

# **Directive on Conducting Voters' Registration; Directive No.6/2021**

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### **Article 1. Issuing Authority**

The National Election Board of Ethiopia, by virtue of the powers vested in it by article 163(2) of the Electoral, Political Parties Registration, and Election's Code of Conduct Proclamation No.1162/2019 and article 7(11) of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia Establishment Proclamation No. 1133/2019, has issued this directive.

#### **Article 2. Short Title**

This directive may be cited as the "Directive for Conducting Voters' Registration No.6 /2021"

#### **Article 3. Definition**

Unless the context otherwise requires, in this directive:

1. "**FDRE**" means the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.
2. "**Board**" means the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia established under Proclamation No. 1133/2019.
3. "**Political Party**" means an entity with a political program established by organized citizens and registered in accordance with the electoral law to hold political power by contesting in elections at the National, Regional or Local levels.
4. "**General elections**" means the elections of members of the House of Peoples' Representatives and Regional State Councils conducted in accordance with relevant laws.
5. "**Local elections**" means the elections of representatives to Nationalities' Zone, Zone, Woreda, City or Sub-City or Kebele Councils conducted in accordance with relevant laws.
6. "**Re-election**" means the rerun of election upon cancellation of election result by the Board in accordance with the authority entrusted with it under Article 7(16) of Proclamation No. 1133/2019; upon the decision of the Federal Supreme Court to conduct a rerun election based on Article 154 of Proclamation No.1162/2019; or

when candidates obtain equal number of votes and it is impossible to determine the winner.

7. **"By-election"** means elections conducted to fill in a vacant council member seat whose mandates are terminated due to recall or any other reason.
8. **"Referendum"** means voting conducted to assess the public interest or know the public's decision based on a decision made in accordance with the FDRE Constitution or other relevant laws.
9. **"Polling Station"** means a place where voter registration, voting and counting of votes take place for various levels of elections.
10. **"Electoral Roll"** means a record wherein voters are registered at polling stations to participate as voters for elections at all levels.
11. **"Voter Identification Card"** means an identification card issued to a voter upon registration at a polling station.
12. **"Election Officer"** means a person assigned by the Board to administer elections at various levels.
13. **"Head of Polling Station"** means an election officer appointed by the Board to head/lead the polling station as chairperson.
14. **"Registrar"** means a member of the committee of election officers at each polling station appointed by the head of the polling station to register voters.
15. **"Queue controller"** means a member of the committee of election officers at a polling station that, by standing at the entrance of the polling station, receives/serves voters in their order of arrival.
16. **"Security or security force"** or **"security organ"** means a police force assigned at the request of the head of the polling station to maintain the security of a polling station.
17. **"Special Registration Date"** is a date of registration decided by the Board on which voters who were unable to register during the regular registration period due to force majeure will be registered
18. **"Election Law"** means the Ethiopian Electoral, Political Party Registration and Election's Code of Conduct Proclamation No. 1162/2019.
19. **"Grievance Hearing Committee"** means a committee established in accordance with the Proclamation during elections to render administrative decisions to complaints lodged at a regional branch office, constituency or polling station level.
20. **"Person"** means a legal or natural person.
21. Unless the context requires otherwise, the definitions provided in the proclamation shall also apply to this directive.

#### **Article 4. Scope of Application**

This directive applies to general, local elections, by-elections, re-elections and referendums conducted in accordance with the Constitution, as well as to voter registration conducted in regular, mobile and special polling stations, without prejudice to specific stipulations of relevant directives.

#### **Article 5. Objective**

The objective of this directive is to establish a genuine, inclusive and transparent voter registration procedure through which citizens elect their representatives equally by exercising their right to vote.

#### **Article 6. Gender Reference**

Provisions set out in one of the genders in this directive shall also apply to the other gender.

### **CHAPTER TWO**

#### **STRUCTURE OF VOTER REGISTRATION**

#### **Article 7. Structure of a Polling Station**

1. Each polling station shall have a committee consisting of election officers, at least one of which is a woman, who are recruited by the Board according to the electoral law and relevant directive of the Board.
2. Voter registration shall be conducted where a minimum of three election officers are present at the polling station.
3. The head of the polling station shall appoint one of the election officers as a Registrar.
4. Voter registration shall be conducted by the designated registrar.
5. The head of the polling station shall, on a rotational basis, appoint one election officer as a registrar every week
6. Notwithstanding the provisions of sub-article 3 of this article, if the election officer assigned as a registrar is unable to discharge her duty due to force majeure, the registration shall temporarily be conducted by another election officer as directed by the head of the polling station.
7. If the registrar is permanently unable to be present for duty, the head of the polling station shall immediately and permanently substitute her with an officer on the list of reserve election officers.

