

**STATE ELECTION COMMISSION, ODISHA,  
TOSHALI BHAWAN, B-2, 1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR, SATYANAGAR,  
BHUBANESWAR-751007.**

E-mail ID – [stateelectioncommission.odisha@gmail.com](mailto:stateelectioncommission.odisha@gmail.com)

Fax No. 0674-2573494

No. 2876 /SEC.,

Dated the 16 / 10 / 2021

From

Sri R.N. Sahu, I.A.S.  
Secretary.

To

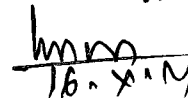
All Collectors.

Sub: Guidelines for counting of votes at the Block Headquarters in the elections to Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Madam/Sir

In inviting a reference to the subject cited above, I am directed to enclose herewith the the guidelines for counting of votes at the Block Headquarters in the elections to Panchayati Raj Institutions for taking necessary action at your end.

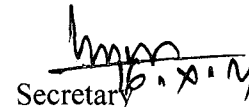
Yours faithfully,

  
16.10.21

Secretary

Memo No. 2877 /SEC., Dated the 16 / 10 / 2021

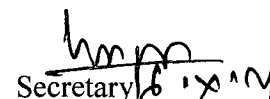
Copy forwarded to the D.G. Police, Odisha, Cuttack/All superintendent of Police for information and necessary action..

  
16.10.21

Secretary

Memo No. 2878 /SEC., Dated the 16 / 10 / 2021

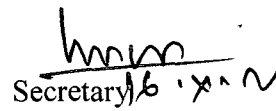
Copy forwarded to the Principal-Secretary to Govt., Panchayati Raj and D.W. Department, Odisha Bhubaneswar for favour of information.

  
16.10.21

Secretary

Memo No. 2879 /SEC., Dated the 16 / 10 / 2021

Copy forwarded to the all Sub-Collectors/ District Panchayat Officers / Block Development Officers for information and necessary action.

  
16.10.21

Secretary

ENCLOSURE- 17 Pages.

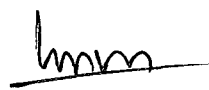
## **GUIDELINES FOR COUNTING OF VOTES AT THE BLOCK HEADQUARTERS IN THE ELECTIONS TO PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS.**

### **GENERAL:**

- Counting of votes is the most important event of the entire election process. The result of the entire election may be nullified by wrong, irregular or careless counting. Election Officer should therefore exercise great vigilance not only on actual counting of votes but also in maintenance of discipline inside the counting hall.
- The earlier practice of counting at the polling station has been done away with, with the amendment of the Panchayat Election Rules. Counting of Votes at the Block Headquarters will be done for the first time in General Elections to Panchayati Raj Institutions, 2022 for which adequate precautions and due diligence shall be exercised by the Election Officer.
- The Collector being the District Election Officer should personally supervise and monitor the counting of votes right from the selection of counting hall till the declaration of results are over.
- The instruction of the Commission in the matter of counting of votes shall be strictly followed in the interest of free and fair poll.

### **COUNTING CENTRE:**

- The Election Officer shall identify the building where counting of votes will be done well before the announcement of the poll schedule.
- The counting hall should be spacious enough to accommodate the Election Officer and other officials required to assist him as well as the candidates and counting agents.
- The counting of votes will be done Zilla Parishad Constituency-wise. The votes polled in one Z.P. Constituency shall be counted in one big hall.
- The counting of votes will be done for a period of three days during which the votes of all the Z.P. Constituencies in a Block will be counted.
- The Election Officer has to identify the required number of counting hall(s) taking into account the number of Zilla Parishad Constituencies in the Block.
- If the number of Zilla Parishad Constituencies are more than three in any particular Block the requirement of the counting hall(s) will be more than one.



