary elections, so that the voters could go and cast their votes at the place already familiar to them.

f) Polling Stations should be set up in such a manner that ordinarily no voter is required to travel more than two kilometres for casting vote. However, in scarcely populated hilly or forest areas, this norm may have to be relaxed. In order to avoid voters having to walk unduly long distances, polling stations, in such cases, may have to be set up for a smaller number of voters.

g) As far as possible, polling stations should be located in schools (Government or aided) and other Government or semi-Government institutions, such as, Gram Panchayat offices and Community halls, as the furniture and equipment required would be available there and could be made use of without any extra cost. The location of polling stations in private buildings or premises should be avoided. But where this becomes unavoidable, the buildings should be properly obtained with the written consent of the owner. The private building so obtained should be at the disposal of the Returning Officer for the period required for the poll. No watch and ward or other personnel connected with the owner, whether armed or unarmed, should be allowed to remain either at the polling station or within a radius of hundred metres around it. The security arrangement at the polling station and within the above area will be the responsibility of the State Police under the control of the Presiding Officer. It should be ensured that the owner of the private building, in which polling station is located, is not a contesting candidate or a known sympathizer or worker of any of the candidates at the election.

h) No polling station should be located in Police Stations, Hospitals and places having religious significance.

i) In case no suitable buildings of the Government or private are available, the polling station can be located in temporary structures but, as far as possible, this should be avoided as it involves considerable expenditure.

The draft list of polling stations should be drawn up in Form given in **Annexure-I**. The demarcation of polling area or part of the electoral roll should be clearly indicated.

The serial number of polling station should be used in conjunction with the serial number of Ward within which it is situated. If there is more than one polling station in a Ward, it should be numbered suffixing "A, B" etc. For example, if there are two polling stations in Ward No. 6, the serial numbers of polling stations will be 6 A and 6 B.

3. PUBLICATION OF THE LIST OF POLLING STATIONS IN DRAFT:

The Mandal Parishad Development Officer is responsible for preparation of draft list of polling stations. The MPDO should prepare at least 6 copies of the draft list of polling stations for each Gram Panchayat in the Mandal and publish the draft list by exhibiting at following places.

(1) At the Office of the Mandal Parishad Development Officer.
(2) At the Office of the Gram Panchayat.
(3) At two other prominent places / public buildings in the Gram Panchayat (Ex: School Building, Village chavadi, etc).

The Mandal Parishad Development Officer should thereafter examine suggestions received from the public and amend the draft list, wherever found necessary, and submit proposals to the District Election Authority for final approval of the list. The proposal should be accompanied by Checklist given in **Annexure-II.**

4. FINAL PUBLICATION OF THE LIST OF POLLING STATIONS AND PUBLICITY:

After approval by the District Election Authority, the final list of polling stations in **Annexure-I** shall be published again at the same places indicated in para 3 above.

5. MODIFICATIONS IN THE LIST:

(a) Changes in the location of polling stations originally chosen may become necessary, if the owner of the building originally proposed for a polling station has since become a contesting candidate or a strong sympathizer for a candidate or on account of any natural calamity. All such cases warranting change in polling station should be reported to District Collector.
(b) Once the lists of polling stations are finally approved, request for shifting of the polling stations from one site to another should be considered only if there are overriding considerations of public convenience. The District Collector may, in such cases, consult the contesting candidates and make modifications only where he is satisfied that it is absolutely necessary.
(c) Where changes become inevitable, such changes should be re-published and all contesting candidates be informed in writing.

6. SUPPLY OF COPIES OF THE LISTS:

Each contesting candidate should be supplied, free of cost, one copy of the list of polling stations for that Gram Panchayat, immediately after the last date for withdrawal of candidature. Copies should also be made available for sale at the cost price.

7. COPIES OF LIST OF POLLING STATIONS TO BE PRINTED:

Sufficient copies of the final list of Polling Stations to be made available for the following purposes.

(1) For final publication (At various locations)
(2) For supply to contesting candidates
(3) For Police
(4) For election staff
(5) For sale
(6) Reserve

8. BASIC MINIMUM FACILITIES (BMF) AT POLLING STATIONS:

Availability of basic facilities at polling station encourages citizens to participate in poll actively. Hence, the following Basic Minimum Facilities (BMF) have to be provided at each polling station.

a) Proper signage and Reception / Help Desk
b) Proper shades for electors in queues for protection from sun and rain.
c) Provision for drinking water
d) Toilet
e) Proper lighting and power supply
f) Adequate furniture
g) Ramp for the benefits of old and infirm

9. ARRANGE HELP DESK:

Where more than two polling stations have been set up in the same building / premises, in order to ensure orderly polling at polling stations, the State Election Commission issues the following instructions to ensure smooth conduct of poll at such polling stations.

a) Where more than two polling stations are set up in the same building / premises, a help desk shall be arranged at the entrance of the building to guide the electors to their respective polling stations and also to locate the serial number of the voter in the electoral roll of the concerned polling station. The help desk should be manned by one or two persons.

b) Additional police personnel shall be deployed at such buildings depending on the number of polling stations set up in the building for traffic management as well as to ensure that voters are lined up properly in queues at their respective polling stations.

10. GENERATION OF POLLING STATIONS THROUGH THE 'SEC-EMS' SOFTWARE:

The APSEC by engaging the Centre for Good Governance (CGG) has developed software modules for the Election Management System (EMS). This software needs to be used for generating the "List of Polling Stations" which will then enable smooth preparation of Marked Copies of Electoral Rolls, generation of Photo Voter Slips by the voter herself/himself, online application of Postal Ballot Paper, etc. The workflow for using the EMS software for generating the "List of Polling Stations" is appended at **Annexure-III**.

The State Election Commission will communicate the schedule for publication of List of Polling Stations separately after publication of Gram Panchayat Photo Electoral Rolls. The Collectors and District Election Authorities will take action accordingly.

Sd/- Nilam Sawhney
State Election Commissioner

To
The Collectors and District Election Authorities.
The Chief Executive Officers of ZPPs and Additional District Election Authorities.
The District Panchayat Officers and Additional District Election Authorities.
The MPDOs and Assistant District Election Authorities.
Copy to:
The Special Chief Secretary to Government, PR & RD Department.
The Commissioner, PR & RD and Election Authority.