8. Where there is no reserve election officer, the head of the polling station shall immediately notify the constituency and request a replacement.
9. Each polling station shall have a Grievance Hearing Committee chaired by an election officer assigned by the head of the polling station and one male and one female member elected from voters registered in the constituency.
10. Members of the Grievance Hearing Committee shall not be members of any political party and shall be of good character and integrity. Their working procedure shall be determined by the directive on Grievance Hearing Committee issued by the Board.

#### **Article 8. Powers and Responsibilities of Election Officers of a Polling Station**

In accordance with the election law, this directive as well as the voter registration manual prepared by the Board, polling station election officers shall have the following core responsibilities and powers:

1. Head of a polling station shall:
  - a) chair the polling station's committee of election officers;
  - b) assign and rotate election officers for carrying out roles and responsibilities stipulated under the election law and this directive and when unable to carry out their duties replace them with the officers reserved by the Board at constituencies
  - c) ensure that constituency office delivers voter registration documents and materials to the polling station; polling station has adequate voter registration documents as well as notify the constituency office if these documents are likely to be used within the next two or three days;
  - d) ensure that all documents and materials are properly kept and secured whenever they are not in use for voter registration;
  - e) ensure that the polling station has a room suitable for work and it is properly prepared;
  - f) ensure that only those persons who are allowed by the electoral law are present in the polling station;
  - g) follow up that election materials are properly kept and handled in accordance with election materials administration directive, and report this daily to the constituency office.
  - h) ensure that the peace and security of the polling station is maintained and work for its observance;
  - i) ensure that security officers remain outside of the polling station keeping their distance unless their assistance is requested by the head of the polling station;

- j) ensure that registration data are reported to the constituency office at the end of each registration day;
- k) ensure that necessary materials are sent to the constituency office within the timetable set by the Board and in accordance with "the directive on the code of conduct of election officers" and "Directive on transportation, allocation, distribution, custody and disposal of election materials and documents";
- l) ensure that fully used voter card register is immediately sent to the constituency;
- m) Perform other activities assigned to her by the Board or other duly authorized personnel of the Board.

2. The registrar shall have the following responsibilities:

- a) Fill out the electoral roll and register voters;
- b) Checking the voter's ID Card against the information shared with the registrar to ensure the personal information of the voter is correctly entered;
- c) Register eligible voters on the electoral roll and forthwith issue voter registration card;
- d) Registering voters using only pen or ink in legible handwriting and without erasure and deletion;
- e) Keeping the electoral roll and registration forms safely during the whole period of registration;
- f) ensuring that the electoral roll and other registration documents and materials are properly arranged and placed out of the reach of unauthorized persons;
- g) Performing other responsibilities assigned to her by the head of the polling station or duly authorized personnel of the Board.

3. The queue controller shall have the following responsibilities:

- a) Standing at the entrance of the polling station, ensure that except for voters with their assistants, only one voter is coming to the registrar at a time;
- b) Search and allow entrance of voters for registration and prevent the entry of prohibited weapons and other sharp materials into a polling station.
- c) Ensure that voters awaiting registration are properly queued at the entrance of the polling station and they leave the polling station immediately after registering, and forthwith report to the head of the polling station the occurrence of any event that may disturb the activities of the polling station;
- d) Performing other responsibilities assigned to her by the head of the polling station or a person duly authorized by the Board.

## **Article 9. Registration Timetable**

1. Nationwide, voter registration for general elections shall commence and conclude on dates scheduled by the Board.
2. The Board shall set a registration timetable for local elections based on the constitutions of the concerned regions and other relevant laws.
3. The Board, prior to setting the dates for registration as provided under sub article 1 and 2 of this article, consults with political parties contesting in the elections and, as appropriate, civil societies, mass media, and other stakeholders.
4. The Board shall include the start date of voter registration in the election calendar and continuously notify this to the public through mass media and other publicizing mechanisms for 15 days prior to the commencement of the registration.
5. Voter registration shall be conducted on government working hours, except for public holidays declared under the Federal law, including on Saturdays and Sundays according to the Board's timetable.
6. The election officers shall have one-hour lunch break based on the working hours of the region.
7. The Board may set a different working hour for registration in some regions considering their official working hours.