- The Election Officer will chalk out the necessary arrangement to finish the counting within three days.
- The counting centre most preferably be located in the Block Office. If adequate space is not available in the Block Office, any Government building preferably College/High school at the Block Headquarters shall be identified for the above purpose.
- Each counting hall should have sufficient space and preferably have a separate entry and exit. Counting of votes will be done at the counting centre comprising one or more counting halls. Each counting hall shall be a separate room walled on all sides preferably with separate exit and entry facility.
- Apart from the counting hall(s) there shall be separate rooms available for strong room(s), one or more rooms for storing other election materials and another Communication Room in the building identified for the purpose.
- Availability of furniture, toilet, ramp and drinking water facility shall be taken into consideration while identifying the counting centre.
- Counting of votes in temporary structure is strictly prohibited.
- Counting centre should have fire fighting arrangement with power back up.
- Proper arrangement of loud speaker should be made for dissemination of information.
- Counting of votes should be done on tables arranged in rows.
- Ideal size of one Counting Hall should be 35' X 20' assuming votes of 8 Gram Panchayat will be counted in one hall. **A model layout of the Counting Hall is enclosed for reference.**
- The number of counting tables in a counting hall should be the same as the number of Gram Panchayats coming under the Zilla Parishad Constituency and two more tables one for the Election Officer and another for the officials to assist the Election Officer shall be there.
- Sitting arrangement in long benches shall be made for the counting agents in front of each counting table.
- In each counting hall barricades should be provided for each counting table so that counting agents are prevented from handling the Ballot Boxes/ballot papers. However, the counting agents must be given all reasonable facilities to witness the whole counting process at the

counting table. This can be done by ensuring that barricades are transparent or that the space in between or above the bamboo or other materials used for the purpose for erecting barricades is adequate to permit full and unobstructed viewing of the counting process. The counting tables should be placed against the barricade of the woodlock and the wire-mesh behind which the agents of the candidates shall sit/stand. The Election Officer should ensure that agents do not get any opportunity of handling the Ballot Boxes/Ballot Papers in any manner to eliminate any chance of tampering by them.

- A 100 meter width periphery around the counting premises/centre should be demarcated as "Pedestrian zone". No vehicles shall be allowed within this perimeter.

#### **STRONG ROOM(S):**

- There shall be one Strong Room for each Zilla Parishad Constituency for storing polled Ballot Boxes received from the Presiding Officers. Hence, the number of Strong Room(s) for a Block will be the same as the number of Zilla Parishad Constituencies in a Block.
- The Strong Room(s) shall preferably be located in the same campus/building where counting of votes will be taken up. In case the Counting Hall and the Strong Room(s) are located in different locations prior permission of the Commission shall be taken.
- Separate room(s) shall be earmarked for storing other election related materials, preferably in the same building/compound.
- The Strong Room(s) should necessarily be located in a pucca building closed from all sides except one entrance and certified by the Executive Engineer of the locality as per the Odisha Treasury Code.
- There should be uninterrupted power supply to the Strong Room(s) and the surrounding locations.
- The Strong Room(s) shall be kept under 24 hours CCTV Surveillance, one day before the receipt of the polled ballot boxes till counting of votes and declaration of result are over.
- The Election Officer should visit the campus (**upto the inner perimeter only**) everyday in the morning and evening and check the log book from the day polled Ballot Boxes are kept in the Strong Room(s) till the counting of votes and declaration of result are over.
- Adequate security arrangements shall be made outside the Strong Room(s). Two cordoned security arrangement should be made round the clock for the Strong Room(s).
- All contesting candidates should be intimated in writing to depute their representative to keep a close watch on the security arrangements of the Strong Room(s). They should be allowed to stay outside the inner

perimeter at a location which enable them to view the entry point of the Strong Room(s).

- There should be sufficient arrangement of fire extinguisher near and inside the Strong Room(s).
- A log book shall be maintained by the police personnel guarding the strong room(s) and any entry and exit shall be recorded and the officers/officials entering the Strong Room(s) shall have to sign in the Register.

#### **COMMUNICATION ROOM**

- As per instruction of the Commission a Communication Room may be set up in the Counting Centre for transmission of counting results/trends to the Commission's Office.
- For transmission of result to the Commission's office an Officer shall exclusively be earmarked for transmitting the result to the Commission. He shall be suitably instructed to transmit the result through Telephone/Fax/E-Mail, to the Commission.

#### **PLACE, DATE AND TIME OF COUNTING:**

- The counting place shall be identified much in advance before the Commission issues the poll schedule and the list of the Counting Halls shall be intimated to the Commission with relevant information of counting centre by the dateline asked for.
- The contesting candidates shall be informed in writing about the commencement of the counting, date, time and place 72 hours before the time fixed for counting.
- Since, it is decided that there shall be one table for one GP the contesting candidates for the office of Ward Member may be intimated separate times for them or their agents arrival taking into consideration the Serial No. of the Ward. This may be done to avoid unnecessary rush at the counting hall and centre.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF ELECTION OFFICER FOR COUNTING:**

- Ordinarily the Block Development Officer is the Election Officer for the purpose of counting of votes and declaration of result. There are some Blocks where counting of votes will be required to be taken up in two halls on the same day of counting. In that event another OAS Officer in the rank of BDO may be appointed by the District Collector to assist the Election Officer on counting of votes.