ANNEXURE-I

ORDINARY ELECTIONS TO GRAM PANCHAYATS, 2026

LIST OF POLLING STATIONS

Name of Gram Panchayat: _____
Name of the Mandal:_____

Ward No.	Polling Station No.	Locality	Name of the Building in which it is located	Area of the Polling Station in Sq. Meters	Whether there is separate entrance and exit, if not reasons.	*Polling area in detail	Whether for all voters or for men / women	Total No. of voters assigned From ____ To ____ Total ____	Maximum distance that a voter will have to travel to reach Polling Station	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

I. Total Number of Voters :
II. Total Number of Polling Stations proposed :
III. Average Number of voters per Polling Station :

* Here, give the details of streets, localities and house numbers assigned to polling station.

Date: _____ **Collector & District Election Authority**

ANNEXURE-II

SCRUTINY SHEET FOR CHECKING THE LIST OF POLLING STATIONS FOR ELECTIONS TO THE POST OF GRAM PANACHAYAT MEMBER, SARPANCH

Name of the Gram Panchayat: .....
Name of the Mandal : .....
Name of the District : .....

PART-I : GENERAL

1. Has the heading of the list been properly given?
2. Has the list been prepared in the prescribed Form?
3. Have two copies of the lists in English (including scrutiny sheet and certificate) been sent to the District Collector?
4. Have copies of the Map been sent to the District Collector?
5. Has Mandal Parishad Development Officer made cent-percent inspection of the location of the Polling Stations?
6. (a) Have all the wards in all the Gram Panchayats been covered by the list of Polling Station?
   (b) Do the Serial Nos. of voters given in the list of Polling Stations tally with those in the printed electoral rolls?
7. What is the total number of voters of Gram Panchayat as per final rolls?
8. Has the information regarding the total number of voters and the average number of voters per Polling Station been specified at the end of the list?
9. Names and designation of the Officers who prepared lists.

PART-II

1. Has the Ward No. been specified correctly in column (1) against each Station?
2. Has the Polling Station number been correctly specified in column (2) against each Polling?
3. Has the exact location of the Polling Station specified in column (4) against each station?
4. Have the total number of voters assigned to each Polling Station has been indicated in column (9)?
5. Have the Serial No. of voters assigned to each Polling Station been indicated in column (9)?

6. MAP

(a) Have the boundaries of the various local units, namely hamlet, village, Gram Panchayat, Ward been marked distinctly in different colours?
(b) Have the areas served by the Polling Stations been marked distinctly in red colour?
(c) Have the serial numbers of Polling Stations been entered correctly in red circles?
(d) Have the number of voters in the Ward been indicated in black ink?
(e) Have the numbers of voters been assigned to polling stations indicated near the stations in red ink?

PART-III

FOR LIST OF POLLING STATIONS

…… Gram Panchayat
……. Mandal
……. District

1. Date of Poll.
2. Number of Voters in the Gram Panchayat.
   (a) Men
   (b) Women
   (c) Others
   (d) Total
3. Number of Polling Stations required on the basis of one Polling Station for each ward subject to a maximum of 650 voters per Polling Station.
4. Total number of polling stations actually provided.
5. Average number of voters per polling station.
6. Number of polling stations where more than 650 voters have been assigned, indicate the highest number of voters assigned to a polling station.
7. Number of polling stations where less than 650 voters have been assigned, indicate the lowest number of voters assigned to a Polling Station and indicate the reasons also.
8. Whether the number of voters in respect of each ward has been shown in the map?
9. No. of polling stations for which the maximum distance that a voter will have to travel is more than two kilometres.
10. Whether all the polling areas have been clearly demarcated?
11. Whether serial number of polling stations has been done in a systematic manner?
12. Whether any polling station has been proposed to be located in any:
    (a) Private building:
    (b) Temporary structure and, if so, whether the exact site chosen for the location of the polling station has been clearly indicated in the list?
13. Whether it has been certified that the private buildings do not belong to active person in politics, his workers or known sympathizers?
14. Whether it has been certified that all the polling areas within the Gram Panchayat are covered by the proposed polling stations and that every Ward in the Gram Panchayat has been provided with at least one polling station?
15. Any other remarks.

PART-IV

CERTIFICATE TO BE FURNISHED ALONG WITH LIST OF POLLING STATIONS

1. That the draft list was duly published, objections and suggestions were invited and discussed with representatives of the Mandal level recognized political parties.
2. (a) that all the polling areas within the Gram Panchayat have been covered in the list.
   (b) that every ward in the Gram Panchayat has been provided with at least one Polling Station;
3. That no building, public or private (such as a temple, church, mosque, gurdwara or has religious significance) in respect of which any section of the public may have legitimate objection to enter has been proposed as a polling station;
4. That no police station, hospital or dispensary is proposed as a polling station;

5. That where the usual limit of 650 voters per polling station or the limit of two kilometres beyond which a voter should not ordinarily be required to walk has not been maintained, no better arrangement is practicable;
6. In cases where private buildings have been selected as polling stations, the written consent of the owner for the purpose has been obtained.

Place:
Date: **MPDO / Asst. DEA**

ANNEXURE-III

In the generation of "List of Polling Stations" using the 'SEC-EMS', logins are provided to APSEC, Collectors, DPOs and MPDOs.

MPDO LOGIN:

POLLING STATION MAPPING

The Polling Station (Gram Panchayat) module within the SEC-Election Management System portal is designed to capture and manage detailed information about polling stations under each Gram Panchayat.

To access this service, users must navigate through the left-hand menu by selecting the "Polling Stations" section and then clicking on "Gram Panchayats." This action opens the data entry form titled Polling Station (Gram Panchayat). At the top of the form, users can find various tabs such as Gram Panchayat, Checklist, Polling Station Map and Proforma with the Gram Panchayat tab active by default.

Select the required Election from the drop-down. Based on the selected election, the system enables the relevant administrative hierarchy.

Note: Selection of 'Election' is mandatory to proceed further.

Administrative Details (System Generated)

The following fields are auto populated by the system and are non-editable:

- District
- Revenue Division
- Mandal

Gram Panchayat and Polling Station Selection

- Select the **Gram Panchayat** from the drop-down list.
- Select **Ward**
- Select the Polling Station No.
- Click View to retrieve existing polling station data, if already available.

Voter Assignment Details (Read Only)

Upon selection, the system displays the following voter-related details:

- Total No. of Voters Assigned
- From Serial Number
- To Serial Number

These values are derived from the electoral roll and cannot be modified.

