

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No. 52/2023/SDR/Vol.IV

Dated: 31st October, 2023

To,

The Chief Electoral Officers of
All States and Union Territories

Subject: Guidelines on Postal Ballot Papers in a General/Bye Election to the House of the People, Legislative Assemblies of the States/ UTs - regarding.

Reference:

1. Letter No. 52/2008/J.S.II dated 21.10.2008
2. Letter No. 52/2009/SDR (JS-II), dated 25.03.2009.
3. Letter No. 52/2012/SDR, dated 13.08.2012.
4. Letter No. 52/2012/SDR, dated 16.10.2012.
5. Letter No. 52/2012/SDR, dated 01.11.2012.
6. Letter No. 52/2014-SDR/, dated 07.03.2014.
7. Letter No. 52/2014-SDR-Vol. I, dated 09.04.2014.
8. Letter No. 576/3/2015/ SDR/ Vol. II, dated 21.05.2015.
9. Letter No. 52/2015/SDR-Vol. I, dated 18.09.2015.
10. Letter No. 52/2016/SDR-Vol.I dated 24.02.2016.
11. Letter No. 52/ECI/LET/FUNC/JUD/SDR/2016 dated 04.10.2016.
12. Letter No. 576/3/ECI/LET/FUNC/JUD/SDR/2016 dated 13.10.2016.
13. Letter No. 52/ER/ECI/LET/JUD/SDR/VOL.I/2014, dated 20.01.2017.
14. Letter No. 52/ECI/LET/JUD/SDR/2017/VOL-I, dated 22.02.2017.
15. Letter No. 52/LET/ECI/FUNC/JUD/SDR/2018-Vol.I dated 15.02.2018.
16. Letter No. 52/LET/ECI/FUNC/JUD/SDR/2018-Vol.II dated 09.08.2018.
17. Letter No. 52/2019/SDR - Vol.III, dated 08.03.2019.
18. Letter No. 52/2020/SDR/Vol.I, dated 03.10.2020.
19. Letter No. 52/2021/SDR/VOL.I, dated 02.02.2021.
20. Letter No. 52/2021/SDR/VOL.I, dated 08.03.2021, and
21. Letter No. 52/2021/SDR/VOL.I, dated 17.03.2021.

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to state that Section 60 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 specifies the special procedure for voting by postal ballot by certain classes of persons. It provides that provision for postal ballot may be made by the rules under the Act. Accordingly, a



complete legal framework has been put in place in Rules 17 to 27L of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961.

2. For smooth functioning of postal ballot system defined under Section 60 and Rules referred to above, the Commission has been issuing detailed instructions from time to time for voting by postal ballot by each of the categories of voters mentioned therein. These instructions have been modified and refined at various occasions. For giving clarity to various aspects of postal ballot system, exhaustive instructions consolidating all the instructions on the subject listed above are hereby issued in supersession of the existing instructions –

I. General Instructions:

3. **Rule position:** As mentioned above, all the relevant rules relating to the process of postal ballot system, persons entitled to vote by post, Form of ballot paper and envelopes, process of recording of vote, etc. are given in Rule 17 to Rule 27L contained in PART-III and PART-IIIA of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961. The concept of ‘postal ballot’ has evolved into an important mode of voting for the voters who are not able to physically vote at polling station, due to various reasons. In 2016, an amendment was made in Rule 23, to make a provision for one-way online transmission of postal ballot for Service Voters. Similarly, in 2019 category of ‘Absentee Voters’ was introduced by modifying Rule 18. A new class of voter, i.e., ‘COVID 19 suspect or affect persons’ was added to ‘Absentee Voter’, defined in Rule 27A, by a further amendment to the rules in June, 2020. This year, with insertion of Rule 18A for a Voter on Election Duty, voting at facilitation centre has been made mandatory.

4. **Categories of voters entitled to vote by postal ballot:** As per Rule 18, the following classes of persons are entitled to vote by post in an election to House of the People and State Legislative Assembly:

- (i) Special voters,
- (ii) Service Voters, other than those who opt for proxy voting (CSV),
- (iii) Voters on Election Duty,
- (iv) Electors subjected to preventive detention,
- (v) Persons notified under clause (c) of Section 60 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, including ‘Absentee Voters’.