- In such Blocks the local BDO will function as Election Officer in one counting hall and other OAS Officer will assist the Election Officer in counting in the 2<sup>nd</sup> hall. The Officer in the 2<sup>nd</sup> hall will discharge all the functions of Election Officer but the statutory work like Declaration of Result will be done under the signature of the B.D.O-Cum-Election Officer of the Block.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF COUNTING PERSONNEL:**

- The Election Officer shall appoint the following personnel for each counting table.
  - i) Counting Supervisor- 1
  - ii) Counting Assistant- 2
  - iii) Group 'D' employee- 1
- The Polling personnel who have been appointed for conducting the poll should not ordinarily be engaged for counting.
- In case it is absolutely essential in any particular Block, the Election Officer can appoint Polling Personnel as counting personnel with the approval of the Collector of the District.
- The counting personnel shall not be engaged for three days continuously. They shall be engaged on alternate days if the counting is spread over all three days in a Block.
- The number of counting teams should be the same as the number of Gram Panchayats coming under one Z.P. Constituency.
- 1-2 team(s) may be kept as reserve Counting Team(s).
- The teams shall be numbered serially (1, 2, 3, ..... )
- One hour before the time fixed for counting the Election Officer shall draw lots to decide which team will be assigned to which table.
- This means the team whose lot is drawn first shall go to the Table No.1 and whose lot is drawn 2<sup>nd</sup> will go to Table No.2 and in similar manner till end of draw of lots.
- The Counting Supervisor shall necessarily be higher in grade as well as the pay scale to the Counting Assistant.
- The Counting Personnel will be paid remuneration at the rate prescribed by the Commission.
- Every Counting personnel may be issued with a Pass in the following format. They will remain seated in their respective Tables allotted till the completion of the counting and not roam inside the Hall or go to another table.

*hmm*

**General Election to PRIs, 2022**

Pass for Counting Supervisor/Counting Assistant.

Name & Designation:

Name of the Counting Centre:

Team No :

Signature  
Authorised Officer

- For other officials engaged in Counting Hall for various election or other related duties may be issued with a Duty Pass.

**General Election to PRIs, 2022**

**DUTY PASS**

Name & Designation:

Name of the Counting Centre:

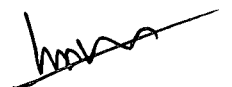
Nature of Duty:

Signature  
Authorised Officer

- 5% of the total Counting Personnel may be kept as reserve as a stand by arrangement.

**TRAINING OF COUNTING PERSONNEL**

- Counting personnel shall be given one round intensive hands on training on counting of votes as well as filling up of different kinds of forms during the counting process.
- Similarly, the personnel in-charge of the Strong Room, sealing room and other rooms shall also be properly trained in order to avoid any future mistakes.
- A physical demonstration of the counting of votes including transportation of Ballot Boxes from the Strong Room to the counting table, opening of ballot boxes, demonstration to the counting agents, actual counting of votes, filling up of forms, preparation of broad sheet, sealing of votes as well as other materials after counting is over shall be properly demonstrated during training.
- The counting personnel shall also be asked to demonstrate themselves about the training imparted so that any error by the counting personnel can be minimized.

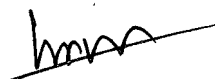


### **APPOINTMENT OF COUNTING AGENT:**

- Each candidate is allowed to appoint one counting agent in each table. Since it is decided that counting of votes will be taken up G.P.wise, those contesting for the office of Ward Member, Sarpanch and Panchayat Samiti Member they are allowed to appoint one person as their counting agent for each post.
- Those contesting to the office of Zilla Parishad Member can appoint as many Counting Agents as the number of G.Ps in that particular Zilla Parishad Constituency.
- Apart from this all contesting candidates can appoint one more counting agent for the Election Officer's Table.
- In case the candidate is present in person, he/she can perform the duty of the counting agent.
- The contesting candidates shall apply for appointment of Counting Agent in the prescribed Format to the Election Officer at least 72 hours before the time fixed for counting alongwith Passport size photographs in duplicate of the person to be appointed as Counting Agent .
- The candidate has to specify the Ward /Gram Panchayat for himself/ agent to be assigned. Those allowed inside the counting hall shall report 15 minutes before the actual time for counting.