## **Article 10. Special Registration Date**

1. The Board, when it deems it necessary, may determine additional special registration dates one week before the completion of voter registration timetable.
2. An eligible voter who, due to circumstances that hinders registration, was unable to register may request to be registered during the special registration date that the Board may fix.
3. Conditions or situations that can be taken as circumstances that prevent a voter from being registered constitute any one of the following or other similar factors:
  - a) Unforeseen circumstances or emergencies emanating from acts of a third-party that a voter cannot be held responsible for;
  - b) A serious illness or accident befalling the voter unexpectedly;
4. An eligible voter who failed to be registered due to a force majeure may register by presenting documentary evidences or witnesses to the head of the polling station.

5. An application under this article shall be entertained on the date to be specified by the Board after conclusion of the voter registration period.
6. Where the Board determines such a special registration date as per this article:
  - a) It shall notify all stakeholders including voters, through suitable means;
  - b) Upon receiving the decision under sub-article (5) of this article, polling stations shall register voters who are permitted to register in a special voter registration timetable on the page next to the last page on which election officers and agents previously had signed and closed the electoral roll, and the electoral roll will be signed and closed once the special registration period ends.

### **CHAPTER THREE**

#### **DISTRIBUTION AND CUSTODY OF REGISTRATION MATERIALS**

##### **Article 11. Distribution of Documents and Preparation for Voter Registration**

1. The Board shall ensure that documents and materials required for voter registration are distributed to the respective constituency offices five days prior to the commencement of the voter registration.
2. The constituency offices shall ensure that registration documents and materials are delivered to polling stations two days prior to the commencement of voter registration based on the timetable provided by the Board.
3. The Board will provide adequate training on voter registration to election officers at different levels.

##### **Article 12. Handover of Election Documents and Materials**

Each constituency shall receive documents and other materials sent to it for voter registration and ensure that they are delivered with care to polling stations based on the timetable provided by the Board. The handover shall be made using the handover form prepared by the Board.

##### **Article 13. Security of Election Documents and Materials**

1. Election officers at different levels shall ensure that the necessary care and security is provided during the distribution of election materials and documents from the Board to constituencies or to the polling stations.
2. Constituency and polling station election officers shall prepare a convenient place for receiving and storing the electoral roll as well as election documents and materials.

3. Constituency and polling station election officers shall store the electoral roll, election documents and materials with care in a safe and secured place that can protect them from being improperly tampered without authorization, damaged, burned, stolen or opened.
4. The registrar shall ensure that all registration materials under her custody are properly packed/sealed daily and stored properly.
5. Upon conclusion of the voter registration and public display period, the handover of, the election materials shall be made between the head of the polling station and the head of the constituency and kept at the constituency office.
6. The handling, handing over and disposal of voter registration materials, equipment or documents shall be in accordance with the relevant directive issued by the Board.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PREPARATION FOR REGISTRATION**

#### **Article 14. Place of Voter Registration**

1. Voter registration shall be conducted, at the polling station established by the Board according to the electoral law on the basis of permanent residence of voters
2. It is prohibited to conduct voter registration outside the polling station, by going door-to-door or moving around.
3. Notwithstanding the provision of sub-article (2) of this article, based on the lifestyle of pastoralists, the Board may decide to establish mobile polling stations or conduct door to-door voter registration.
4. Establishment of polling stations by election officers shall, including others, consider the special needs of persons with disabilities, suitability of the place to conduct voter education activities as well as its identifiability and accessibility to the public. It shall be established in locations selected by the Board.
5. The location where the voter registration takes place should be notified to voters and candidates 15 days prior to commencement of voter registration.
6. In any election, the number of voters assigned to each polling station shall not exceed 1500.
7. Without prejudice to stipulations under the electoral law and directives applicable to special and mobile polling stations, there shall not be more than one polling station in an area designated for one polling station.

8. Notwithstanding the provisions under sub-article 7 of this article, where a certain polling station registers more than 1500 voters and there are still voters waiting to be registered, a new polling station shall be established and the registration shall proceed.
9. The provisions of sub-article 7 of this article shall not apply on polling stations established for special constituencies and on special polling stations established in institutions specified by the law.
10. The Board may, where it deems it appropriate, change the location of polling stations; It shall notify voters, contestant political parties, observers, civic societies engaged in voter education and journalists of such change in accordance with sub-article (5) of this article. The Board may establish a working procedure applicable for this.