5. **Intimation/application by voters for postal ballot and time limit for submission:** A voter belonging to any of the above categories who wishes to vote by post at an election shall send an intimation/ application in a statutory Form specified under Rules 19, 20 and 27C to the Returning Officer with in the given period. A Special Voter who wishes to vote by post shall send intimation in Form 12 to the Returning Officer so as to reach him at least 10 days before the date of poll. A Voter on Election Duty shall make an application in Form 12 to the Returning Officer so as to reach him at least 7 days or such shorter period as the Returning Officer may allow before the date of poll. A voter on election duty who is being deployed as polling officer, presiding officer or other election duty in the constituency of which he is an elector, wishes to vote in person and not by post, he shall submit an application in Form 12A to the Returning Officer so as to reach him at least 4 days or such shorter period as he may allow before the date of poll, the Returning Officer shall issue to the applicant an Election Duty Certificate (EDC) in Form 12B. Persons of various classes of Absentee Voters can submit application in Form 12D to the Returning Officer within a period starting from date of commencement of election schedule upto 5 days following date of notification. As a Service Voter does not have the option for physical voting at a polling station, he is not required to submit any application for postal ballot and the Returning Officer shall issue postal ballot to all the Service Voters registered in the last part of the electoral roll of the constituency.

6. **Specifications and Forms of postal ballot for different categories:**

6.1. **Form, language and particulars of Postal Ballot for Service Voters:** The following specifications are prescribed for preparation of postal ballot for Service Voters:

- (i) Name of the candidate and party affiliation shall be printed together. The name of political party which has set up the candidate is to be printed below the name of the candidate in the same panel. In the case of an independent candidate, the word "Independent" shall be printed in place of a political party.
- (ii) These particulars shall be both in the official language of the State and in English.
- (iii) Photographs of candidates shall be printed on the right side of the name - between the name and the column for marking vote/preference
- (iv) Election Symbol of the candidates is not to be printed.
- (v) The width of the printed portion in the ballot papers shall be between 4" and 6".



- (vi) The last panel below the panels containing the name and particulars of the candidates shall be for “None of the Above”.
- (vii) The particulars on the counterfoil shall be printed in English only.
- (viii) The template of postal ballot for Service Voters is provided in the ETPBMS portal. The counterfoil in case of ePB is maintained in the data base and is corresponding to the ePB number generated electronically for each ePB.

6.2. Form, language and particulars of Postal Ballots for voters other than Service Voters:

The postal ballots for other categories (i.e. other than Service Voters) are prepared conventionally. The specifications for the Postal Ballot papers for these categories are as under:

- (i) Names of candidates shall be printed both in the official language of the State and also in English.
- (ii) The photograph of the candidate shall be printed in the panel for the name of the candidate. It shall appear on the right side of the name in between the name of the candidate and the symbol.
- (iii) Party affiliation of the candidate is not required to be printed. However, election symbol allotted to the candidate shall be printed.
- (iv) The election symbol shall be printed on the right side of the photograph of the candidate between the photograph and the space for marking vote.
- (v) The name of a candidate and his symbol shall be inscribed in one panel. The panels will be separated from each other by shaded area of 3 em width.
- (vi) There will be a thick black border of 1 em at the bottom. The width of the ballot paper, when printed in one column, shall be between 4” and 6” as may be considered convenient by the Chief Electoral Officer.
- (vii) The last panel below the panels containing the names and particulars of the candidates shall be for “None of the Above”. The symbol for “None of the Above” option as specified by the Commission shall be printed against the column meant for printing of election symbol.
- (viii) Every such postal ballot paper shall have a counterfoil attached to it. The counterfoil shall be at the top of the postal ballot paper and its depth shall not ordinarily exceed 15 em. **The particulars on the counterfoil shall be printed in English only.** The



counterfoil should be at the top and should have space for stitching the postal ballot from at the top;

- (ix) These postal ballot papers shall be stitched into convenient bundles, with consecutive serial numbers. The serial number of each ballot paper and its counterfoil shall be identical.
- (x) The postal ballot paper shall have a black border of 1 em at the top of the counterfoil;
- (xi) The particulars of the election, as mentioned below, printed immediately below item.
- (xii) The words “Electoral Roll Part Number and Serial Number of Elector,” shall be printed one below the other on the left-hand side or right-hand side as may be convenient;
- (xiii) Serial number of the ballot paper on the left-hand side either on the front or on the back as may be convenient.
- (xiv) One block of lines of 1 em with a perforated rule/disjointed straight lines below, separating the ballot paper from the counterfoil.
- (xv) There shall be one block of lines of 1 em below the perforated rule/disjointed lines on the postal ballot paper.
- (xvi) On the top of the front face of the ballot paper, the particulars (No. and name of constituency as mentioned in Delimitation Order) of the constituency and the type of election (General election/Bye-election) shall be printed. In the case of State/Union Territories the whole of which form a Parliamentary Constituency, their names will not find mention in the Delimitation Order. The name of such State/Union Territory shall be mentioned as the name of the Parliamentary Constituency. The year of election and the legend “Genl.” or “Bye” will also be printed after the year depending on whether the ballot paper is printed for a general election or a bye-election. The word “Postal Ballot Paper” shall be endorsed below that entry. The following illustrations will make the position more clear:
 - a) For General Election to the House of the People Postal Ballot Paper (on white paper) “8-Rampur PC. /2019 Genl. Postal Ballot Paper”
 - b) For Bye-election to the House of the People Postal Ballot Paper (on white paper) “8 – Rampur PC. /2022 Bye Postal Ballot Paper”



