

ELECTION / IMMEDIATE

TELANGANA STATE ELECTION COMMISSION
5th Floor, DTCP Building, Opp: PTI Building, A.C. Guards, Hyderabad – 500 004.

CIRCULAR

No.381/TSEC-ULBs/2015

Dated:29-06-2015

Sub: TSEC - ELECTIONS –Ordinary Elections to Municipalities / Nagar Panchayats / Elections casual vacancies of ward member of Municipalities / Nagar Panchayats - **Selection of Polling Stations** - Instructions - Issued.

In elections to Municipalities / Nagar Panchayats, the Election Officer is responsible for the setting up of the Polling Stations and the publication of the list of Polling Stations. The Polling Stations are to be set up more or less at a permanent location covering well defined Polling areas. Changes will become necessary only when there is an abnormal increase of Electors in a particular polling area.

In the ensuing elections, since a voter has to cast only one vote to elect a member of the ward and Electronic voting machines are used in this elections to facilitate fast and smooth polling, the strength of voters allotted to a polling station is fixed around 1200.

2-1. Drawing List of Polling Stations:

These lists should be drawn up, as far as practicable, bearing in mind, the following instructions:

- (a) The optimum number of Polling Stations to be set up in a ward should be determined by dividing the total number of voters in a ward by 1200.
- (b) A Polling Station should be provided for a well defined polling area, normally covering about 1200 electors. However, in exceptional cases, such number may exceed to avoid the break up of any Polling area.
- (c) When the number of voters in a ward exceeds 1400, separate polling station should be set up, as far as possible, in the same Building.

- (d) Polling Station may be set up in colonies predominantly inhabited by the Scheduled Castes and weaker sections of the society even though the number of voters may be less than 1200.
 - (e) Select the actual site of each polling station carefully in advance and arrange for material, structures, fittings etc., necessary to set up a polling stations in order to make the polling station to satisfy the legal requirements and practical convenience.
- 2-2. As far as practicable, the polling station should have normally a minimum area of 20 sq.meters so that there is no congestion inside the polling station.
 - 2-3. Select a hall / room which is well lit and is having two openings, as far as practicable, so that one can be used as 'entrance' and the other as 'exit' for the smooth and orderly conduct of poll.

3-1: Location of Polling Stations:

To the extent practicable, polling stations should be located more or less permanently so that the voters go and cast their votes always at one polling station. Further, as far as practicable, polling station should be set up at the same places where they were located during general election to State Legislative Assembly and House of People held in the year 2014, so that the voters may not have to go to different polling stations for different elections. As far as possible, the polling station should be setup within the Polling area. If a suitable building is not available in the area, then it may be setup outside polling area but as near to its own area as possible. In cases where suitable buildings are not available in a particular ward, Polling Stations may be set up in adjacent wards duly furnishing reasons in this regard.

- 3-2: Polling Station should be set up in such a manner that ordinarily no voter is required to travel more than 2 km from his residence.
- 3-3: As far as possible, polling stations should be located in schools (Government or aided) and other Government or Semi-Government offices as the furniture and equipment required would be available there and could be made use of without any extra cost to the Municipality. The location of polling stations in private buildings or premises should be avoided; but where this becomes unavoidable, buildings should be properly requisitioned and/or the consent of the owner should be obtained in writing. The private buildings so requisitioned with the consent should be at the disposal of the Election Officer for the period required for the poll. The building and the area around it up to a radius of two hundred meters should be under the control of the Presiding Officer. No watch and ward or other personnel connected with the owner, whether armed or unarmed, should be allowed to remain either at the Polling Station or within a radius of two hundred metres around it. The security arrangement at the Polling Station and within the above area will be the responsibility of the State Police under the control of the

Presiding Officer. After nominations are filed, it should be ensured that the owner is not a contesting candidate or known sympathiser or worker of any of the candidates at the election. If the owner of the premises requisitioned for election happened to be a contesting candidate or known sympathiser or worker of any of the candidates the polling station must be immediately shifted duly following the procedure.

- 3-4: No Polling Station should be located in Police Stations, Hospitals, and places having religious significance:
- 3-5: In case no suitable building, either Government or private, is available, the Polling Station can be located in the temporary structures but, as far as possible, this should be avoided as it involves considerable expenditure to the Municipality and is also open to other risks like rains, fire, etc.