### **Article 15. Places that cannot Serve as Voter Registration Stations**

Without prejudice to the provisions within the directive for the establishment of special polling stations, voter registration stations shall not be established at the following places:

1. Military camps;
2. Police stations;
3. Churches;
4. Mosques;
5. Other places of worship;
6. Hospitals and other health institutions at various levels;
7. Bars, restaurants and hotels;
8. Buildings owned by religious or political organizations; and
9. Private residences.

### **Article 16. Preparation of Polling Station**

1. Election officers at polling stations shall conduct the following preparations to make the polling station suitable for voter registration:
  - a) Setting up a room or a tent that has a separate entrance and exit in which voter registration will be conducted;
  - b) Preparing the seating arrangement in the polling station in such a way that the registrar, observers, and members of the grievance hearing committee are seated in front and able to effectively observe the registration process including when voters enter and exit the registration area.
  - c) Preparing a waiting area, with shade or protection from rain or sun, for voters who came to register.

2. Election officers shall, 3 days prior to the commencement of the voter registration period:
  - a) Write visibly on paper prepared for this purpose and post at the polling station notice necessary to enable voters to clearly identify the location of the polling station where voter registration will be conducted,
  - b) In addition, through the voter education program of the Board, they ensure that additional information is availed to voters.
3. Election officers shall ensure that the electoral roll, voter registration cards, as well as a stamp-pad and other documents and materials required for voter registration are sufficiently available.
4. The head of the polling station shall immediately notify the constituency office where any of these materials are deficient.

### **Article 17. Preparation of the Electoral Roll**

1. Each polling station shall, in accordance with the electoral law, have an electoral roll that is user-friendly, easy for handling as well as helpful in avoiding errors.
2. The electoral roll will have pre-printed columns to enter including the particulars required by the electoral law any information the Board deems useful for the election process.
3. The electoral roll shall be prepared prior to the first day of voter registration.
4. On the front cover of the electoral roll, the name of the region, constituency, woreda, Kebele, and the polling station as well as the identification number of the polling station shall be recorded.

### **Article 18. Persons that can be Present in Voter Registration Stations**

1. The following persons may be present at the polling station during the voter registration period:
  - a) Stationary or mobile election observers accredited by the Board;
  - b) Members of the media accredited by the Board;
  - c) Members of Grievance Hearing Committee;
  - d) Authorized and assigned Employees of the Board;
  - e) Agents of political parties and independent candidates accredited by the Board;
  - f) Assistants of persons with physical disability who come to register.

2. The voter registration process will proceed as per the schedule, even where those persons mentioned under Sub Article 1 failed to be present.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **EXECUTION OF VOTERS REGISTRATION**

#### **Article 19. Eligibility Criteria to Register as a Voter**

In accordance with article 18 of Proclamation No. 1162/2019, to be registered as a voter any person shall:

- a) be an Ethiopian citizen;
- b) be 18 years old and above on the day of registration; and
- c) have been residing within the constituency for at least 6 months.

#### **Article 20. Proofs Required for Registering as a Voter**

1. A person who is eligible to register as a voter may be registered by presenting , as appropriate, one of the following evidences to the polling station located in the area she resides in:
  - a) a Kebele identification card from her place of residence or a passport that proves her identity;
  - b) a Kebele identification card or a passport may be used for the purposes of registration, even if expired. However, if the identification card has not been renewed for the past five years, she shall be required to provide another evidence
  - c) In the absence of a Kebele identification card or passport, documents bearing a recent photograph of the voter, such as a driving license, certificate of residence, military discharge paper, student identity card, and employee ID card shall be deemed to be sufficient identification documents for registration purpose.
2. In the absence of proofs indicated hereinabove, registration may be carried out:
  - a) In the event that two of the election officers can confirm the voter's identity, upon the testimony of these election officers;
  - b) In the case of rural areas where the voter can be identified through traditional or customary methods, upon the testimony given to head of the polling station by two persons knowledgeable of the culture and after the incident is recorded in the minutes and signed by the election officers.