- c) For General Election to the Legislative Assembly Postal Ballot Paper (on pink paper)“11– Almora AC./2021 Genl. Postal Ballot Paper”
- d) For Bye-election to the Legislative Assembly Postal Ballot Paper (on pink paper)“11– Almora AC./2021 Bye Postal Ballot Paper”

6.3. Common specifications for both the categories of postal ballot papers:

- (i) The size of the photograph printed on the ballot paper for both types of postal ballots shall be 2cm in breadth and 2.5cm in height.
- (ii) The names of the contesting candidates will appear in the same order as they appear in the list of contesting candidates in Form 7A (but without the headings of the three categories of candidates mentioned therein).
- (iii) Where the number of contesting candidates exceeds 8, the postal ballot paper shall be printed in two or more columns depending upon the number of candidates. Ordinarily, the number of candidates along with provision for “None of the above” panel in one column should not exceed nine, but it should not exceed fifteen in any case. If the number of columns is two, three or more, the width of the ballot paper and its counter-foil shall be dependent on the number of columns, which are provided on the postal ballot paper. In such case, each column shall be separated by a shaded area of half an inch width from top to bottom.
- (iv) These names of contesting candidates will be printed starting from Serial No. 1 to Serial No. 9 in Form 7A in the first column, while candidates from Serial No. 10 onwards in Form 7A will be printed in the second column and so on.
- (v) If the number of contesting candidates is 10 then the panel showing “None of the Above” will be at Sl. No.11 in the second panel of the second column. If the number of contesting candidates including the provision for “None of the Above” panel is not exactly divisible by the number of candidates in each column, the end panels on the right side of the ballot paper will be completely shaded.

7. Documents to be issued by Returning Officer along with postal ballot paper:

Rule 23 and Rule 27E provide that on receipt of an application in the specified Form from an eligible voter, the Returning Officer shall issue/provide a postal ballot to him together with following documents:



- (i) Postal Ballot Paper,
- (ii) Form 13A - Declaration by Elector,
- (iii) Form 13B - Cover A (Inner Envelope),
- (iv) Form 13C - Cover B (Outer Envelope),
- (v) Form 13D - Instructions for the Guidance of Elector.

8. **Colour of postal ballot paper and envelopes:** The postal ballot papers and envelopes for Service Voters shall be of white colour in all types of election. The colour of postal ballot papers and envelopes for voters other than Service Voters shall be as follows:

- (i) White colour for Lok Sabha election, whether general or bye-election;
- (ii) Pink colour for Vidhan Sabha election whether general or bye-election.

9. **Timeline for issuing postal ballots by Returning Officer:** When the Returning Officer issues a postal ballot paper to a voter, the serial number of the elector in the relevant part of electoral roll is to be entered in the counterfoil of the said ballot paper. Simultaneously, the Returning Officer will mark "PB" in the marked copy of the electoral roll against the name of the elector to indicate that a postal ballot paper has been issued to the elector and he shall not be allowed to vote at the polling station. This marked copy will be given to the concerned Presiding Officer for marking the names of electors who cast their vote at the polling station on the day of poll. It is clear from the above that once the marked copy of the electoral roll is ready to be sent to the Presiding Officers under clause (a) of sub rule (5) of Rule 23, no postal ballot paper can be issued by the Returning Officer. It should be noted that once a postal ballot paper is issued to a voter on election duty, he/she can vote only through the Postal Ballot and option of voting at polling station will not be available to him.

10. **Status of Postal Ballot Papers returned undelivered:** Rule-26 provides that if a postal ballot paper and the other connected papers sent by post are returned to the Returning Officer undelivered, he may re-issue them by post or may deliver it to the elector personally on a request being made by the elector. In case there is no request for re-issue, the Returning Officer shall keep them separately in an envelope superscribed 'Postal Ballot Papers Returned Undelivered'. The Returning Officer shall maintain a day-to-day record of all such postal ballots returned undelivered. On the day of counting, the candidates should be intimated the total number of such postal ballot papers returned undelivered. After election, the sealed envelope containing postal



ballot returned undelivered should be kept in the safe custody of District Election Officer along with the documents specified in sub- rule (2) of Rule 92.