Polling Station Identification Details

Enter the following mandatory details:

- Polling Station Name in English (Building Name)
- Polling Station Name in Telugu (Building Name)
- Room Specifications in English (Wing / Block / Direction / Room No.)
- Room Specifications in Telugu
- Area of the Polling Station (in Square Meters)

Entrance and Location Details

1. Specify whether the polling station has a separate entrance and exit:
    - Select Yes or No
    - If No, reasons shall be recorded wherever applicable
2. Enter the location details:
    - Polling Station Location in English
    - Polling Station Location in Telugu

Polling Area Coverage Details

- Enter Polling Area Places in English
    - (Habitation / Colony / Street / House Numbers assigned to the polling station)
- Enter Polling Area Places in Telugu
- Specify the Maximum distance a voter has to travel to reach the polling station (in kilometers).

Polling Station Category

- Verify the Polling Station Category:
    - Normal
    - Sensitive
    - Hypersensitive

Note: Polling Station Category is assigned as per competent authority instructions and may be system controlled.

Upload of Polling Station Photographs

- Upload Photograph–1 of the polling station building.
- Upload Photograph–2 (additional view, in side).

Geo-Location Details

Enter accurate geographical coordinates:

- **Latitude**
- **Longitude**

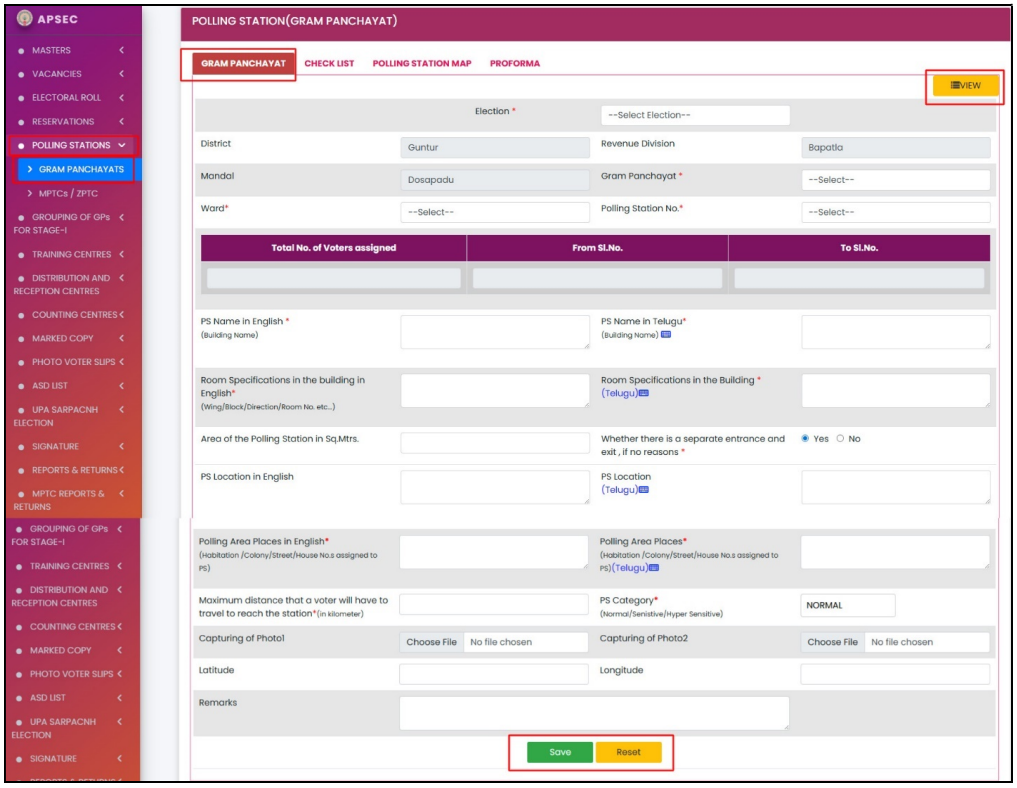
These details are used for polling station mapping and validation.

Remarks

- Record any additional information or observations in the **Remarks** field.

Save / Reset Actions

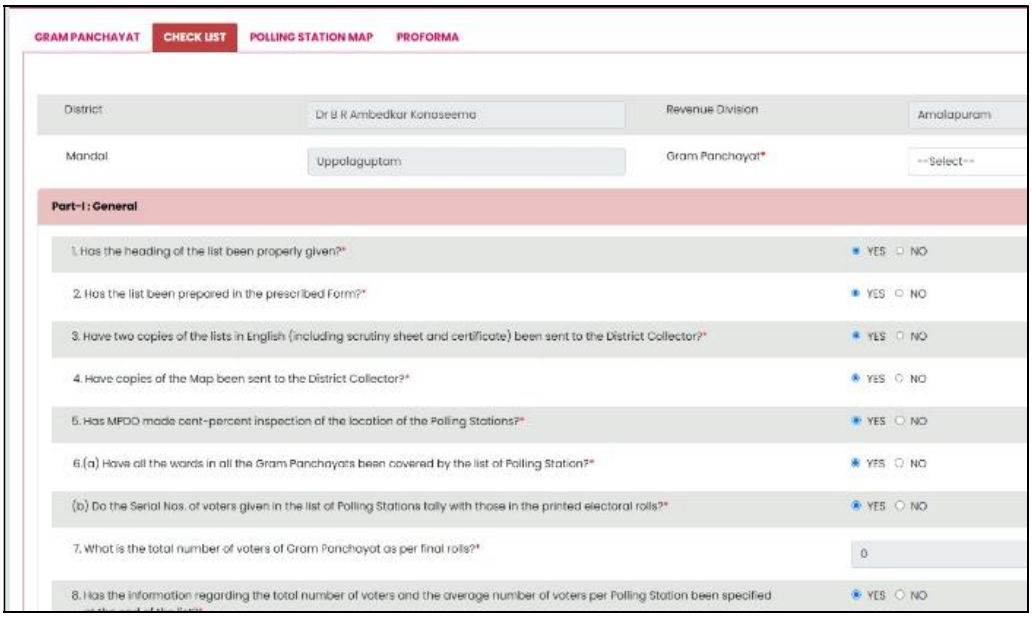
- Click **Save** to store or update the polling station details.
- Click **Reset** to clear all entered data without saving.