- c) Where there is no proof that the registrant is 18 years old or where there is doubt about her age, it can be verified through the testimony of an oldest family member or relative, or in their absence, two persons who know the registrant, and recording this in the minutes.
  - d) The head of the polling station shall hear the testimony and election officers shall sign on the minutes.
3. A registrant unable to submit documents indicated above can be registered through the testimonies of three persons that can produce documentary proof regarding long residence in the Kebele where the polling station is established can be registered after recording the process in the minutes prepared by the Board and is signed by the election officers.
  4. Any person who gives any testimony regarding a voter's identity, residence, or other condition shall:
    - a) be a registered voter;
    - b) not be a candidate or an agent of a candidate.
  5. Where the identity and residency of a voter cannot be ascertained using only one of the proofs indicated hereinabove, registrars can use multiple methods of proof.

#### **Article 21. Persons who are Ineligible to Register as Voters**

The following persons cannot be registered as voters:

1. A non-Ethiopian;
2. A person under the age of 18 on the day of registration;
3. A person, due to a mental illness, has been declared incapable by a recognized health institution or a court;
4. A person whose voting right is stripped-off by decision of a court in accordance with the law.

#### **Article 22. Registration Procedure**

1. Each eligible voter, except for those specified under sub article 3 of this article, shall be registered on the electoral roll by the registrar on the basis of her order of arrival at the polling station.
2. A person who comes for registration shall give her correct personal information as asked by the registrar. Every information she gives shall be carefully entered on the electoral roll.
3. Persons with disabilities, frail, elderly, pregnant and lactating mothers, as well as parents carrying infants that are eligible to vote, shall, upon notifying the head of the polling station and without queuing, be registered with the help of an assistant of their choice.
4. An assistant of a frail, blind or illiterate registrant shall:
  - a) Be 18 years old and above; and

- b) not be a candidate, an agent of a candidate, or an election observer.
5. Where a person who needs assistant comes to the polling station without their own assistant, the election officer will assign from among those that came to register a person who is willing to help during registration, the registrar shall enter the particulars of the registrant in the electoral roll and at the same time reading each particular aloud that observers and the registrant can hear.
6. Once voters have been registered, they shall, depending on their ability, sign or put their fingerprints in the electoral roll parallel to their names, or where the voter does not have all fingers, the registrar shall record this fact in the special remarks' column of the electoral roll.

### **Article 23. Registration in Person, Once and in One Place**

1. No voter shall be registered more than once in in a single polling station or register again in a different polling station.
2. Voter registration, including special voter registration, shall only be conducted in person.

### **Article 24. Voter Registration Card**

Any person who has been registered as a voter:

1. Will be issued a voter registration card.
2. Each voter registration card will have the following columns to be filled out with information entered in and cross checked against the electoral roll, once the voter has been registered:
  - a. The voter's full name including her grandfather's name;
  - b. The region, zone, Woreda and Kebele, House number, Village or locality where the voter resides in;
  - c. The electoral roll number, register's serial number, voter identification number, electoral roll page number;
  - d. Age of the voter
  - e. The voter's signature or thumbprint, registrar's signature; and
  - f. The date of registration.
3. A voter shall have only one voter registration card.
4. A registered voter shall bring her voter registration card to the polling station on election day.
5. Any voter who proves that her voter registration card has been lost or damaged may apply, during the voter registration period, public display period, and election day and within the working hours of the polling station for a replacement card.
6. After cross-checking on the electoral roll, the voter may be issued a replacement card or allowed to vote if the application is presented on the election day upon recording the incident in the minutes. The copy of the previously issued voter

registration card undetached from the electoral roll shall be marked as invalidated. If the voter comes with the spoiled card, she should return it.

### **Article 25. Particulars of the Electoral Roll**

1. The electoral roll shall have columns for entering the following particulars:
  - a. Serial number;
  - b. Voter's identification number;
  - c. Date of registration;
  - d. Full name of registrant, including grandfather's name;
  - e. A remark on whether a testimony was given;
  - f. Registrant's gender;
  - g. Age of the registrant;
  - h. Registrant's date and year of birth;
  - i. Disability;
  - j. Type of disability;
  - k. House number/village or locality/specific name of the area;
  - l. Duration of residence within the constituency;
  - m. Signature or fingerprint or other marking on the day of registration;
  - n. Signature or fingerprint or other marking on voting day; and
  - o. Special remark.
2. Particulars mentioned under (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), and (i) of this sub-article shall be entered by asking the registrant for and by checking the information on the document submitted for registration.
3. The column mentioned under sub-article 1(n) of this article is where the voter places his/her signature on the day of the election.