11. Recording of vote, sealing and returning of marked postal ballot:

11.1. Before the postal ballot papers are issued to all electors entitled to vote through Postal Ballot, except Service Voters (who are issued ETPBs), the facsimile signature of the RO will be stamped on the reverse side of the postal ballot paper two times, one which will appear in full and the other in such a manner that part of the signature appears side of postal ballot paper and the remaining part appears on the reverse of counterfoil of the ballot paper. A sample is enclosed for guidance at **ANNEXURE 1**.

11.2. Rule 24 specifies the method of recording of choice by an elector on a postal ballot paper. The detailed directions relating to recording of vote by the elector, attestation on declaration, sealing of envelopes and sending the same to the Returning Officer are contained in Form 13D. There is no specified mark of recording of vote. A voter can put a 'cross' (X) or 'tick' (✓) against the name of the candidate of his choice. After marking the choice, he will fold the postal ballot paper, put in the inner cover in Form 13B and paste it. Then the voter shall sign the declaration in Form 13A in the presence of and have the signature attested by the concerned authority as mentioned in Form 13D. Thereafter, both Form 13B containing the postal ballot and duly attested Form 13A shall be put separately in outer envelope in Form 13C and sealed by the voter himself. This envelope shall be returned to the Returning Officer by post/ at facilitation centre/ through the poll team, as the case may be.

II. Procedures of voting through postal ballot by various categories of voters:

12. Special Voters:

12.1. As defined in Rule 17, a 'Special voter' means any person holding a declared office under the provisions of sub-section (4) of Section 20 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950. Spouse of such person, if he or she has been ordinarily residing with her/him is also eligible to be registered as a special voter. If a special voter wishes to vote by post at an election, he/she shall send intimation in Form 12 to the Returning Officer so as to reach him at least 10 days before the date of poll.

12.2. The Returning Officer shall prepare a list of the Special Voters whose intimation has been received in time and manner and issue Postal Ballot Paper to each of such voters as per the



address given by him/ her in Form 12. As provided in Rule 23, the Returning Officer may deliver the postal ballot and other Forms, or cause them to be delivered, to such voters, personally.

13. Service Voters:

13.1. Section 20(8) of the RP Act, 1950 defines the term 'Service Voter'. 'Service Voter' is one who is:

- (i) a member of the armed forces of the Union; or
- (ii) a member of a force to which the provisions of the Army Act, 1950 have been made applicable whether with or without modifications(e.g., member of para military force); or
- (iii) a member of an armed police force of a State, who is serving outside that state; or
- (iv) a person who is employed under the Government of India, in a post outside India.

13.2. Plainly speaking, the following categories of personnel/ government officials have service qualification and thus are eligible for enrolment as Service Voters and consequently entitled for voting by post –

- (i) Members of Indian Army, Navy and Air Force
- (ii) Personnel of Central Paramilitary Forces, namely, GREF, BRO, BSF, ITBP, Assam Rifles, NSG, CRPF, CISF and SSB
- (iii) Personnel of State Armed Police Force, posted outside the State, and
- (iv) Government of India employees posted in Indian Missions abroad.

13.3. The spouse of the Service Voter ordinarily residing with him/her at the place of posting is also eligible for registration as Service Voters and thus entitled for the facility of postal ballot. However, the persons other than spouse (like parents, children, siblings and domestic servants etc.), are not entitled for the postal ballot facility even if they are ordinarily residing with the Service Voter.

13.4. The Service Voters are enrolled in the last part of the roll of the constituency. Since the Service Voters cannot vote physically at the polling station, they have option of voting by postal ballot. Service Voters belonging to the Armed Forces and members belonging to a Force to which provisions of the Army Act 1950 applies have been provided the option to vote either through proxy or through postal ballot papers. Such Service Voters, who opt to vote through proxy, have been categorized as "Classified Service Voters" (CSVs). The CSV is required to appoint a person who is resident of the area covered by the constituency concerned, as his/her



proxy in Form 13F submitted to the Returning Officer before the last date for making nomination at that election. The proxy should be of at least 18 years of age and shall not be disqualified for registration as an elector. Appointment of a proxy, once made will be valid for all future elections so long as the person making the appointment continues to be a Service Voter or till the appointment is revoked or the proxy dies. The Returning Officer, on the basis of Form 13F of CSV allows the appointed proxy to vote at the polling station of the area which covers CSV's home address. The CSV who has appointed a proxy shall not be issued a postal ballot paper.

