



**STATE ELECTION COMMISSION  
GOA**

***Guidelines  
for holding Local Body elections in view of  
the Covid-19 pandemic***

## **PART I**

### **I. General instructions about Preventive measures to be taken at the Polling stations.**

- i. All Voters are to be thermally screened for temperature at the entry of the polling station.
- ii. Norms of social distancing by marking circles at 2 metre distance for the voters to stand in a queue outside the polling station and, allowing entry of limited number of voters in the marked circles near the entrance of the polling station shall be strictly followed.
- iii. The provision of hand sanitisers at the entrance of the polling stations shall have to be made without fail.
- iv. The place used for setting up the polling station and all the materials/items used shall be properly sanitized before setting it up. Proper cleaning and frequent sanitization of the workplace, particularly of the frequently touched surfaces like tables, ballot boxes, cross mark, metal strip, etc must be ensured by the polling staff on duty.
- v. Polling parties shall be provided with hand gloves.
- vi. Use of face covers/ masks is mandatory for all.
- vii. If the temperature is above prescribed norms, the Voter shall be asked to sit in the shed for 10 minutes and the second reading will be taken. If the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading is still higher than the prescribed norms, then the Voter will be asked to come for poll at the last hour of Poll i.e. 4.00 pm to 5.00 pm.
- viii. Covid-19 positive persons will be allowed to cast their vote during the last hour of the polling day i.e. between 4.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.
- ix. The BLOs shall be instructed to identify the Covid Positive person in each Polling Station.
- x. The required number of PPE kits and hand gloves based on the number of Covid positive person shall be provided by the Returning Officer to the BLOs which shall be used by the Covid positive persons when they come to the Polling Station for voting.

- xi. The Covid positive person shall display their identity proof to the Polling Staff.
- xii. Frequent hand washing with soap /alcohol-based hand sanitizers will be used.
- xiii. Hygiene related etiquettes to be strictly followed by all. This involves strict practice of covering one's mouth and nose while coughing/sneezing with a tissue/ handkerchief/flexed elbow and while disposing off used tissues properly in dust bins.
- xiv. Spitting shall be strictly prohibited.
- xv. Drivers deployed on election duties shall follow required do's and don't's related to COVID-19. A proper sanitization/disinfection of vehicle steering, door handles, keys, etc. should be carried out.

**II. Specific preventive measures required at the Distribution/ Collection and Counting Centres .**

- i. The provision of hand sanitiser at the entrance will have to be made and only the asymptomatic staff/visitors/candidates and their agents shall be allowed after thermal screening at the entrance of the Distribution/Receiving/Counting Centres.
- ii. The place used for setting up the Distribution/Receiving/Counting Centres and all the materials/items used shall be properly sanitized.
- iii. The face cover/mask has to be worn at all times by all inside the distribution, collection and counting centres.
- iv. Seating arrangement for polling personnel and counting staff at the distribution, collection and counting centres is to be made in such a way that adequate social distancing is maintained.
- v. Large gatherings outside the distribution centre, collection centre, and counting centres and inside the counting halls will not be allowed .
- vi. IEC /awareness material on preventive measures about COVID-19 to be displayed prominently at suitable places.
- vii. A Gazetted officer may be designated for dealing with the election staff who may develop Covid-19 symptoms during election duty to coordinate with the Health authorities and the RO. The following measures will be taken in such circumstances:

- a) When one or more staff members on poll duty is found to be suffering from symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 either in the office on the election duty, the said person/s should be placed in a separate room or area where he is isolated from others at the workplace.
- b) The nearest medical facility (hospital/clinic) may be immediately informed and the state or district helpline should be immediately called.
- c) The advice of the designated public health authority may be sought for carrying out a risk assessment and for making further advice regarding management of the said case, his/her contacts and the need for carrying out disinfection of the said premises as per Government instructions, if any.

## **PART II**

### **Guidelines to be followed by the Candidates and the Political parties to prevent spread of COVID-19 during the election process**

#### **General instructions about Preventive measures to be taken while attending official meetings.**

- i. All the candidates and representatives of the political parties must maintain a minimum distance of 2 mts as far as feasible.
- ii. Use of face covers/ masks is mandatory. Use and throw masks should be changed at regular intervals and properly disposed off for which a separate dustbin will be made available.
- iii. Frequent hand washing with soap (for at least 40 seconds) will be practiced at regular intervals. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers will be provided at the venue.
- iv. Hygiene related etiquettes to be strictly followed by all. This involves strict practice of covering one's mouth and nose while coughing/sneezing with a

tissue/ handkerchief/flexed elbow and disposing off used tissues properly in dust bins.

- v. Self-monitoring of health by all and reporting of any illness at the earliest to the immediate supervisory officer will be necessary.
- vi. Spitting, chewing tobacco shall be strictly prohibited.
- vii. Installation & use of AarogyaSetu App is must while entering in the offices of Returning Officers, Assistant Returning Officers, and the State Election Commission.
- viii. Number of people in the elevators (if any) shall be restricted, duly maintaining social distancing norms.
- ix. All concerned are advised to cooperate with the security person for taking body temperature with thermal gun at the entry point .
- x. Social distancing norms must be followed at the offices of the RO / ARO both within and outside the office premises.
- xi. The entry of the candidates/political party representatives who are residing in any containment zone, to any office is strictly prohibited till the containment zone is de-notified.
- xii. At the time of filing nomination, not more than six persons will be allowed to remain present inside the office chamber of the RO at any given point of time so as to avoid crowding and they are advised to observe social distancing norms while inside the chamber.

**Specific preventive measures to be taken by the political parties/candidates during the election meetings, rallies, press briefings etc.**

- i. Political parties and the contesting candidates should strictly adhere to the advisory issued by MHA, Govt. of India from time to time.
- ii. The provision of thermal screening and hand sanitizer will have to be made in sufficient measure at the entry point depending upon the number of persons likely to be there.
- iii. Only the asymptomatic staff/visitors/candidates and their agents should be allowed to participate.

- iv. Separate entry and exit for party members and visitors shall be preferably maintained.
- v. Provision shall be made for carrying out sanitization/disinfection of the interior areas, meeting and press briefing areas and the vehicles by using 1% sodium hypochlorite solution/ spray.
- vi. As far as possible virtual meetings may be arranged.
- vii. All persons who are at higher risk i.e. old / aged employees, pregnant staff and those who have underlying medical conditions should be advised to take extra precautions and try to avoid participating in the meetings, rallies and press briefings.
- viii. Proper crowd management in the parking lots and outside the venues of the meetings, rallies culminating centres and press briefing places by duly following social distancing norms has to be ensured.
- ix. Posters/standees/AV media on preventive measures about COVID-19 to be displayed prominently at suitable places.
- xiii. Anybody showing Covid symptoms should be referred to the health authorities.
- xiv. Drivers deployed by the candidates/political parties for electioneering related activities shall follow required do's and don't's related to COVID-19. Proper sanitization/disinfection of vehicle steering, door handles, keys, etc. should be carried out. It shall be ensured by the service providers/ officers/ staff that drivers residing in containment zone areas are not requisitioned to drive vehicles.

**Safety measures required at the candidate's camps outside the Polling Station.**

The places used for setting up the candidate's camp outside the polling station shall be properly sanitized before setting it up.

- i. All the persons deployed shall wear masks and maintain social etiquettes.
- ii. Face shield /gloves need to be provided to persons deployed on duty.
- iii. Proper disposal of face covers / masks / gloves left over shall be ensured.