### **Article 26. Minutes to be Recorded at the Polling Station at the End of Each Day of Voter Registration**

1. When polling station election officers break for lunch and comes back, and at the end of each day of voter registration, the following information in the electoral roll shall be recorded on the form prepared by the Board for this purpose:
  - a) The identification number of the last registered voter;
  - b) Date; Month, and Year
  - c) Region;
  - d) Constituency;
  - e) Woreda;
  - f) Kebele;
  - g) Name of polling station;

- h) Identification number of the polling station;
  - i) Sealing numbers;
  - j) The time the polling station closed; and
  - k) The time the polling station opened.
2. The election officers at the polling station shall sign on the form daily.
  3. The form filled out and signed in accordance with this article shall be kept safely at the polling station.
  4. The election officers shall seal the documents and lock the polling station during lunch break and open the seal after the lunch break and record the fact in the minutes.
  5. Election officers, observers and agents of candidates sign on the minutes form prepared by the Board when a polling station is opened, closed for lunch and re-opened after lunch and at the end of the registration. A person who has a dissenting opinion shall record it and put his signature.

### **Article 27. Closing of the Regular Electoral Roll**

At the end of the day and regular registration hours:

1. Voter registration on the electoral roll shall cease;
2. The electoral roll shall be closed immediately after the activities listed chronologically below are completed.
3. At the end of the voter registration, the entry lines next to the last name registered in the electoral roll shall be closed by connecting them in a zigzag line from left to right.
4. Once the electoral roll is closed in accordance with Sub article 3 of this article, and the following information are recorded on a confirmation form prepared by the Board, the head of the polling station will put his name and signature on it.
  - a) The total number of registered voters;
  - b) The number of registered female voters;
  - c) The number of registered male voters;
  - d) Region;
  - e) Constituency;
  - f) Woreda;
  - g) Kebele;
  - h) Name of the polling station;
  - i) The identification number of the polling station;
  - j) Date; Month, and Year
  - k) Identification number of the last registered voter;
  - l) Number of spoiled voter registration cards;
  - m) Number of testimonies;
  - n) Number of complaints;

5. The number of voters identified under sub-article 3 above shall be recorded on the back page of the last page of the electoral roll that has been closed with a zigzag line by specifying the number of "Female voters\_\_\_, Male voters\_\_\_ and total number of voters\_\_\_"; election officers shall record this information on the minutes prepared for this purpose and sign it.
6. Unless the Board decides otherwise and notifies the relevant polling stations in a suitable manner, no new voters shall be registered and no entry or text shall be added to the electoral roll once it has been closed and signed on by election officers in the manner indicated under this article.
7. Without prejudice to the provisions of sub-article (6) of this article, a polling station or constituency office will, as appropriate, conduct registration or cancellation of registration in the electoral roll on the basis of a decision given by the polling station or constituency Grievance Hearing Committee on disputes related to voter registration.
8. A voter who presented a copy of a court decision regarding voter registration shall be allowed to cast vote directly in accordance with the directive on voting, vote counting and announcement of result.
9. In addition to the confirmation form filled out at the end of the last day of voter registration in accordance with article 27/4, election officers shall also place their signatures next to the total number of registered voters filled under sub-article 5 of this article.
10. Agents of Independent candidates or political parties, representatives of mass media, as well as observers may observe the voter registration process including the process of closing the electoral roll.

#### **Article 28. Closure of Voter's Special Electoral Roll**

After voters have been registered, in accordance with article 11 of this directive, on a date announced by the Board for special registration, the special electoral roll shall be closed in the following manner:

1. The special registration shall be concluded and the electoral roll closed on the date and at the time specified in the Board's timetable for special registration.
2. The closing of the electoral roll for special registration shall be in accordance with the provisions of article 27 of this directive relating to the closing of the regular electoral roll.

#### **Article 29. Public Display of the Electoral Roll**

1. Upon the conclusion of voter registration, the electoral roll shall be displayed to the public in the premises of the polling station for 10 consecutive days.