### **COMMENCEMENT OF COUNTING:**

- The counting of votes shall be taken up at the time and date as specified by the Election Commission.
- All those authorized to be present inside the counting hall shall be present 15 minutes before the actual time for counting.
- Entire proceedings shall be videographed with proper date/time stamping.
- Everyone present in the counting hall should be instructed to maintain secrecy of vote. For that purpose the provisions of Section 128 of the Representation of Peoples Act, 1951 should be brought to the notice of everyone by reading that Section aloud.
- Section 128 of the Representation of Peoples Act, 1951 is as follows:  
  
 "128. Maintenance of secrecy of voting. – (1) Every officer, clerk, agent or other person who performs any duty in connection with the recording or counting of votes at an election shall maintain, and aid in maintaining,





the secrecy of the voting and shall not (except for some purpose authorized by or under any law) communicate to any person any information calculated to violate such secrecy.

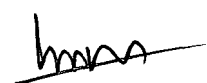
(2) Any person who contravenes the provisions of sub-section (1) shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months or with fine or with both.

#### **SECURITY ARRANGEMENT DURING COUNTING:**

- Adequate security arrangements shall be made outside the Counting Hall as well as outside the Counting Centre.
- The security personnel will allow the candidates or their Counting Agents, Counting Personnel and person with Duty Pass having ID card issued by the Election Officer to the Counting Centre.
- Entry of the unauthorized persons into the Counting Centre shall be strictly prohibited.
- No mobile phone/tablet/Lap-top, or any such electronic device which can record audio or video are allowed in the Counting Hall. Proper arrangement shall be made at the Counting Centre for safe keeping of the mobiles of Counting Staff/Candidates/Counting Agents, if any.
- Smoking inside the Counting Hall is strictly prohibited.
- No person should leave the Counting Hall or enter the Counting Hall without prior permission of the Election Officer.

#### **PERSONS ALLOWED INSIDE THE COUNTING HALL**

- Only the following persons are allowed inside the Counting Hall.
  - (i) Election Officer, Counting Supervisor & Counting Assistants.
  - (ii) Persons authorized by the State Election Commission.
  - (iii) Public servants on duty in connection with the election (with Duty Pass).
  - (iv) Candidates or their Counting Agents.
- Election Officer should note that expression of "public servant on duty in connection with election" does not include police officers; such officers whether in uniform or in plain clothes should not, as a general rule, be allowed to enter inside the counting hall without any exception, unless Election Officer decide to call them in for the maintenance of law and order or some similar purpose. Their presence in the counting hall without any compelling reason has on occasion given rise to complaints



by some candidates or parties that their agents have been overawed by an unnecessary show of force.

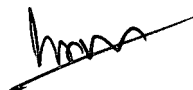
- Election Officer should also note that the above expression “public servant on duty in connection with election” does not include the Ministers/State Ministers/Deputy Ministers of the Union Govt. or State Govt. They can come inside the counting hall only as candidate. They can't be allowed to be appointed as counting agents as they have to be escorted by their security guards who are not be allowed entry into the counting hall. The Commission, has further clarified that even if they voluntarily decide to relinquish their security, they will not be allowed to become counting agent.

### **COUNTING MATERIALS:**

- Generally, the following stationery would be required for one counting table.
  1. Knife for cutting and opening the seals, etc.
  2. Pencil/Ball Point Pen.
  3. Four sheets of plain paper
  4. Paper Weight
  5. Tray as per number of Candidates
  6. Rubber Band
  7. Water sponge
- All these above materials should be provided to the individual Counting Table before starting of the Counting.

### **TRANSPORTATION OF BALLOT BOXES:**

- Normally the Strong Room(s) and counting hall shall be located in one building. If polled Ballot Boxes are stored in a place other than the Counting Centre, then proper security arrangement should be made while transporting Ballot Boxes from the Strong Room(s) to the Counting Centre.
- Polled Ballot Boxes stored in the Strong Room(s) shall have to be taken to the counting table and after the counting of the votes are over the polled votes shall be handed over to the sealing room and blank boxes be kept separately.
- The movement of polled Ballot Boxes from the Strong Room(s) to the counting table is most important and vital work for which trained personnel shall be deployed at the Strong Room(s) as well as in the entrance of the counting hall so that the Group 'D' staff handling the Ballot Boxes do not commit any mistake.
- A register has to be maintained at the Strong Room(s) as well as just at the entrance of the counting hall to avoid any mistake.