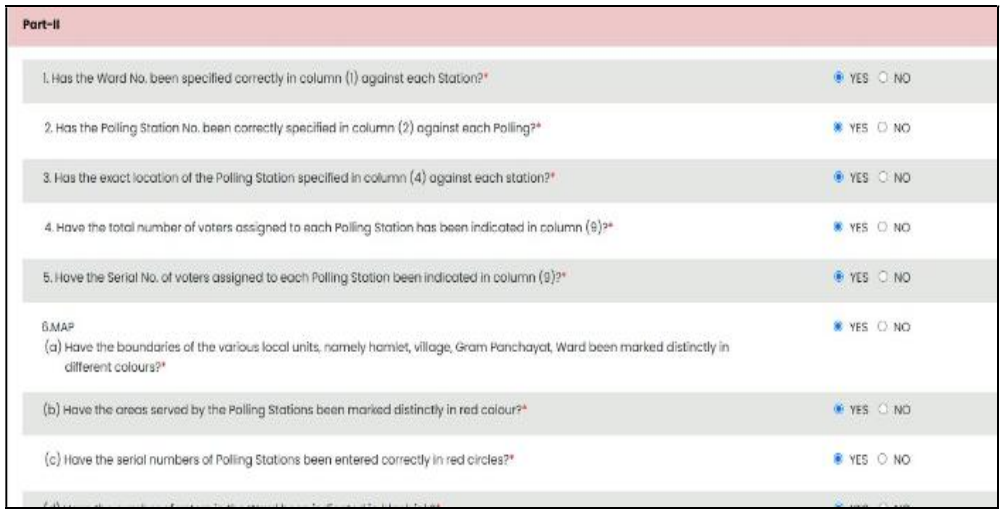


Upon completion of the Gram Panchayat tab, the page is redirected to the Checklist tab, as shown in the screenshot below.

CHECKLIST:

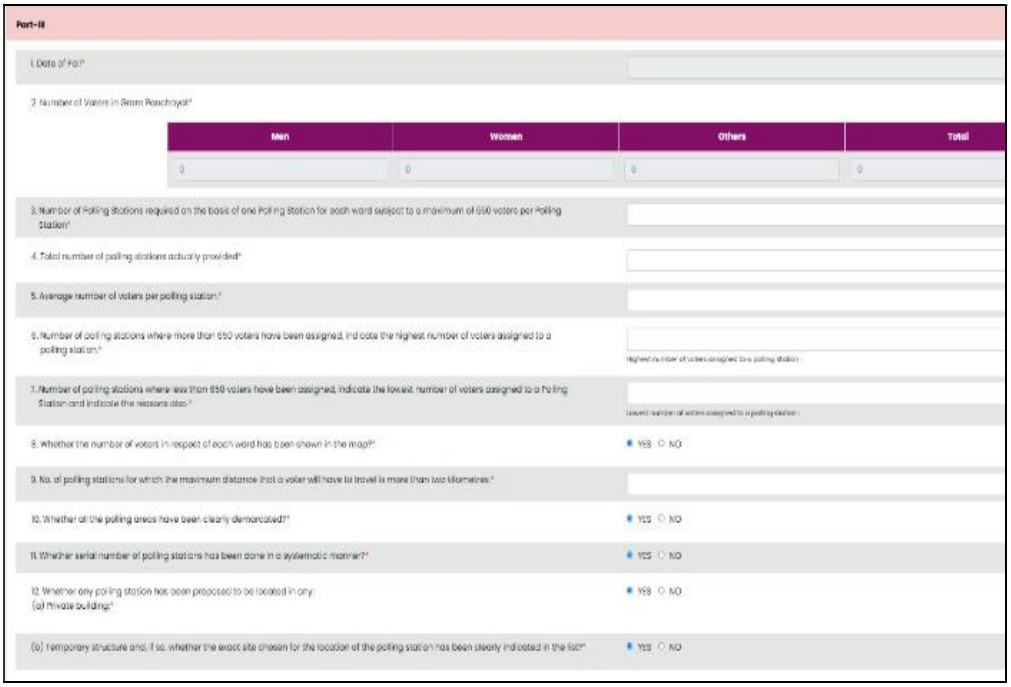
It consists of four parts, and the user needs to check and fill in all the options.





Part-II

1. Has the Ward No. been specified correctly in column (1) against each Station?*	YES NO
2. Has the Polling Station No. been correctly specified in column (2) against each Polling?*	YES NO
3. Has the exact location of the Polling Station specified in column (4) against each station?*	YES NO
4. Have the total number of voters assigned to each Polling Station has been indicated in column (9)?*	YES NO
5. Have the Serial No. of voters assigned to each Polling Station been indicated in column (9)?*	YES NO
6.MAP (a) Have the boundaries of the various local units, namely hamlet, village, Gram Panchayat, Ward been marked distinctly in different colours?*	YES NO
(b) Have the areas served by the Polling Stations been marked distinctly in red colour?*	YES NO
(c) Have the serial numbers of Polling Stations been entered correctly in red circles?*	YES NO



Part-III

1. Date of Poll*

2. Number of Voters in Gram Panchayat*

Men	Women	Others	Total
0	0	0	0

3. Number of Polling Stations required on the basis of one Polling Station for each ward subject to a maximum of 650 voters per Polling Station*	
4. Total number of polling stations actually provided*	
5. Average number of voters per polling station.*	
6. Number of polling stations where more than 650 voters have been assigned, indicate the highest number of voters assigned to a polling station.*	Highest number of voters assigned to a polling station
7. Number of polling stations where less than 650 voters have been assigned, indicate the lowest number of voters assigned to a Polling Station and indicate the reasons also.*	Lowest number of voters assigned to a polling station
8. Whether the number of voters in respect of each ward has been shown in the map?*	YES NO
9. No. of polling stations for which the maximum distance that a voter will have to travel is more than two kilometres.*	
10. Whether all the polling areas have been clearly demarcated?*	YES NO
11. Whether serial number of polling stations has been done in a systematic manner?*	YES NO
12. Whether any polling station has been proposed to be located in any: (a) Private building;*	YES NO
(b) Temporary structure and, if so, whether the exact site chosen for the location of the polling station has been clearly indicated in the list?*	YES NO

Part-IV

1. That the draft list was duly published, objections and suggestions were invited and discussed with representatives of the Mandal level recognized political parties.*	YES NO
2.(a) That all the polling areas within the Gram Panchayat have been covered in the list.*	YES NO
(b). That every ward in the Gram Panchayat has been provided with at least one Polling Station;*	YES NO
3. That no building, public or private (such as a temple, church, mosque, gurdwara or has religious significance) in respect of which any section of the public may have legitimate objection to enter has been proposed as a polling station *	YES NO
4. That no police station, hospital or dispensary is proposed as a polling station*	YES NO
5. That where the usual limit of 650 voters per polling station or the limit of two kilometres beyond which a voter should not ordinarily be required to walk has not been maintained, no better arrangement is practicable;*	YES NO

The Gram Panchayat Polling Station Checklist Application is designed to assist officials in verifying and documenting details related to polling stations for elections. The application is divided into four parts, each focusing on a different aspect of the verification and documentation process.

