



GOVERNMENT OF KERALA

Abstract

Election Department – General Election to Kerala Legislative Assembly 2021-Counting of votes on 02.05.2021. Implementation of Covid Protocol at Counting Centres/Halls – State Action Plan – Formulated - Orders issued.

ELECTION (EQUIPMENT) DEPARTMENT

G.O.(Rt)No.261/2021/Elec.

Dated, Thiruvananthapuram. 30.04.2021

- Read: 1) Document No. 324.6.EPS.OT.001.2020 issued by Election Commission of India.
- 2) G.O(Rt)No. 85/2021/Elec. Dated 11.02.2021
- 3) G.O(Rt)No. 383/2021/DMD dated 20.04.2021
- 4) Letter No.464/INST/2021/EPS dated 27.04.2021 and 28.04.2021 from Election Commission of India.

ORDER

In view of the Covid -19 Pandemic, as per instructions of Election Commission of India in document read as 1st paper above, detailed guidelines were issued vide Government Order read as 2nd paper above for the conduct of safe Kerala Legislative Assembly Election 2021.

2. In view of the surge in Covid-19 cases throughout Kerala, and taking into consideration of the directions issued vide Government Order read as 3rd paper above and directions from Election Commission of India as per letter read as 4th paper above, the following action plan is formulated for strict compliance for the safe conduct of counting of Kerala Legislative Assembly Election 2021 on 2nd May 2021.

- (1) District Election Officer will be the Nodal Officer at each Counting Centre to ensure adherence to the Covid-19 related norms at Counting Centres, with assistance of Nodal Health Officer.

- (2) Compliance Certificate in respect of Counting Centre that all arrangement has been made as per extant COVID guidelines shall be obtained from the concerned Health Authorities. **[Action: Returning Officer and District Medical Officer]**
- (3) No candidates/Agents will be allowed inside the counting hall without undergoing RT-PCR/RAT test or without having 2 doses of vaccination against Covid-19 and will have to produce Negative RT-PCR report or RAT report or Vaccination reports within 48 hours of start of counting. Principal Secretary (Health) shall make arrangement for RT-PCR/RAT test to Candidates/Counting Agents before the day of Counting. List of Counting Agents shall be made available by the contesting candidates to the Returning Officer concerned by 1700 hours on the day three days prior to the date fixed for counting of votes. **[Action: Principal Secretary (Health) and Returning Officer]**.
- (4) No Public gathering outside the counting venue shall be allowed during the process of counting. **[Action: State Police Chief and Returning Officer]**.
- (5) The Counting Hall should be sufficiently big to maintain Social Distancing, and should have proper ventilation, windows, exhaust fan etc. as per available protocol of State Disaster Management Authority. **[Action: Returning Officer]**.
- (6) The counting centers shall be disinfected before, during and after the counting. **[Action: Returning Officer/District Medical Officer]**.
- (7) Sealed outer boxes of EVM/VVPAT shall also be sanitized/disinfected. **[Action: Returning Officer]**.
- (8) Counting of votes of a constituency shall be considered at 3-4 halls by appointing additional Assistant Returning Officers. **[Action: District Election Officer and Returning Officer]**.
- (9) At the entry of hall/room/premises-
 - a, Thermal Scanning of all persons shall be carried out;
 - b. Sanitizer, soap and water shall be made available and every person entering in hall shall sanitize his/her hand. **[Action: Returning Officer]**.

- (10) No one having any symptom of Covid19 like fever, Cold etc. shall be allowed to enter in the Counting Hall. **[Action: Returning Officer]**.
- (11) Candidates may appoint/replace the counting agents in case RT-PCR/RAT report is positive. **[Action: Candidates/Returning Officer]**.
- (12) Social distancing shall be maintained inside Counting Hall, seating arrangement of Counting Personnel/Agents etc. should be made as per extant Covid-19 guidelines of SDMA. **[Action: Returning Officer]**.
- (13) There shall be sufficient number of PPE kits for Counting Agents/Candidates. The Counting Agents sitting arrangements shall be made in such a way that between 2 counting agents 1 agent shall be in PPE. **[Action: Returning Officer]**.
- (14) The following items shall be provided to every counting official and security personnel in addition to other prescribed items;
 - a. Mask
 - b. Sanitizer
 - c. Face-Shield.
 - d. Gloves **[Action: Returning Officer]**.
- (15) For Counting of Postal Ballot, Additional Number of Assistant Returning Officers can be deputed. If required, Postal Ballots may also be counted in a separate Hall under the supervision of the Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer. **[Action: Returning Officer]**.
- (16) There shall be proper arrangement of disposal of Covid related wastage viz Maks, Face Shield, PPE Kit, Gloves etc. **[Action: District Medical Officer]**.
- (17) There shall be proper display of guidelines “Does and Don’t” at convenient places including entrance gate and inside counting hall. **[Action: Returning Officer and District Medical Officer]**.

- (18) **No Victory processions after the counting on 02.05.2021 shall be allowed. [Action: State Police Chief and All District Election Officers].**
- (19) **Not more than two persons shall be allowed to accompany the winning candidate or his/her authorized representative to receive the certificate of election from the Returning Officer. [Action: State Police Chief, All District Election Officers and Returning Officers].**
- (20) Anybody violating instruction on Covid-19 measures will be liable to proceeded against as per the provisions of section 51 to 60 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, besides Legal Action under section 188 of the IPC and other Legal Provisions as applicable as specified in order No. 40-3/2020-DM-1(4) dated 29th July 2020 of Ministry of Home Affairs. **[Action: State Police Chief/DEOs].**
- (21) State Police Chief will issue instructions to all Commissioners of Police/Deputy Police Commissioners to ensure that enforcement of Covid Protocol is complied with in letter and spirit. **[Action: State Police Chief].**
- (22) The District Election Officers also being the chairperson of District Disaster Management Authority shall ensure that provisions of the Disaster Management Act 2005 are invoked in case of violations and enforce the Covid Protocol during counting, strictly. **[Action: District Election Officer].**

3. Keeping in view the public health, the above action plan shall be complied with by all concerned strictly in letter and spirit.

(By Order of the Governor,)

Teeka Ram Meena
Chief Electoral Officer

To

- 1) Chief Secretary.
- 2) State Police Chief, Thiruvananthapuram.
- 3) The Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare Department,
Thiruvananthapuram,
- 4) Director of Health Services, Thiruvananthapuram.
- 5) The Advocate General, Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
- ✓6) All District Election Officers and Head of the Departments.

- 7) All District Medical Officers.
- 8) Executive Director, Information Kerala Mission.
- 9) Director of Medical Education, Thiruvananthapuram.
- 10) Director, Web & News Media, Information and Public Relation Department, Thiruvananthapuram. (for press release).
- 11) The Principal Accountant General (Audit/A&E) Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
- 12) Principal Accountant General (G&SSA/E&RSA), Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram
- 13) Secretaries of Chief Minister/Ministers/Opposition Leader/ Speaker/Deputy Speaker.
- 14) Special Secretary to Chief Secretary.
- 15) All Political Parties.
- 16) Stock file/Office copy

Forwarded/by Order



Section Officer.