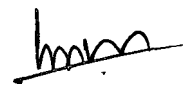


**COUNTING OF VOTES:**

- The counting of votes shall commence on the day and at the place and time fixed by the Commission under the supervision of Election Officer in the presence of the Candidates and their Counting Agents.
- Counting of votes should be continuous.
- In the extraordinary situation <sup>9b</sup> if the counting ~~could~~ not be completed before 8.00 AM of the next day, the counting will continue till it is completed. The counting for the next Zilla Parishad Constituency can only commence only when the previous one is completed even though the time mandated is 8.00 AM.
- During the entire counting process complete discipline and decorum shall be maintained.
- The Election Officer has authority to ask anybody to go out of the counting centre if he disobeys any rightful direction of the Election Officer.
- Counting of votes shall be taken up as per the sequence of the Z P Constituency in a Block. It means the Z.P. Constituency coming first in Serial No. Shall be taken up for counting on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of counting. The counting on subsequent days shall be taken up sequentially.
- In Blocks where there is only 1 Z.P. Constituency the counting of votes in the said Blocks will be completed on the first day of counting in one hall.
- In Blocks where there are 2 Z.P. Constituencies the same shall be completed within first two days of counting in one hall each day.
- In Blocks where there are 3 Z.P. Constituencies one Z.P. constituency will be counted on each day of three day counting in one hall.
- In Blocks where there are more than 3 Z.P. Constituencies, the counting of votes shall be taken up in two separate halls.
- In Blocks where there are 4 Z.P. Constituencies, counting of votes in the 1<sup>st</sup> Z.P. Constituency will be taken up on the first day of counting followed by second one in the second day of counting and 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> on the third day of counting.
- In Blocks where there are 5 Z.P. Constituencies, the counting of votes in the 1<sup>st</sup> Z.P. Constituency shall be taken up on the first day of counting and followed up 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Z.P. Constituencies on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day and 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> constituencies on the third day of the counting.
- In Blocks where there are 6 Z.P. Constituencies, the counting of votes will be taken up for 2 Z.P. Constituencies on each day of counting.

**COUNTING TABLE:**

- There shall be one counting table for one GP and the number of tables for the purpose of counting would be the same as the number of GPs coming within the Z.P. Constituency. Apart from this there shall be a separate table for the Election Officer and another table for the officials engaged in tabulation work. All the counting tables shall be numbered and a register shall be maintained showing distribution of Ballot boxes to the Counting Table.
- Provided that there may be some Gram Panchayats having more number of Wards say 24-25. In that event the counting process will be held up till the counting of all the Wards are completed. In such a situation the Collector may make an assessment and if felt necessary the total votes polled in one GP can be counted in two Tables ward-wise (*one Table with Wards having odd number and other with even number*) with prior approval of the Collector subject to the availability of the space and other logistic arrangement.
- The number of tables for the purpose of counting of votes in one hall shall be equal to the maximum of the number of the Gram Panchayats coming under the Zilla Parishad Constituencies.
- This means if a Block has got three Z.P. Constituencies and the number of Gram Panchayats coming under these Z.P. Constituencies are 6, 8 & 10, then 10 tables shall be arranged for counting of votes.
- As per the earlier instruction the Sl.No. of the Z.P. Constituency appearing first for the Block shall be counted on the first day of counting. But, the counting hall should be prepared for the maximum Gram Panchayats even though the counting may be on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day.
- **ILLUSTRATION:** There are 3 Zilla Parishad Constituencies in a Block. On the 1<sup>st</sup> day counting the Z.P. Constituency 1 will be taken up where there are 8 Gram Panchayats. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of counting there are 6 Gram Panchayats coming under the 2<sup>nd</sup> Z.P. Constituency and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day the counting for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Z.P. Constituency there are 10 GPs. In this event while finalizing the counting hall and preparing the same there should be 10 tables for counting of votes by the counting personnel. Some tables may remain idle in the 1<sup>st</sup> day and 2<sup>nd</sup> day of counting.