In Part-I, general information about the polling station list preparation is captured. The user is required to select the appropriate District, Revenue Division, Mandal, and Gram Panchayat.

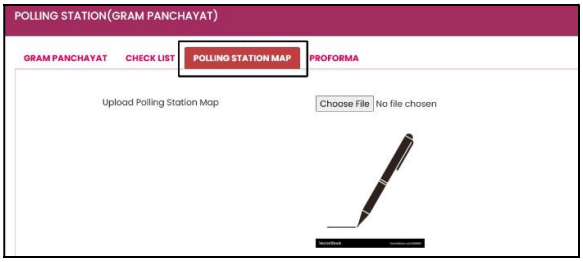
Following this, a set of ten checklist questions must be answered with either YES or NO. These questions ensure the proper formatting of the list, confirm whether the list has been forwarded to the Collector and relevant officials, verify inspection details by MPDO, and check if all wards and voters have been appropriately covered. There are also input fields to enter the names and designations of the officers who prepared the final list. At the bottom of the form, "Save" and "Reset" buttons are provided to either store the entered information or clear the fields.

Part-II focuses on polling station and map-related details. This section ensures that all polling station data — such as ward numbers, location, total voters, and voter serial numbers — are entered correctly. Additionally, the map validation segment checks that different hamlets or villages are color-coded appropriately, polling station areas are marked with red color, and voter numbers are clearly represented in black ink, while polling station numbers are highlighted using red circles. The use of red ink near polling stations to denote the number of voters is also validated. Similar to the previous part, Save and Reset buttons allow users to save or clear the entered data.

In Part-III, detailed information about the polling station allocation is entered. Users must input the date of the poll and demographic details of the voters, including the number of male, female, and other voters. The system then calculates the total voters count automatically. This section also captures the required and actual number of polling stations, along with statistics on average, maximum, and minimum voters per polling station. If there are deviations in the standard limits, users must provide justifications. There is a verification of whether all polling areas and travel limits have been properly marked on the map. Furthermore, it asks whether polling stations are located in government buildings and if any temporary or private premises have been used, proper consents must be uploaded. A confirmation checkbox ensures that all wards and areas have been covered. A remarks section is available for additional comments, and the standard Save and Reset options are provided.

Finally, Part-IV is used for the final verification and compliance. This section confirms whether the draft list of polling stations was discussed with recognized political parties and whether every polling area has been properly addressed. It checks that polling stations are not proposed in objectionable or sensitive locations like religious places, hospitals, or police stations. The form also ensures that the norms regarding the maximum number of voters per station and travel distance to polling stations have been followed, or that valid reasons have been provided if there are exceptions. If private premises are proposed for polling stations, written consent must be attached. Upon completing all verifications, the form can be saved and finally confirmed using the "Confirm" button, marking the checklist ready for submission.

Upon completion of the Check List tab, the page is redirected to the Polling Station Map tab.



POLLING STATION MAP:

Once on the "POLLING STATION MAP" tab, the primary action is to upload the relevant map file. Users will see a section labeled "Upload Polling Station Map." To select a file from their local system, they should click the "Choose File" button. After clicking, a standard file explorer dialog box will appear, allowing the user to browse and select the desired polling station map file (e.g., an image file or PDF). Once a file is selected, its name will appear next to the "Choose File" button, confirming that a file has been chosen. Finally, to complete the upload and save the map to the system, the user must click the "Update" button, which is prominently displayed at the bottom of the section. This action will commit the uploaded map to the record for that specific Gram Panchayats polling station.

Upon completion of the Polling Station Map tab, the page is redirected to Proformas tab.

PROFORMA:

This screen is part of the Polling Station module for Gram Panchayats. It is specifically designed for managing and submitting documents related to polling stations at the village level. Current active tab is "Proforma," which allows users to view and handle document submissions for each Gram Panchayat.

District and Mandal are fixed as per the login. Once these selections are made, the table below displays the relevant Gram Panchayat data. The table lists each Gram Panchayat entry with corresponding columns such as Serial Number, Name of the Gram Panchayat, Annexure-I, Check List, Map, and Action.

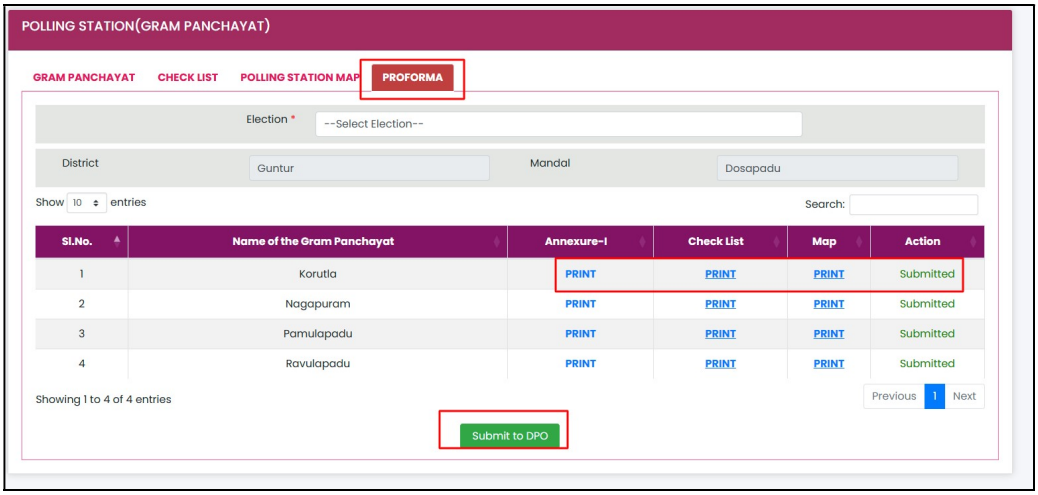
For each Gram Panchayat, users can print the Annexure-I form, the checklist, and the polling station map by clicking the "PRINT" links in their respective columns. The "Action" column displays the submission status. If the documents have already been submitted, the status shows as "Submitted" in green text, indicating that no further action is required; otherwise, the status will be displayed as pending.