13.5. Transmission of postal ballot (ETPBMS):

13.5.1. In order to improve the postal ballot system for Service Voters and to reduce the travelling time of postal ballots, an amendment was made in 2016 in Rule 23 to introduce one-way electronic transmission of e-Postal Ballot (ePB) to Record Officer/ Unit Officers/Incharge Officers in Missions. In view of this provision, the postal ballot papers for Service Voters are now prepared and transmitted electronically through a dedicated portal called 'Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot Management System' (ETPBMS). The return of the ePB from Service Voter is to be made by speed post.

13.5.2. ETPBMS is a highly secured system with multiple layers of security. The complete set of ePB file is encrypted and downloaded only using onetime password (OTP) with a time lapse mechanism to avoid any misuse. There is a provision of dashboard and MIS reports for all users such as Returning Officer, District Election Officer, Chief Electoral Officer, ECI Admin, Record Officer/Unit Officer and Nodal Officer. It has also provision of alert in format of SMS and email at different stages of transmission of ePB.

13.5.3. ETPBMS is integrated with Department of Posts for tracking of ePB and facilitation of their transmission through speed post in return journey, without any charge on Service Voter.

13.5.4 Stages of transmission of ePB:

- (i) Central Administration Officer (C- Admin) initiates the 'RO operation' by populating ETPBMS portal with the 'start' date & time and the 'end' date & time.
- (ii) Action by Returning Officer: The Returning Officer shall login into etpbms.eci.gov.in and perform the following activities for transmission of ePB and connected Forms, electronically:
 - (a) enter/view the election data of RO's constituency



- (b) enter/view download window for ePB
 - (c) enter full and exact postal address for receiving back the marked ePB from the Service Voters
 - (d) load template of the ePB and all connected Forms (Form 13A to 13D).
 - (e) check the names of candidates, their order and symbol allotted for each of them
 - (f) generate and approve the sample ePB
 - (g) generate the PIN and password protected ePB in bulk
 - (h) transmit PIN to Record Officer and ePB to Unit Officer
- (iii) **Action by Record Officer/Unit Officer/Incharge in Missions:**
- (a) Record Officer and Unit Officer will login into etpbms.eci.gov.in
 - (b) go to dashboard
 - (c) click on download (ePB PIN/ePB) or view the report
 - (d) Record Officer will download ePB PIN
 - (e) Unit Officer will download ePB
 - (f) The Record Officer shall send PIN to the concerned Service Voter. The Service Voter will inform PIN to the Unit Officer. The Unit Officer downloads ePB and open ePB through secured OTP. He will handover the printout of ePB along with Form 13A, Form 13D and labels of Form 13B and Form 13C together with blank envelopes to the Service Voter.
 - (g) Nodal Officer of the concerned Force is also able to monitor download of ePB/ PIN by Unit Officer/ Record Officer and send alert message to those officers whose download is pending

13.5.5. The Returning Officers shall ensure that uploading of ePB and the connected papers mentioned above on the ETPBMS portal is completed by the day following the last date for withdrawal of candidatures. He shall issue a certificate to the effect that all the uploading has been done well in the time as specified above.

13.5.6. Timely action by Returning Officer in transmission of ePB will provide more time to the Units for downloading and printing of the ePB and further delivery to the Service Voters concerned and also to the Service Voters to cast vote and return marked ePB to the Returning Officers, by post.



13.5.7. While specifying the timeline, the Commission has further instructed that Unit Officers shall download ePB and other connected papers uploaded by the Returning Officers on the portal latest by the eighth day after the last date for withdrawal of candidature. Uploading the ballot paper by the day following the last date for withdrawal by the Returning Officer will leave clear seven days for Unit Officers to complete all functions of downloading, printing and distribution of ePB and other papers to the Service Voters. Unit Officer shall ensure that the ePB and the accompanying documents meant for a particular Service Voter is handed over to him only on the very same day and to no one else.

13.5.8. The Unit Officer shall maintain a record of ePB handed over to each Service Voter under his charge. This record shall be preserved in the unit concerned for the next five years so that the same can be produced for inspection before any authority or before Courts in the event the same is required to be inspected.