### **DISTRIBUTION OF BALLOT BOXES TO THE COUNTING TABLE:**

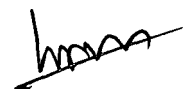
- The polled Ballot Boxes shall be taken to the Counting Hall 15 minutes before the time fixed for counting.
- As counting will be done Zilla Parishad Constituency-wise, Gram Panchayats under the concerned Zilla Parishad Constituency shall be arranged in Odia alphabetically. Distribution of Ballot Boxes to the Counting Tables shall be done in the serial order of the Gram Panchayat i.e. counting of Gram Panchayat placed at Serial No.1 shall be done at Counting Table No.1 and counting of Gram Panchayat placed at Serial No.2 shall be done at Counting Table No.2.

**Illustration** – Suppose one Zilla Parishad Constituency has 8 Gram Panchayats. There shall be 8 Counting Tables. Counting of Gram Panchayat placed at Sl.No.1 shall be done at Counting Table No.1 and counting of Gram Panchayat placed at Sl.No.2 shall be done at Counting Table No.2. For other Tables in similar manner.

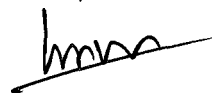
- A register shall be maintained showing which Ballot Box is allotted to which Counting Table. The official in charge of strong room shall hand over the Ballot Box to the Group –D counting staff of the concerned Counting Table and after counting of votes of the concerned Ballot Box, the Counting Supervisor shall return the same through Group D staff to the Sealing Room.

### **COUNTING OF VOTES ON THE COUNTING TABLE:**

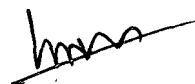
- When the Ballot Box(es) is brought to the Counting Table, the Address Tag put thereon by the Presiding Officer at the Polling Station specifying the name of Gram Panchayat, Ward No. etc. should be verified to ascertain that the Ballot Box(es) is for the Table allotted.
- Before counting, Counting Supervisor shall satisfy himself that the Ballot Box(es) has not been tampered with.
- After Counting Supervisor is satisfied that the Ballot Box(es) is intact and not been tampered with, then counting shall be done by the Counting Assistants. If it is found that the Ballot Box(es) has been tampered with, the same should be kept aside and should not be counted. The matter should be reported to the Election Officer, who in turn will seek clarification from the Commission.
- Before counting, the Candidates or their Counting Agent present at the counting table shall be allowed to inspect the seal fixed by the Presiding Officer on the Ballot Box(es).



- The Seal of the Ballot Box(es) shall be removed in presence of Counting Supervisor.
- In the Ballot Box(es) there would be 4 ballot papers in different colours for Ward Member, Sarpanch, Panchayat Samiti Member and Zilla Parishad Member. The different varieties of ballot papers shall be segregated and be bundled in rubber band.
- Counting of votes in the Ballot Box(es) relating to the Membership of the Ward (Ward Member) shall be taken up first.
- A tray for each symbol and another for invalid ballot paper shall be kept and all ballot papers shall be segregated symbol wise and placed in the concerned tray.
- After segregation the ballot papers shall be counted and each Ballot Paper shall be carefully scrutinized by the Counting Assistant in the course of counting and a ballot paper shall be liable to rejection on one or more of the following grounds, namely:-
  - (a) If it bears any mark or writing by which the voter can be identified,
  - (b) If no vote is recorded thereon,
  - (c) If votes are recorded in favour of more than one candidate,
  - (d) If the mark indicating the votes is placed in such a manner so as to make it doubtful as to which candidate the votes has been given.
  - (e) If the ballot paper is spurious,
  - (f) If it is so damaged or mutilated that its genuineness can not be established,
  - (g) If it is of a design different from the one authorized for use at the polling station,
  - (h) If it does not bear the seal and signature of the Presiding Officer
- The counting Supervisor shall summarily decide at the time of scrutiny and in case of rejection shall endorse under his signature on the ballot paper itself. He shall also record the reason for each Ballot Paper so rejected in a separate paper.