After verifying and printing all necessary documents for the Gram Panchayats, the user can proceed to submit the data by clicking on the green "Submit to DPO" button located at the bottom center of the screen. This finalizes the submission process and forwards the data to the District Panchayat Officer (DPO) for review and onward submission to the District Collector for approval.

This interface ensures that all polling station documentation is reviewed, printed, and submitted in a structured and timely manner as part of the election preparation process.

Clicking "PRINT" in Annexure I displays the Gram Panchayat input screen's information in PDF format. Similarly, clicking "PRINT" in the Check List option shows the

Check List input screen's information as a PDF, and clicking "PRINT" in the Map option displays the polling station Map input screen's information in PDF format.



Once submitted to DPO, the Gram Panchayat polling stations will be displayed in the DPO login for approvals

DPO LOGIN:

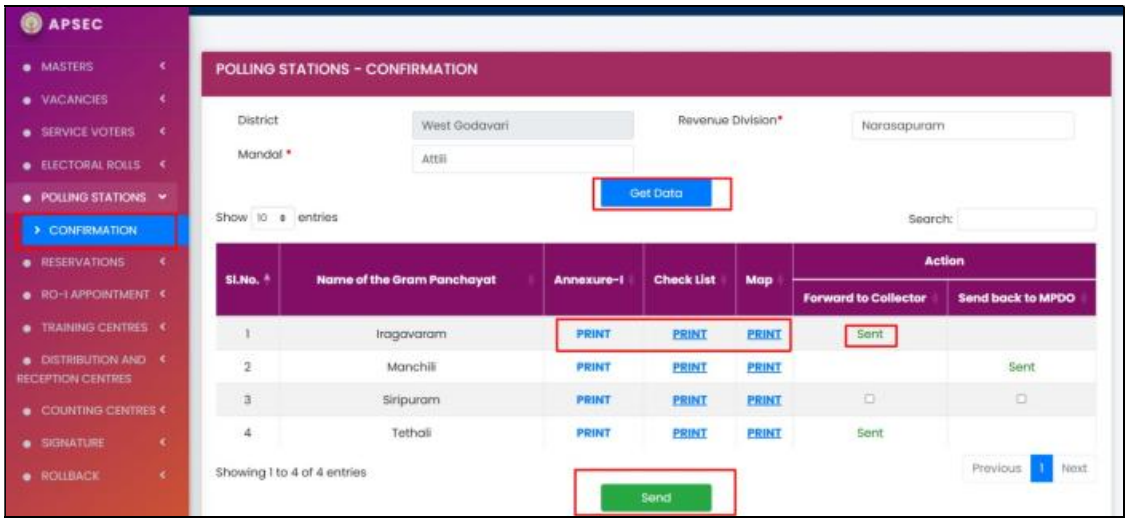
The Polling Stations - Confirmation screen in the SEC-EMS application is designed to facilitate the confirmation process of polling stations at the Gram Panchayat level. This service allows users to review, print, and take necessary actions—such as forwarding data to the Collector or sending it back to the MPDO—for each Gram Panchayat under a specific Mandal.

To begin using this screen, the user must first select the District, Revenue Division, and Mandal. The 'Mandal' field is mandatory and must be filled before proceeding. Once the required selections are made, the user should click on the Get Data button to fetch the polling station details corresponding to the selected Mandal. These details are displayed in a tabular format below.

Each row in the table represents a Gram Panchayat. The table provides options to view and print three key documents for each Gram Panchayat: Annexure-I, Checklist, and Map. The user can click on the PRINT links under each column to access and print these documents for recordkeeping or verification purposes.

In the Action section of the table, users can see the current status of each Gram Panchayat's polling station data. If the data has already been sent to the Collector, the status will show as Sent in green. For entries that are pending, users are given the option to either Forward to Collector or Send back to MPDO by selecting the corresponding checkboxes.

After making the necessary selections, the user must click the green Send button at the bottom of the page to execute the selected actions. This ensures that the polling station data is either sent or not.



This screen plays a crucial role in the administrative workflow by allowing efficient handling of polling station confirmations, ensuring that proper documentation and actions are maintained throughout the process.

COLLECTOR LOGIN:

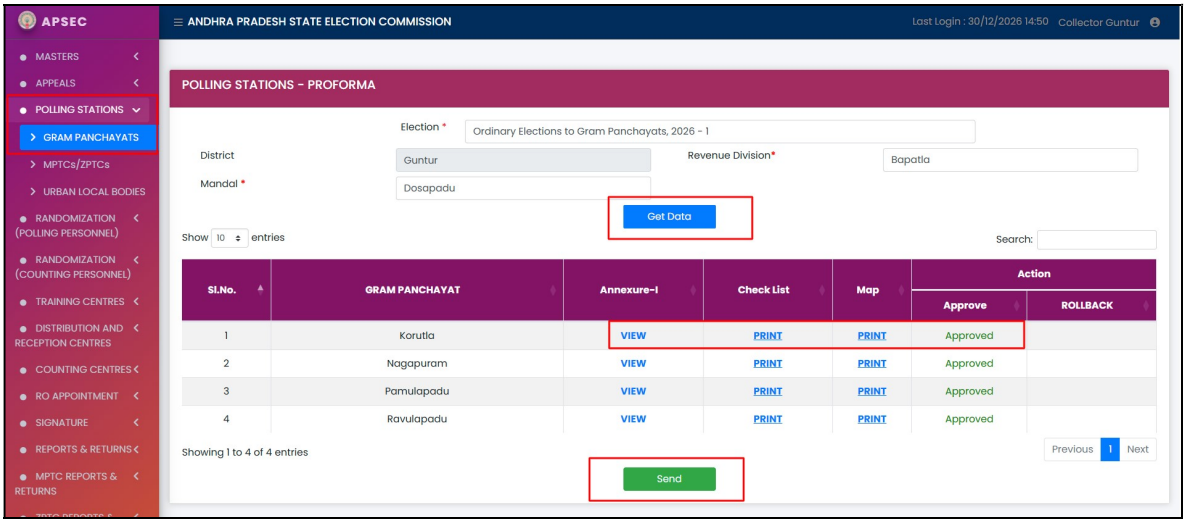
The Polling Stations – Proforma screen in the SEC-EMS application is designed to facilitate the viewing, approval, and rollback of polling station details for various Gram Panchayats within a selected Mandal. This interface ensures that all relevant documents related to polling stations are available for review and the necessary administrative actions can be taken efficiently.