13.6. Colour and measurement of Postal Ballot and envelopes for Service Voters: Since, ePB for the Service Voters are generated electronically, the Commission has directed that ePB shall be printed in A4 size white papers for any type of elections, whether general or bye-elections. This can be distinguished by the identity given to it i.e., for PC or AC and General or Bye. As mentioned above, the Unit Officer shall handover printout of postal ballot along with print of all Forms and required blank envelopes to the concerned Service Voter. The measurement of inner envelope meant for Form 13B will be 4"x9" while for the outer envelope for Form 13C the size will be 4.75"x11". Both the envelopes shall be in white color. Commission further directs that the envelopes will not be forwarded by the CEOs to the Record Officers instead the Record Officer/Unit Officer/Commandant or any other competent authority, as the case may be, shall procure the envelopes and provide them for use by Service Voters. The Service Voters shall paste the labels of Form 13B and Form 13C on the inner envelope and outer envelope respectively, before dispatching the postal ballot to the Returning Officer, by speed post.

13.7. Recording of vote and return of ePB by Service Voter:

13.7.1. The process of recording of vote and sealing of envelopes by a Service Voter will be the same, as mentioned in paragraph 11.2 above

13.7.2. The Service Voter shall place the marked ballot paper inside the inner envelope, close the envelope by gum and paste the label for Form 13B on this envelope. Also, the serial



number of the ballot paper shall be noted on the Form 13B at the space provided for the purpose on that envelope, if not already printed thereon.

13.7.3. He shall then fill up the declaration in Form 13A, sign the same and get it attested by the Unit Officer/officer designated for attestation.

13.7.4 Form 13B containing the marked postal ballot and the declaration in Form 13A shall be put separately in the outer envelope and close the same using gum.

13.7.5. Paste the label for Form 13C on the outer envelope and put signature in the place marked for signature of sender.

13.7.6. AC wise data of postal ballots in the case of Service Voters may be sent by Returning Officer in the **FORMAT 7 (ANNEXURE 2)** and compiled State data is forwarded to the Commission by the Chief Electoral Officer in **FORMAT 8 (ANNEXURE 3)**.

13.7.7. Dispatch the envelope (Form 13C) back to the Returning Officer through post.

13.7.8. No postage stamp needs to be affixed on the envelope (Form 13C) if posted, within India.

13.7.9. The Department of Post has been instructed that the Service Voter shall not bear the cost of the ETPB postage being sent by speed post. The postage expenditure will be borne by the election machinery at the State/ District level. The Chief Electoral Officer should inform General Manager, Post Office to accept the envelope for speed post-delivery to addressee and that the charges would be paid by Chief Electoral Officer's office.

13.7.10. For effective monitoring of ETPBMS, it is necessary to maintain record of the number of postal ballots received back, in time, the number of postal ballots rejected during counting, etc. Accordingly, all Returning Officers shall collect information in the Table below in respect of ETPBs received back from the Service Voters:

| Name of AC | No. of ETPBs issued | No. of ETPBs received back before commencement of counting | No. of ETPBs found invalid by the system |
|------------|---------------------|--|--|
| | | | |

14. Voters on Election Duty:

14.1. As per Rule 17, “Voter on Election Duty” means any polling agent, any polling officer, presiding officer or other public servant, who is an elector in the constituency and is by reason of his being on election duty unable to vote at the polling station where he is entitled to vote. In view of the above provision, all public servants who are deployed on election duty are entitled to the facility of voting by postal ballot. To further clarify, all polling officials, all police personnel in the State (who are covered under the notification issued by the State Govt. in terms of Section 28A of the RP Act 1951), deployed on election duty and all the Commission’s Observers and the staff members accompanying them are Voters on Election Duty for this purpose.

14.2 Further, the Commission has also extended this facility of postal ballot to all private persons and non-government staff engaged in election work, such as drivers, conductors, cleaners of vehicles, videographers, staff of expenditure monitoring teams, staff working in control room, helpline staff, those appointed for dispatch and receiving of poll material, EVM maintenance, etc., who are specifically assigned any official work in connection with election on the day of poll and because of that they are not be able to vote at the polling station.

14.3 However, those persons who may have been assigned specific task related to election during pre-poll period, but would not be on such election duty on the day of poll, cannot be treated as Voters on Election Duty for the purpose of postal ballot facility.

14.4 Preparation of Database of Voters on Election Duty: A database of persons to whom postal ballots are to be issued on account of being on election duty should be prepared, well in advance. The database should necessarily have the following information:

- (i) No. and name of Assembly Constituency,
- (ii) Part No. and the Serial Number of the person in electoral roll,
- (iii) EPIC number,
- (iv) Location and address of Facilitation Centers for postal balloting,



(v) Information about all the trainings for which the person is to be called for. The order of appointment sent to the polling personnel asking them to attend the training shall contain AC/Part/Serial no. detail of each staff.

