

HANDBOOK
FOR
RETURNING OFFICER
2014

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

leave or not, or who are otherwise on medical advice not to undertake any rigorous or hazardous work, from election duty.

3.4.3 Every female official called for election duty should be informed of the arrangements made for her stay. Unless arrangement is made and information in this behalf is furnished to such female official, she shall not be called to perform any election duty at any such place.

3.4.4 The female polling personnel should not be put on duty on the basis of computer randomization process. They should be put on duty by manual randomization by the observers in the neighbouring polling stations so that they are able to go to the polling stations in the morning of the poll day. (ECI Instruction No 464/inst/2009 dated 22-9-2009)

3.5 JUDICIAL OFFICERS

3.5.1 The employment of Judicial Officers for election work will be subject to the following conditions,

- (a) The present practice of obtaining the prior approval of the High Court before engaging Judicial Officers for election work should continue;
- (b) Civil Judicial Officers of and above the rank of District Munsif or any rank corresponding thereto will not be engaged for election work in any capacity;
- (c) Judicial Magistrates may not be appointed as Sector Magistrates in charge of law and order duties or engaged as Presiding or Polling Officers of Polling Stations; and
- (d) In States where there is no separation of judiciary and executive, Executive Magistrates may be put in charge of law and order work in connection with election; provided a sufficient number of them are left out for dealing with criminal cases arising out of the law and order situation relating to elections. In these states also, no Civil Judicial Officer should be detailed in any capacity for election work.

3.6 PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS

3.6.1 Physically challenged persons with disabilities as defined under the "Persons With Disabilities (Equal Opportunities Protection of Rights & Full Participation) Act, 1995 should not be deployed on election duty. In the case of physically handicapped persons (including visually handicapped and deaf and dumb persons), it may be

considered whether any handicapped person as aforesaid would be able to go to the polling station/counting centre and perform election duties there. If any such person would not be in a position to perform election duties, he must be exempted subject to the satisfaction of the District Election Officer/Returning Officer.

- 3.6.2 The DEO and the RO shall make personal efforts to ensure that the special needs and requirements of the physically challenged persons are taken into account while choosing the polling station for deployment. It shall be ensured that they are not posted in any remote areas; rather they should invariably be posted at the polling stations located in the headquarters. This can be incorporated in the randomization software itself so that the database contains information about the physically challenged personnel, if any and if drafted on election duty those persons are not be posted in any difficult location even inadvertently.
- 3.6.3 The RO should make a special effort to identify such individuals at the time of training itself and personally meet and discuss with them in order to appreciate their nature of disabilities and limitations and decide the deployment. In case any such physically challenged person even inadvertently deputed to any difficult location, the RO should be in a position to make necessary change manually in consultation with the Observer(ECI Instruction No.464/INST/2008/EP Date: 23rd December 2008)

3.7 PROPER MIXING OF POLLING PERSONNEL DRAWN FROM DIFFERENT OFFICES

- 3.7.1 In order to avoid any allegation of collusion among the polling personnel in favour of any candidate or political party and to instil confidence in minds of political parties and candidates free and fair elections, you should ensure a proper mix of polling personnel drawn from different offices and departments at the time of formation of a polling party. Further, the polling personnel should be drawn both from the State Government departments as well as the Central Government offices, as far as practicable. It is pertinent to mention that central govt. officials must first be used for appointment as micro-observers and then, if available for proper mix as stated above.
- 3.7.2 No person shall be assigned polling duties in an assembly constituency where he is employed or resides. He should also not to be posted in his home constituency.

3.8 RANDOMIZATION OF POLLING PARTY

- 3.8.1 District Election Officer should obtain a complete database of officers eligible for polling party duties from respective authorities. All relevant information should be compiled into a database. The database should contain 125% of your total anticipated requirement of election staff.