2. The person who comes to view the electoral roll shall bring her voter registration card and ID card or witnesses to prove her identity.
3. The electoral roll shall be displayed in the following manner:
  - a) The election officers designated as registrars of the polling station shall be responsible for displaying the electoral roll.
  - b) The head of the polling station shall arrange and facilitate the display process for those persons that appear to view the electoral roll in order of their arrival.
  - c) Any person who wants to view the electoral roll shall appear before the registrar and request for the information that she wants to look in the electoral roll. The registrar shall open the electoral roll and show the required information to the person requesting it.
  - d) No voter is allowed to take photograph, touch, write or put a mark on the electoral roll other than looking the information s/she requested for or listening to the information being provided by the registrar and taking notes.
4. Observers, agents of candidates and political parties, and election officers of the polling station can be present during the display of the electoral roll.
5. The public display of the electoral roll for 10 consecutive days including Saturdays, Sundays and holidays in accordance with sub-article (1) above shall take place during government working hours.
6. Once the display of the electoral roll is over, a confirmation form recording the following information shall be prepared and signed by election officials:
  - a) Whether the electoral roll is displayed to the public for 10 consecutive days;
  - b) Brief information on the content of the information requested by the public and whether it is provided or not;
  - c) Brief information on whether there was any complaint lodged to the Grievance Hearing Committee by a resident of the locality that examines the electoral roll and the response given thereof; and information regarding observers, agents of political parties or independent candidate who were present during the display period. This information will be filled in a confirmation form, signed by the election officers and documented.

### **Article 30. Correction of Errors on Electoral Roll**

1. A voter who finds errors on the electoral roll concerning her personal information during the display period may apply to the polling station for the correction of the errors.

2. The application under sub article 1 of this article shall be made using the form prepared for this purpose and submitted along with voter registration card and a document that proves the error.
3. If the application is granted, the election officer shall make the necessary correction in accordance with the registration manual prepared for election officers.

### **Article 31. Cancellation of Registration**

1. A registered voter shall not be cancelled from the electoral roll, except when a complaint with evidence attesting incapacity verified by a professional, fraudulent or multiple registration, death, court decision that stripped of voting rights in accordance with relevant laws is submitted against the voter.
2. When one of the grounds mentioned in sub-article (1) of this article occurs or brought to their attention, courts, vital events offices, hospitals, *Idirs*, or other members of the society who have knowledge of such facts have the duty to immediately report to the relevant:
  - a) Regional branch office of the Board, or
  - b) Constituency, or
  - c) Polling station
  - d) Shall clearly specify in the report the constituency and polling station in which the voter is registered.
3. For cancellation of registration to be undertaken at polling station, a regional branch office or constituency that receives the information according to sub article 2 of this article shall immediately communicate same to the polling station.
4. The polling station which has received information in accordance with sub-article (2) and 3 of this article shall:
  - a) Immediately cancel the voter from the electoral roll.
  - b) Notify the voter in writing of the cancellation of her registration and of, if she has any objection, her right to lodge a complaint to the grievance hearing committee of the polling station.
  - c) Record in minutes the cancellation of the registrant from the electoral roll under sub-article (a) by mentioning the evidence presented to it and the ground for the cancellation; and
  - d) Have the minutes recorded under sub-article (c) signed by election officers.
5. It is only until the end of the public display period that a registrant can be cancelled from the electoral roll under this article.

## CHAPTER SIX

### **SUSPENSION OF THE VOTER REGISTRATION AND PUBLIC DISPLAY PROCESS DUE TO FORCE MAJEURE**

#### **Article 32. Suspension of Voter Registration and Public Display Process**

1. The head of the polling station may suspend the process of voter registration or public display where the polling station cannot implement its regular activities due to force majeure such as insurrection or conflict, hurricane or flood, fire or any other compelling circumstance.
2. The head of the polling station shall consult the concerned security officer prior to suspending the voter registration or public display process for security reasons
3. The head of the polling station shall make every effort to consult with the constituency office before suspending the voter registration or public display process. Where it is impossible to do this, she shall immediately notify the constituency office after the suspension.
4. The head of the polling station shall suspend the process of voter registration or public display where she is advised to do so by the head of the constituency office or the immediate supervisor of the election security officers.
5. Where the process of voter registration or public display is suspended in accordance with this article, the head of the polling station shall ensure that sensitive materials, such as the following are properly sealed:
  - a. Electoral roll, register of voter's card, official seal of the polling station and completed forms in case of the suspension of voter registration; and
  - b. Electoral roll, official seal of the polling station and completed forms in case of the suspension of the public display process.
6. The head of the polling station shall discuss with the constituency office to decide the place to temporarily store sensitive materials until the resumption of the voter registration or public display process. Once the temporary storage is determined, she shall ensure that these materials are properly sealed and stored in a locked room with proper security.