14.4.1. The District Election Officer will prepare separate database of government employees; one for the persons to be appointed on duty with polling parties, and second for persons drafted for other election duties like sector officers, zonal officers, micro-observers etc.

14.4.2. In the case of police personnel to be deployed on election duty, the Superintendent of Police of District or other competent officer will prepare a similar database of all police personnel (including home guards, if deployed on election duty) in the district. A deployment plan shall also be charted out for the police officials, well in advance, for issue of EDC if deployed within the constituency where they are registered as elector or issue of postal ballot if posted outside the constituency. A Nodal Officer shall also be appointed to coordinate all activities related to distribution of necessary Forms such as Form 12 (for Postal Ballot) or Form 12A (for EDC) to enable the police personnel to make application for EDC or PB, as the case may be. It shall be ensured that the duly filled in applications are signed by the police personnel and sent to the concerned Returning Officer. The request for issue of EDC shall reach to the Returning Officer at least 4 days before the date of poll and that for PB at least 7 days before the date of poll so that EDC or PB, as the case may be, can be issued after making necessary entries in the marked copy of the electoral roll.

14.4.3. In the case of non-government workers like drivers/conductors/cleaners and other persons deployed on specific election related duties, a Nodal Officer will be appointed. The Nodal Officer after ascertaining all the details of these workers and cause to distribute Form 12A (for EDC) if they are posted on election duty in the same constituency where their names are enrolled. If they are posted in a different constituency, they may be provided Form 12 to enable them to apply for Postal Ballot. The Nodal officer shall ensure that these applications in Form 12A/Form 12 and with the electoral roll details duly entered and signed by the person concerned so drafted on election duty and the same are sent to the concerned Returning Officer within the specified period.



14.5. Issue and collection of Form 12/Form 12A:

14.5.1 As mentioned above, a Voter on Election Duty has to make application for postal ballot in Form 12, along with a copy of appointment letter for election duty. The Returning Officer should arrange distribution of pre-filled Form 12 to all government officials or non-government persons drafted for election duty. Form 12 can be pre-filled with the details mentioned in para 14.4 above, which should be available in the database of employees prepared by the District Election Officer. A note should be printed at the bottom of Form 12, that the employee should check the pre-filled details and make corrections if these details are not correct.

14.5.2. Duly filled in and signed Form 12, along with a copy of the appointment letter as a proof of having been drafted for election duty and photocopy of EPIC in order to ensure that no ineligible person is issued a Postal Ballot should be collected on the first day of training or as soon as possible through the Nodal officer appointed for the purpose. Efforts should be made to collect signed Form 12 well before the last date of withdrawal of candidature. However, if for some reason Form 12 of some persons on election duty could not be collected before this date, they should be collected even after this date as soon as possible.

14.5.3. The District Election Officer shall appoint a Nodal Officer for facilitation centre who shall provide Form 12 to such Voters on Election Duty, if pre-filled Form 12 has not been received by them, collect duly filled-in Form 12 from them. The Returning Officers shall provide the list (**ANNEXURE 4**) of such voters to the Nodal Officer who shall maintain AC wise and date wise record of Form 12 distributed and received from them. Nodal Officer shall segregate all filled-in Form 12 AC wise and keep them in separate sealed covers, superscribed with names of the respective AC and District on them. The Nodal Officer will send Form 12 immediately to the respective Returning Officers for issuing postal ballot to such voters through the Nodal Officer.

14.6. Setting up of Facilitation Centre for Voters on Election Duty:

14.6.1. As per newly inserted Rule 18A, a Voter on Election Duty, shall receive his postal ballot, record his vote thereon and return the same at the Facilitation Center as specified, in writing by the Returning Officer. **It is, therefore, clarified that all the Voters on Election Duty shall cast their votes at the Facilitation Centers and not in any other manner.**



14.6.2. The Commission has directed that voting through postal ballot by Voters on Election Duty at the Facilitation Centre shall be done in a completely transparent manner. The District Election Officer shall provide necessary logistics for setting up Facilitation Centres by the Returning Officers. The Facilitation Centres shall be set up at the Training Venue and at the office of the Returning Officer. One facilitation centre shall be set up at the training centre for each of the Assembly Constituencies comprised in that district, while for Voters on Election Duty from other districts; one additional facilitation centre shall be provided at the training venue.

14.6.3. Ideally, all the Facilitation Centres of the Assembly Constituencies of a district, should be located at the same venue; however, if that is not possible due to distance, the Facilitation Centre for an Assembly Constituency located in a far flung area can be set up at the training venue in the Headquarters of the said Assembly Constituency.