4-1: Setting up of Polling Station for voters suffering from Leprosy:

If there is a leprosy sanitarium within the Municipality, then a separate Polling Station may be set up for the inmates alone and the Officers, medical and other staff, working in the sanitarium, may be appointed as Presiding and Polling Officers of the Polling Stations.

4-2. Provision of Polling Stations for Weaker Sections:

Identify the localities predominantly in-habited by Weaker Sections and locate Polling Stations in these localities irrespective of the number of Electors. Welfare Associations or Voluntary Organisations championing the cause of such Weaker Sections should also be associated in identifying such localities and locating the Polling Stations.

5-1. List of Maps:

The draft list of Polling Stations should be drawn up in the prescribed form as shown in Annexure-I. The demarcation of polling area should be clearly done. The name of each polling area and the number of voters in it should be shown in the respective columns against each Polling Station. By a clear description of the polling area it should be feasible for an ordinary voter to know to which Polling Station he should go for recording his vote. In order to ensure that a uniform method is followed in the matter of filling up the columns as detailed in Annexure – I, the following instructions may be kept in mind.

Column 1: Ward number shall be entered in this column.

Column 2: The serial number of the Polling Stations should be given on a rational basis commencing from the north-western corner of the ward and proceeding in a zig-zag manner to south-eastern corner of the ward.

- Column 3:** The locality to be specified is the name of the area in which the Polling Station is located. In the case of temporary structures, the description of the exact site chosen for the location of the temporary structure should be clearly indicated.
- Column 4:** The name of the building in full should be clearly described. The use of abbreviations should be avoided. In cases where more than one polling station is located in the same building, the location should be made clear by mentioning "North Wing", "South Wing", etc.
- Column 5:** The area of the polling station in square metres should be indicated. The reason for locating Polling Stations in rooms/halls having an area of less than 20 square metres should be furnished in 'Remarks' Column of the Proforma against the appropriate entry.
- Column 6:** If there is a separate entrance and a separate exit, 'Yes' may be written, otherwise reasons why it has not been possible to locate the Polling Station in a room/hall with separate entrance and exit may be given.
- Column 7:** The names of blocks, wards, streets, localities, house numbers should be given.
- Column 8:** It should be indicated whether the polling station is for all voters or exclusively for men voters or women voters.
- Column 9:** This column should contain information about the total number of voters assigned to the Polling Station according to the final electoral roll of the Municipality updated upto the date of issue of election notification.
- Column 10:** This column should indicate the distance to be travelled if the maximum limit of 2 Kilometres is exceeded.
- Column 11:** Where it is not practicable to conform to the directions of Election Authority/Commission in regard to the location or area of a Polling Station, broad reasons may be given in this column, for the consideration of the District Collector.

5-2. The total number of voters in the Ward, the total number of Polling Stations proposed and the average number of voters per polling station should invariably be shown at the end of each list.

5-3. The list should be accompanied by a map to scale showing :

- (i) All the wards in the Municipality with the number of voters in each such ward on the map itself.
- (ii) The place selected for the location of the polling stations;

- (iii) The area covered by each polling station; and
 - (iv) Serial number of the polling stations indicated in a systematic manner, preferably beginning from the north-western corner of the ward proceeding zig-zag and ending at the south eastern corner.
- 5-4. The use of abbreviations in the list should be avoided, as far as possible, and where those are used, they should be expanded.
- 5-5. If any local terms are used to describe buildings, etc. in the list, they should be explained.
- 6. Publication of the List of Polling Stations in Draft:**
- 6-1. With the prior approval of the Collector & District Election Authority, the Election Officer is required to provide sufficient number of polling stations for every ward.
- 6-2. After the list has been prepared on the lines indicated above, and after receipt of notification from the State Election Commission fixing programme for publication of list of Polling station, the Election Officer should publish it in draft on the date fixed by the Commission in the language or languages of the electoral roll for the Municipality, for general information, inviting objections and suggestions by a specified date. The notice of publication of the draft list of polling stations and the places at which it can be inspected should also be given in local newspapers and written objections or suggestions invited for consideration. This list should also be published on the web-portal of the concerned Municipal body simultaneously.
- 6-3. Copies of the lists should be supplied to the local branches of all recognized political parties, registered political parties with reserved symbol and to the sitting members of the House of the people and Legislative Assembly concerned under due acknowledgement.
- 6-4. The Election Officer should, thereafter, call the party representatives and Legislators to a meeting on the date fixed by the Commission and discuss the draft list and receive the suggestions. Any bonafide intending candidate who wishes to take part in the discussions at this meeting should also be permitted to do so.
- 6-5. The Election Officer should then take his decision and amend the draft list, wherever necessary and finalise the list of Polling Stations for the wards of