Accredited agents, observers and journalists present at the polling station may observe the process of sealing and moving sensitive materials to their place of temporary storage.
7. The head of the polling station shall ensure that the time and reason of the suspension of the process is recorded in the minutes and signed by election officers.

### **Article 33. Resumption of the Process of Suspended Voter Registration or Public Display**

1. The head of the polling station shall discuss with the constituency office to decide whether it is possible to resume the process of voter registration or public display. Where the process was suspended due to security reason, she shall consult with the head of the security officers of the polling stations.
2. Where, due to the incident it is impossible to use the polling station previously established, the head of the polling station shall consult with the constituency office or the relevant office of the Board to decide on the establishment of a new polling station in the vicinity or resume the process in another polling station.
3. The suspended process at the polling station shall resume as soon as possible. The process shall be extended by an equal period of time the suspension took.
4. Once the time and place to resume the process is determined, the head of the polling station and the constituency office shall announce the same to the public.
5. The head of the polling station shall notify of the place and time of the same to accredited agents, observers and journalists.
6. The head of the polling station shall record the place and time of the resumption of the process on the minutes of the polling station.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

### **Article 34. Acts Prohibited During the Voter Registration Process**

1. Anyone who commits the following prohibited acts during the voter registration process shall be held legally liable:
  - a) A registrar found to have knowingly registered a person who does not fulfill the eligibility requirements;
  - b) a registrar found conducting registration outside of the place, date and time designated for registration;
  - c) A person found to have been registered more than once, in more than one polling station or is found in possession of more than one voter registration card;
  - d) A person found to have provided a false declaration, false evidence or document to the relevant organ in order to be registered as a voter;
  - e) A person who, using any threat or giving false information or evidence, prevents or forces voters to
  - f) A person who prohibits, restricts or disrupts another person from exercising her right to register as voter or to lodge a complaint;
  - g) A person who alters, cancels, spoils or forges voter registration card;

- h) A person who cancels or erases a legally registered voter's information from any election document; or
  - i) Any officer other than the registrar found registering voters.
2. Whenever acts prohibited under this article or in violations of article 157 of the electoral law as well as provisions of the relevant criminal law are committed, so that legal measures are taken, the head of the polling station shall refer the case to the police, and follow it up
  3. Without prejudice to the provisions of sub-article (1) of this article:
    - a) Any registered voter, an agent of a political party, or an independent candidate who has a grievance regarding voter registration may lodge a complaint and the reasons for it to the polling station's Grievance Hearing Committee, using a form prepared by the Board;
    - b) Should a decision not be reached within five days as provided by the electoral law or the complainant is not satisfied by the decision given, she has the right to receive a decision in writing by lodging a complaint to the Board's Grievance Hearing Committees at different levels, and to the competent regional or federal courts.
    - c) The polling station's Grievance Hearing Committee will conduct its functions in accordance with the decision given by the constituency Grievance Hearing Committee or the competent court.
  4. In the event that a polling station election officer notices that a voter has registered more than once or in more than one polling station, or is in possession of more than one voter registration card, or receives an evidenced complaint she shall immediately cancel the voter from the electoral roll in accordance with the electoral law and this directive.
  5. If the appropriate Grievance Hearing Committee of the Board decides, on the basis of a complaint raised under article 152(2) of the electoral law that the act of registering a person more than once was not committed with fraudulent intent, it shall pass a decision directing the head of the polling station to cancel the second registration and discard the second voter registration card. The polling station shall execute its activities in accordance with the decision given.

### **Article 35. Forms Used during the Voter Registration Process and Reporting**

1. Election administration organs established at different levels shall report to the next relevant election authority in the hierarchy about the voter registration process.
2. The reporting stated under sub-article (1) of this article shall be conducted in accordance with the timetable set by the Board and relevant directives.

**Article 36. Duty to Cooperate**

Any person or organ shall have the duty to cooperate in the implementation of this directive up on the request of the head of the constituency.

**Article 37. Penalties**

Any person who violates this directive or is found to have intentionally committed an offense that disrupts the electoral process shall be held liable under the relevant law.

**Article 38. Repealed Directives**

Any directive or practice that contradicts this directive shall not apply to matters covered herein.

**Article 39. Effective Date**

This directive shall come into force on 30 December 2020.

**Birtukan Midekssa**

**Chairperson of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia**