

Notice from the National Election Board of Ethiopia

Roles, duties, responsibilities and prohibited acts of recruited election officers for the Sidama Referendum

1. Election officers at all levels must be governed by the electoral law; the proclamation on the establishment and code of conduct of election officers; applicable international principles; as well as directives put forward by the Board in order to establish clear and neutral operations that ensure democratic, and free and fair elections.
2. Election officers must be prepared to serve voters neutrally and shall conduct the referendum according to the electoral law.
3. By understanding the electoral law, the regulations and guidelines put forward by the Board, election officers must ensure that the referendum is held according to the electoral law; ensure that voters, public agents, journalists, and observers, have the proper information and understanding to partake in the referendum within the law; and shall prevent prohibited acts from taking place during the referendum.
4. Election officers must refrain from sharing sensitive information known to them as part of their roles and responsibilities in the referendum, with unauthorized third parties, as well as refrain from disclosing any information or decision in relation to the referendum until such information or decision is made public by the Board.
5. Election officers must be courteous and provide relevant information in accordance with the electoral law; the directives on freedom of information and code of conduct of mass media communication, when there is a legal and appropriate question regarding the referendum.
6. Election officers are expected to, in accordance to the referendum's timeline and directives, be present in their designated election offices and provide efficient service; ensure capacity and readiness to accommodate and respond to grievances or implement suggestions, as appropriate.
7. Election officers must serve voters, public agents, journalists, and observers with impartiality.
8. Election officers must be truthful when disclosing information and decisions; refrain from providing false or unverified information; and misrepresenting the truth.

9. Election officers must set examples by understanding and implementing the electoral law, as well as by demonstrating confidence throughout their engagement in the referendum.

10. Election officers must treat voters, public agents, journalists, and security forces with integrity and sincerity; and ensure preparedness to accommodate people with special needs such as: those who cannot read and write; pregnant women and nursing mothers, and the elderly, by providing the necessary support and service.

11. Election officers must handle election documents and materials entrusted to them with care and integrity; ensure that sealed documents are not opened in the absence of observers; fill and sign the necessary forms of ethical conduct and handover of documents.

12. Election officers must be free from corruption and ethical misconduct; refrain from receiving gifts or favors from any stakeholders partaking in the referendum.

13. Election officers must refrain from engaging in any manner that may lead to a conflict of interest in relation to their roles and responsibilities in the referendum. If such circumstances occur, they must notify and excuse themselves from their duties, as well as ensure that a review of the cause of the conflict of interest is carried out without revealing the decision to the public.

14. Election officers that violate any code of conduct or demonstrate ethical misconduct may be removed from their duties; disciplinary actions taken against them or be held accountable under the electoral law or the criminal law.