Municipality. He should then forward it along with the map, the scrutiny sheet and the certificates in the forms prescribed in Annexures II & III to the District Collector on the date fixed by the Commission.

- 6-6. The Collector & District Election Authority will then consider and approve the proposed list of polling stations with any changes he deems necessary in the form prescribed in Annexure – IV on the date fixed by the Commission. The list finally approved by the District Collector and District Election Authority should be published as directed in para 7 of this circular on the date fixed by the Commission.

7. Final Publication of the List of Polling Stations:

- 7-1 The Election Officer shall publish the list of polling stations, on the date fixed by the Commission with the prior approval of the Collector & District Election Authority by making available a copy thereof for inspection at the following places and displaying at his office, circle & ward offices, if any, a notice in the form given in Annexure-V.

- 1 Office of the District Collector
- 2 Office of the Revenue Divisional Officer
- 3 Office of the Tahsildar
- 4 Office of the Sub-Registrar
- 5 Office of the District Court/Sub Court
- 6 Office of the Munsif Magistrate Court.
- 7 Office of the Public Libraries
- 8 Post Offices
- 9 Banks
- 10 Police Stations

The list so published shall be the list of Polling Stations for that Municipality. This would also be hoisted/published on the web portal of the concerned Municipality.

- 7-2. The Election Officer is empowered to correct only printing or clerical mistakes, if any, after such publication.
- 7-3. The list of Polling Stations for the Municipality shall be published in the language or languages in which the electoral roll for that Municipality is published.
- 7-4. If the lists of Polling Stations are approved before final publication of the electoral rolls, they should be reviewed after the rolls are finally published, particularly with respect to the number of electors allotted to each polling station. If there has been substantial increase in the number of electors allotted to any polling station making such number far in excess of the normal permissible limit and if it is

considered desirable to provide an additional polling station, such cases should be referred to the Collector & District Election Authority for his approval. In such cases, as far as practicable, the additional Auxiliary polling station should be provided in the same premises in which the earlier polling station is located or as near to that premises, as possible.

8. Modifications in the List :

- 8-1. Modifications as a result of variation in the number of voters within the polling area allotted to a polling station consequent on the revision of electoral rolls should be reported to the Collector & District Election Authority and prior approval has to be obtained from him before issue of modifications, if any.
- 8-2. Changes in the location of polling stations to new buildings or sites may become necessary where the owner of the building or site originally proposed for a polling station has since become a contesting candidate or has developed strong sympathies for such candidate or a political party or because of any natural calamity that might have effected such building. It may also be due to subsequent discovery that there is no such building as was proposed. All such changes should be reported to the Collector & District Election Authority and prior approval has to be obtained from him before issue of modifications, if any.
- 8-3. Once the lists are approved, requests from political parties and individuals for shifting of the polling stations from one site to another should not be normally considered except when there are overriding considerations of public convenience for the change proposed. If the Election Officer is satisfied, he should consult other political parties and contesting candidates and then make his recommendations to the Collector & District Election Authority in the matter.

9. Change in the location of Polling Stations:-

- 9-1. The Election Officer should on no account make any change in the location of polling stations already approved by the District Collector without his prior approval, as any change may ultimately result in the election being declared void.
- 9-2. Where changes become inevitable and have to be made, such changes should be referred to the Collector & District Election Authority for his approval. The changes should be fully published and all contesting candidates and political parties, etc, informed in writing duly obtaining proper acknowledgement from all concerned.
- 9-3. **Change in the nomenclature of the building of a Polling Station:**

After the approval of the list of polling stations for a ward, if there is any change in the nomenclature of the building in which the polling station is proposed to be set up, for example, upgradation of a Primary School to a Upper Primary School and the like, but otherwise there is no change in the location of the polling station, cases of such change need not be referred to the Collector & District

Election Authority for his approval. However, the Collector & District Election Authority should be informed of such change. The political parties and the contesting candidates, etc., should also be informed in writing about such change duly obtaining proper acknowledgement.

10. Supply of Copies of the list:

- 10-1. Each contesting candidate at an election shall be supplied, free of cost, with three copies of the list of polling stations in the form of Annexure III for that ward immediately after the last date for withdrawal of candidatures. Copies should also be made available at the price fixed and may be sold to persons on demand.
 - 10-2. The Election Officer should also supply the required number of copies to the Superintendent of Police/Deputy Superintendent of Police as the case may be. The list of Polling stations may also be put on official web site.
 - 10-3. Where the list of polling stations already approved by the Collector & District Election Authority is proposed to be adopted with modifications in future elections the Election Officer should call for a meeting of the representatives of the local branches of the recognized political parties, and the Legislators and after consulting them forward the revised list to the Collector & District Election Authority with reasons for the modifications. While approving the modifications, it should be ensured by the Collector & District Election Authority that the Election Officer furnishes a certificate to the effect that he has consulted the political parties and the Legislators and that they have no objection to the modifications. Where a modification is not acceptable to any political party or Legislators or a candidate and such modification is necessary from the point of view of Election officer, full justification for the change should be furnished to the Collector & District Election Authority. After the list is approved by the Collector & District Election Authority it should be published for general information in the Municipality. The Election Officer should ensure wide publicity of the details with regard to polling stations so that no inconvenience is caused to a voter.
11. The programme for publication of list of polling stations would be issued separately by the State Election Commission.

12. All the Municipal Commissioners of Municipalities & Nagar Panchayats are requested to take necessary action in the matter for setting up of the polling stations as per the above instructions. The receipt of this circular should be acknowledged by return of post.

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

**Sd/-M. Ashok Kumar
SECRETARY**

Encl:

- Annexure-I : Draft list of Polling Stations.
Annexure-II : Scrutiny sheet for Polling Stations.
Annexure-III : Certificate to be furnished by the Election Officer.
Annexure-IV : Proceedings to be issued by the District Collector along with the prescribed form.
Annexure-V : Notice of publication of list of Polling Stations.
Annexure-VI : Final list of polling stations attested by District Collector.

To

All the Election Officers & Commissioners of Municipalities / Nagar Panchayats.
All the District Collectors & District Election Authorities.
The Election Authority & Commissioner & Director of Municipal Administration,
Telangana, Hyderabad.
The Hyderabad and Warangal Regional Director-cum-Appellate Commissioner of
Municipal Administration.

Copy to

The Principal Secretary to Government, MA & UD Department, Government of Telangana,
Secretariat, Hyderabad.

// ATTESTED //


SECTION OFFICER

ANNEXURE - I

Draft list of Polling Stations

..... Municipality

Ward No.	Sl. No.	Locality of polling station	Building in which it will be located	Area of the Polling Station	Whether there is a separate entrance and exit if not reasons	Polling area *	Whether for all voters or men only or women only	Total number of voters assigned	Maximum distance that a voter will have to travel to reach the station	Remarks
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)

1. Total number of voters
2. Total number of polling stations proposed
3. Average number of voters per polling station:-

Date :

Election Officer

* Here given names of streets, localities, house numbers and part number of the electoral roll assigned. In case part is split up into two polling stations, then the serial number (not the house numbers) of the voters assigned should also be mentioned.

ANNEXURE – II

Scrutiny Sheet for list of Polling Stations

..... Municipality.