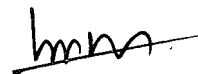


- The total number of votes including invalid votes should tally with total number of votes polled in the concerned Ward for Ward-Member as reported by the Presiding Officer. After counting, the Counting Supervisor shall write down votes polled separately in respect of each Member in Form No.8 in case of Ward Member and announce the votes polled by each candidate and send this Form to the Election Officer. The Counting Assistant shall next proceed to count the Ballot Paper relating to the office of Sarpanch and then Panchayat Samiti Member and Zilla Parishad Member. After completion of counting the Counting Supervisor shall write down such votes polled separately in respect of each candidate in Form No.8A in case of Sarpanch, in Form No.13 in case of Panchayati Samiti Member and in Form No.11-A in case of Zilla Parishad Member and announce the votes polled by each contesting candidate and send these Forms to the Election Officer.
- After completion of counting of each ward, the Counting supervisor will send the result of counting to the Officer in charge of broad sheet for compilation.
- Broad sheet for recording the results of Wards for Sarpanch and Panchayat Samiti Member shall be maintained. Result of Sarpanch, and Panchayat Samiti Member is to be derived by correct totaling of votes secured by Candidates in different Wards arithmetically and then announced by the Election Officer.
- Two Broad sheets shall be maintained for recording the results of Zilla Parishad Member. One Broad Sheet for correct totaling of votes of secured by Candidates in different Wards within a Gram Panchayat of concerned Zilla Parishad constituency arithmetically. Second Broad Sheet for correct totaling of votes of secured by Candidates in different Gram Panchayats within the concerned Zilla Parishad constituency arithmetically. Result of Zilla Parishad Member to be derived by correct totaling of votes secured by Candidates in different Gram Panchayats of concerned Zilla Parishad constituency arithmetically and then announced by the Election Officer.
- The candidate securing the largest number of votes shall be declared duly elected. In the case of an equality of votes, the result shall be decided by drawing lots and the candidate whose name is drawn first shall be declared elected.



**RECOUNTING:**

- After declaration of result by the Election Officer has been made a candidate or in his absence, his counting agent may apply in writing to recount the votes either wholly or in part stating the grounds for such recounting.
- When the Election Officer declared the total number of votes polled by each candidate he should pause for a minute or two. If, during this period any candidate or in his absence his counting agent requested for recounting the Election Officer shall allow the time he would require for making an application for recounting in writing.
- If the Election Officer receives an application for recounting, he should consider the grounds urged and decide the matter judiciously. He may allow the application in whole or in part or may reject it in toto if it appears him to be frivolous or unreasonable.
- The right of a candidate to demand recounting does not mean that recounting can be granted for the mere asking. The candidate demanding recounting has to make a prima facie case that the counting was not accurate and recounting is necessary in the interest of justice.
- In every case the Election Officer should record a brief statement of reasons for the decision.
- The decision of Election Officer is final.
- If the Election Officer decides for recounting of the votes either wholly or in part, he shall take up the recounting in accordance with Rule 47 of the Odisha Gram Panchayat Election Rules, 1965. Rule 30 of the Odisha Panchayat Samiti Election Rules 1991 and Rule 52 of the Odisha Zilla Parishad Election Rules, 1994 is applicable for the Panchayat Samiti Member and Zilla Parishad Member respectively.
- After recounting the Election Officer shall make necessary corrections in the result sheet to the extent necessary after such recounting and announce the result on the basis of correction made by the Election Officer.
- No candidate/agent has right to demand recounting after the Election Officer has completed and signed the final result sheet. Any such demand should be rejected.
- Entire recounting process shall have to be videographed carefully.





**SEALING:**

- Soon after counting of votes are over the used Ballot Papers shall be sealed in packets (Not in Ballot Box) and stored in safe custody.
- Other important election documents shall be sealed properly and kept in the big trunk provided for each GP. and stored in safe custody.
- The Election Officer shall put a responsible official in charge the Sealing of all the packets as there is possibility of important documents being not available when a competent court orders the production of these materials.
- The documents relating to election proceedings received from the Presiding Officers and prepared by the Election Officer shall be retained in safe custody in the office of the Election Officer for a period of three months and shall then unless otherwise directed by a competent Court, be destroyed.
- The documents of records referred to above in the custody of the Election Officer shall not be opened or inspected or produced save with the prior permission of the Commissioner or of a competent Court.

N.B. *If, any of the above instructions come in conflict with the prescribed Rules for Conduct of Elections to Panchayati Raj Institutions, the prescribed Rules shall prevail over the above instructions. (2) The above guidelines are subject to modifications as and when required.*

*hms*  
16.12.17