To begin, the user must select the appropriate District, Revenue Division, and Mandal. Among these, the Mandal field is mandatory and must be chosen for the system to retrieve records. Once the required fields are selected, the user must click the Get Data button to display the Gram Panchayat-wise polling station data.

The results are shown in a tabular format with several columns, including the serial number, Gram Panchayat name, and associated documents such as Annexure-I, Checklist, and Map. Each document can be accessed by clicking the corresponding VIEW or PRINT links available in the table. These links allow users to review or generate hard copies of the polling station details for verification or record maintenance.

In the Action section of the table, users are presented with the current status of each polling station entry. The "Approve" column indicates whether a particular record has already been approved, displaying the status as Approved in green. Similarly, the "ROLLBACK" column may show the status as Sent, suggesting that the data has been forwarded and may require a rollback if necessary.

At the bottom of the screen, there is a green Send button which may be used to finalize or forward the selected entries after review. Additionally, navigation buttons like Previous and Next are available to move between pages if there are multiple entries. The Search bar at the top right allows users to filter and quickly locate a specific Gram Panchayat by name.



Once the polling stations are approved by the Collector, the Marked Copy is generated. This report is available in the EO, MPDO, DLPO, DPO, Collector and Admin logins.

***

ANNEXURE-25

FORM-XXVI

[See Rules 57(11), 59 , 60 & 92]

FINAL RESULT SHEET

(to be used for recording the result where counting is done polling station wise)

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

Serial No. of Polling Station	No. of valid votes cast in favour of			Total of valid votes	No. of rejected votes	Votes for 'None of the Above' (NOTA) option	No. of tendered votes
	A	B	C				
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
Total No. of votes recorded at polling stations							
Total No. of votes recorded on Postal Ballot Papers							
Total votes polled							

Place.....

Date ..... **Returning Officer**

FORM-XXVI

[See Rules 57(11), 59 &92]

FINAL RESULT SHEET

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

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

Polling Station No.	Total votes found in the Ballot Box (es)	No. of Tendered Votes
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
Total		

1	Total No. of votes recorded at polling stations	Candidate's valid votes			Valid votes total	Number of rejected ballot papers	Valid and rejected votes total	Votes for 'None of the Above' (NOTA) option
		A	B	C				
	1st Round							
	2nd Round							
	3rd Round							
	4th Round							
	5th Round							
Total								
2	Total No. of votes recorded on Postal Ballot Papers							
Grand Total								

Place……..

Date ……..

Returning Officer

ANNEXURE-26

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-27

FORM-XXVII

[See Rule 62 (1)(a)]
(for use in election when the seat is contested)

DECLARATION OF RESULT OF ELECTION

In accordance with rule 62 (1) (a) of Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj (Conduct of Election) Rules, 2006, I, declare that the following candidate has been elected to the office of Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. ..... of ..... Gram Panchayat of ..... Mandal Praja Parishad.

Name:

Address:

Place :

Date: **Signature of Returning Officer**

ANNEXURE-28

FORM-XXVIII

[See Rule 62(1)(b)]

RETURN OF ELECTION

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

Serial No.	Name of the Candidate	*Party affiliation, if any	No. of votes polled
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Total No. of electors : _____

Total No. of valid votes polled : _____

Total No. of votes polled for 'None of the Above' (NOTA) option : _____

Total No. of rejected votes : _____

Total No. of tendered votes : _____

I declare that –

…….. (Name) of ……..

…….. (Address) has been duly elected to fill the seat.

Place……..

Date …….. **Returning Officer**

* Applicable in case of election to Member, Mandal Praja Parishad / Zilla Praja Parishad.

ANNEXURE-29

FORM-XXIX

[See Rule 63]

CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION

I, Returning Officer for the election to the Sarpanch / Member of Ward No. …….. of …….. Gram Panchayat of …….. Mandal Parishad, hereby, certify that I have on the …… day of …… 20…... declared Sri/Smt./Kum. …… to have been duly elected to the said office in the ordinary / casual election and that in token thereof I have granted to him/her this Certificate of Election.

Place……..

Date……

Returning Officer

Seal

ANNEXURE-30

A.P. STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

1st Floor, New HODs Building, M.G. Road, Vijayawada-520010.

CIRCULAR

No. 71/SEC-B2/2026 Date:26.03.2026

Sub: APSEC - Ordinary Elections to Local Bodies -Poll Management System under SEC-EMS - Circular on Mobile Applications - Issued - Reg.

*****

The A.P. State Election Commission hasdeveloped the Software Modules and Mobile Applications based on the IT initiatives of Election Commission of India and other State Election Commissions and after obtaining due feedback from the field functionaries at various levels and senior officers of the Panchayat Raj and Municipal Administration Departments. These Software Modules and Mobile Applications, collectively known as the SEC-Election Management System (SEC-EMS), have been designed to streamline and standardize election-related processes in both Rural Local Bodies (RLBs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).The SEC-EMS consists of three main components, namely:

1. Electoral Roll Management System (ERMS)
2. Election Process Management System (EPMS)
3. Poll Management System (PMS)

Poll Management System (PMS)

The Poll Management System includes a Mobile Application for Presiding Officers to manage Polling Stations, report poll turnout, and record poll-related incidents with a simple questionnaire. Mobile app is also developed for the Zonal Officers, Route Officers and Micro Observers to monitor the real time status.

All the Presiding Officers, Zonal Officers, Route Officers and Micro Observers have to login in to the Mobile Application with their login credentials. The user credentials are as follows.

Officer	Gram Panchayat	MPTC/ZPTC	ULB
Presiding Officers	po_gp_xx_xxxxxx	po_mpp_xx_xxxx	po_ulb_xx_xxxxxx
Zonal Officers	zo_gp_xx_xxxx	zo_mpp_xx_xxxx	zo_ulb_xx_xxxxxx
Route Officers	ro_gp_xx_xxxx	ro_mpp_xx_xxxx	ro_ulb_xx_xxxxxx
Micro Observers	mo_gp_xx_xxxxxx	mo_mpp_xx_xxxx	mo_ulb_xx_xxxxxx

Note : xxxxxx represents LGD code of respective Local Body, xx represents for Polling Station Numbers in respect of PO & MO and Zone/Route Numbers in respect of ZO & RO.

After login the Officers have to verify the prepopulated information about the Local Body details and enter their name, Official designation and Election Type.

Each login consists of two sections: "Before Poll Day" and "Poll Day." Upon entering either section, a questionnaire is displayed, with most questions presented as simple "Yes" or "No" (balloon-style) options.