1. Total number of voters in the Municipality.
 - (a) Men
 - (b) Women
 - (c) Service voters
 - Total
2. Number of polling stations required on the basis of an average of 1200 voters per polling station.
3. Total number of polling stations actually provided
4. Average number of voters per polling station
5. Number of polling stations to each of which more than 1200 voters have been assigned, indicating the highest number of voters assigned to a polling station
6. The lowest number of voters assigned to a Polling station
7. No. of polling stations for which the maximum distance that a voter will have to travel is more than 2 kilometers
8. Whether all the polling areas have been clearly demarcated
9. Whether serial number of polling stations has been done in a systematic manner
- 10.(a) Whether there are any areas predominantly inhabited by electors belonging to scheduled castes and other weaker sections of the Society
 - (b) If so, the number of polling stations set up separately for them and the total number of electors assigned to each of them
11. Whether any polling station has been proposed to be located in any :
 - (a) Private building

- (b) Temporary structure; and if so, whether the exact site chosen for the location of the polling stations has been clearly indicated in the list
12. No. of polling stations which have less than 20 sq.mt. area
13. Details of polling stations where more than 4 polling Stations have been located in the same building
14. Whether it has been certified that all the polling areas Within the Municipality are covered by the proposed polling stations
- 15.(a) Serial No. of separate polling stations provided for women voters
(b) In case of (a) above, whether polling stations for men and women voters of a particular area have been located in the same building
- 16.(a) Whether a polling station is located outside the jurisdiction of a ward
(b) If so, furnish reasons
17. Serial number of polling stations which have not been located of the wards attached to it
18. Whether it has been certified that the private buildings do not belong to any of the candidates, his active workers or known sympathisers?
19. Any other remarks

Election Officer

Note : Please specify the serial numbers in addition to total number of polling stations against items 5, 6, 10(b), 11, 12, 13, 15 and 17.

ANNEXURE – III

Certificate to be furnished along with list of polling stations :

- (i) That the draft list was duly published, objections and suggestions were invited, and discussed with the party representatives and legislators on the lines indicated in the Election Authority's directions;
- (ii) That all the polling areas within the ward have been covered in the list;
- (iii) That no building, public or private, which is a temple, church, mosque, Gurdwara or has any religious significance or in respect of which any section of the public may have any legitimate objection to enter, has been proposed as a polling station;
- (iv) That no police station, hospital or dispensary is proposed as a polling station;
- (v) That separate polling stations have been set up in areas, electors of which are predominantly scheduled castes and other weaker sections of the society and that no such area has been either left out or linked with areas where electors predominantly belong to forward communities.
- (vi) That where the usual limit of 1200-1400 voters per polling station or the limit of two kilometers beyond which a voter should not ordinarily be required to walk has been maintained, no better arrangements is practicable.
- (vii) That no private building in the list of polling stations belongs to any political party or is known to belong to any prominent or active member of any of the political parties; and
- (viii) That in case where private buildings have been selected as polling stations, the written consent of the owner for the purpose has been obtained.

Signature of the Election Officer

Place :

Date :

ANNEXURE – IV

Proceedings of the District Election Authority District:

The District Election Authority hereby directs that the Election Officer of Municipality shall publish the list of polling stations provided by him for the ward by making a copy thereof available for inspection and displaying a notice in the form appended as Annexure – VI.

- a. at his office and
- b. offices mentioned in para 7-1 of the circular.

The Election Officer shall, as far as practicable, also make a copy of the relevant parts of the list, together with the notice in the form appended, available for inspection at such of the places as he may consider necessary and suitable:-

**Collector & District Magistrate &
District Election Authority
..... District.**

ANNEXURE – V

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION OF LIST OF POLLING STATIONS

I..... the
Election Officer of..... Municipality hereby
provide for the Municipality with the prior approval of the
District Collector, the polling stations specified in the appended list for the polling areas
or groups of voters noted against each.

Election Officer

Date :.....

Municipality.....

List of polling stations for
.....of Municipality.

Ward No.	Sl. No.	Locality of Polling station	Building in which it will be located	Polling area	Whether for all voters or men only or women only
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)

Election Officer

Date :.....

Place:.....

ANNEXURE - VI

LIST OF POLLING STATIONS

Name of the Municipality:					Total No. of wards:				
Ward No.	Polling Station No.	Building in which the polling station will be located with name of the locality and address	Door Nos.		Sl. No. of the voters		Whether for all voters or men only or women only	Votes Strength	Remarks
			From	To	From	To			
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)

DISTRICT COLLECTOR &
DISTRICT ELECTION AUTHORITY
_____ District