Mobile Application for Presiding Officer

Questionnaire for Before Poll Day		
1	Have you reported at Distribution Centre?	Yes/No
2	Have you received Election Kit?	Yes/No
3	Have you started for Polling Station with your team?	Yes/No
4	Have you reached Polling Station?	Yes/No
5	Have you completed Pre-Poll arrangements?	Yes/No
6	In the Polling Station:	
	a) Whether installed Web camera is functioning?	Yes/No/Not installed
	b) Whether Videographer has reported?	Yes/No/Not arranged
	c) Whether Micro Observer is present?	Yes/No/Not appointed

Questionnaire for Poll Day			
7	Are appointment letters of Polling Agents verified and ID Cards issued?		Yes/No
	If Yes, No. of ID Cards issued		Entry
8	Is Ballot Box demonstrated / Mock Poll (EVM) conducted?		Yes/No
9	Have the Candidates / Polling Agents attended the demonstration / Mock Poll?		Yes/No
	If Yes, No. of Candidates / Polling Agents attended		Entry
10	Has the Ballot box / EVM been sealed for actual poll?		Yes/No
11	Whether the declaration made before commencement and poll commenced?		Yes/No
12	Total Voter strength		Display
13	Bi-hourly poll report:	No. of votes polled	%of VotesPolled
	(a) Up to 09:00 AM	Entry	Auto Display
	(b) Up to 11:00 AM	Entry	Auto Display
	(c) Up to 01:00 PM	Entry	Auto Display
	(d) Up to 03:00 PM	Entry	Auto Display
	(e) Up to 05:00 PM	Entry	Auto Display
	(f) Close of Poll	Entry	Auto Display
14	Is poll interrupted at any time?		Yes/No
	If Yes, indicate details		Entry
15	Whether any subsequent Ballot Box(es) / EVM used? If yes, declaration made?		Yes/No
16	No. of tokens issued to voters standing in the queue at the hour fixed for closure of poll		Entry
17	End of Poll:		
	a) Is the poll conducted peacefully?		Yes/No
	b) Are declarations made at the end of poll?		Yes/No
	c) Is the sealing of ballot box(es) / EVM done?		Yes/No
	d) Are copies of the Ballot Paper Account (Ballot paper) / Account of Votes Recorded (EVM) provided to Polling Agents?		Yes/No

18	Voter Turnout	Male <Entry>	Female <Entry>	Others <Entry>	Total <Display>	Poll Percentage <Display>
18 (a)	Is the Voter Turnout same for both Sarpanch & Ward Member or MPTC & ZPTC?					Yes/No

	(If No, Sl.No. 18 is to be considered for Sarpanch / ZPTC and Col.18(b) table is to be displayed for entry of Ward Member / MPTC turnout) (Not applicable to ULBs)	
19	Is Presiding Officer's Diary and other forms prepared?	Yes/No
20	Have you and your team reached safely at reception Centre and handed over the polled material?	Yes/No

Mobile Application for Zonal Officers

1	Have you familiarized yourself with Poll Parties?	Yes/No
2	Are Basic Minimum Facilities available at all Polling Stations?	Yes/No
	If No, indicate details of such Polling Stations and action taken thereto.	Entry
3	Have you collected reserve Polling Material?	Yes/No
4	Have you observed any Law & Order problem and intimated the same to RO/SHO, if any?	Yes/No/ No incidents
	If yes, indicate details	Entry
5	Have voters of vulnerable areas turned up?	Yes/No/ No such voters
	If No, indicate details	Entry
6	Has remuneration been paid to all polling personnel?	Yes/No

Mobile Application for Route Officers

BEFORE POLL DAY		
1	Have you obtained Route Maps?	Yes/No
2	Have you familiarized yourself with locations of all Polling Stations and established contact with Zonal Officer?	Yes/No
3	Have you familiarized yourself with Polling Parties at Distribution Center?	Yes/No
4	Has the Route Opening Party (in troubled areas) cleared the route?	Yes/No
5	Have all the Poll Parties boarded the vehicle?	Yes/No
6	Have you noticed any obstacle in the route and informed to ZO/RO/SHO?	Yes/No
	If yes, details	Entry
7	Have all the Polling Parties been dropped at the allotted Polling Stations?	Yes/No
END OF POLL		
8	Have you picked up all the Polling Parties with polled material?	Yes/No
9	Have all the Polling Parties reached the Reception Center safely?	Yes/No

Mobile Application for Micro Observer

A. POLL PROCESS		
1	Have you reached Polling Station location?	Yes/No
2	Are Candidates / Polling Agents present during demonstration and preparation of Ballot Box / Mock Poll (EVM)?	Yes/No
3	Has the entry pass system been enforced properly?	Yes/No
4	Is Indelible ink being properly applied?	Yes/No
5	Has the Ballot Box / EVM been sealed according to instructions?	Yes/No
6	Has the PO provided copies of Ballot Paper Account (Ballot Box) / Account of Votes Recorded (EVM) to Polling Agents?	Yes/No
7	Any serious complaints on election process received?	Yes/No

	If yes, indicate details	Entry
B. COUNTING PROCESS (In case of Gram Panchayat Elections)		
8	Whether Counting Agents attended?	Yes/No
9	Is counting conducted as per laid down procedure?	Yes/No
10	Any serious complaints on counting process received?	Yes/No
	If yes, indicate details	Entry
11	Has election of Upa-Sarpanch been conducted as per laid down procedure?	Yes/No
12	Has the Report (Checklist for Micro Observers) on election process been prepared and handed over?	Yes/No
	If No, indicate reasons	Entry

This initiative empowers the entire election machinery with real-time poll monitoring at their fingertips. It is set to play a significant role in enabling efficient, transparent, and technology-driven Local Body Elections across the State.

Sd/- Nilam Sawhney
State Election Commissioner

To
The Commissioner of Panchayat Raj & Election Authority.
The Commissioner & Director of Municipal Administration & Election Authority.
All the Collectors & District Election Authorities.
All the Chief Executive Officers of Zilla Praja Parishads.
All the District Panchayat Officers.
All the Commissioners of Urban Local Bodies.
All the Revenue Divisional Officers (through Collectors & DEAs).
All the Divisional Panchayat Officers (through DPOs).
All the Mandal Parishad Development Officers (through CEOs of ZPPs).
All the Extension Officers (PR & RD) (through DPOs).
All the Panchayat Secretaries (through DPOs).

Copy to:
The Special Chief Secretary to Government, PR & RD Department.
The Principal Secretary to Government, MA & UD Department.