14.6.4. The polling parties and the other associated civilian staff put on election duty accompanying the polling parties shall vote at the respective Facilitation Centres set up at the training venue.

14.6.5. The additional facilitation centre set up in the training venue shall also function as help desk. It will also cater to those Voters on Election Duty who are electors in the ACs of other districts.

14.6.6. In addition to these facilitation centres, the Returning Officer will set up a facilitation centre at his office also. The Voters on Election Duty other than the those in polling parties and others accompanying polling parties (as mentioned above), shall vote at the facilitation centre set up at the Returning Officer's office. This may include all the police personnel, videographers, cleaners and other staff engaged in election duty.

14.6.7. The details of Facilitation Centres, shall be fed in the database of the Voters on Election Duty, well in advance so that information about facilitation centre can be given in the appointment letters issued to Voters on Election Duty.

14.6.8. The Returning Officer shall appoint an officer of the level of Group-B or above as Incharge of the Facilitation Centre for conducting postal balloting. He shall be assisted by three officials in conducting voting through postal ballot at the facilitation centre.



14.6.9. The Returning Officer may assign the responsibility of supervision of logistics and overall postal ballot voting process at Facilitation Centres to a dedicated ARO.

14.7. Time and duration of the functioning of the Facilitation Centre:

14.7.1 The Facilitation Centres at the training venue shall function during training hours on the second and subsequent training days. In order to ensure smooth conduct of postal ballot voting, the training should be conducted in batches. Those voters who have completed training shall cast their vote immediately thereafter.

14.7.2. The facilitation centre at the office of the Returning Officer shall function from P-3 to P-1 day during normal office hours. Where deployment of police personnel for election duty is done prior to P-3 day, the Returning Officer may set up facilitation centre at his office accordingly to facilitate postal balloting by the police personnel deployed on election duty.

14.7.3. If more than one training session is required to be organized for any category of Voter on Election Duty, the facilitation centre shall remain functional during all sessions so that if an employee has not cast his postal ballot in an earlier session, he or she is able to cast postal ballot after their training is over.

14.8. Preparation of Postal Ballot papers before issue to the Voters on Election Duty:

14.8.1. The Returning Officer will prepare the Postal Ballot papers for those Voters on Election Duty who have submitted signed Form 12 after checking the details to his satisfaction. This should be done as soon as possible after postal ballot papers are printed. The Returning Officers will send these postal ballots along with related Forms, envelopes, and other related material together with list of Voters on Election Duty who have been issued postal ballot to the Facilitation Center through Assistant Returning Officer appointed for this purpose.

14.8.2. If the Facilitation Center is outside the jurisdiction of the Returning Officer who issues the postal ballot, but within the district then also he will send it directly to the Assistant Returning Officer concerned of the Facilitation Center instead of routing it through the District Election Officer.

14.8.3. Returning Officer shall maintain record containing Sl. No., Part No. and AC No. of all such Voters on Election Duty to whom postal ballot papers have been issued. This record/list of electors can be shared with candidates, if any request is received from them. However, the list should not contain Sl. No. of the postal ballot issued.



14.8.4. Before handing over the postal ballot and other Forms to the elector, the Returning Officer shall make sure that the field in Form 13B meant for Sl. No. of ballot paper issued, is duly filled-in so that chance of getting ballot paper rejected during the counting of votes on this ground can be avoided. Therefore, the duty of filling Sl. No. of postal ballot in Form 13B should be assigned to a staff of office of Returning Officer.

14.9. Arrangements for casting Postal Ballot in secrecy: Sufficient number of voting compartments similar to the voting compartments set up at the polling station shall be installed at each Facilitation Center to enable Voters on Election Duty to mark their postal ballot in complete secrecy and also to avoid rush at the facilitation centre. Arrangement of pen, glue/gum shall be made for marking of the choice and sealing of the envelopes.

14.10. Availability of Group A/Group B officers for attestation of declaration: In case of Voters on Election Duty, the declaration and signature of the elector in Form 13A is to be attested by a Group A or Group B officer. For this purpose, the Incharge of each of the facilitation centre shall attest the declaration in Form 13A after the voter has marked his choice and put the postal ballot in the inner envelope. The officer shall attest the declaration based on the identification of the voter by his identity documents. He must check before attestation that the Sl. No. of the ballot paper is filled up in the space provided in the declaration, it is signed by the elector in his presence and his address is duly mentioned. The attesting officer should append full signature with date and write in hand or put a stamp showing his designation & office address.

14.11. Identification of voters and issue of Postal Ballots at the Facilitation Center:

14.11.1. The Incharge of the facilitation centre will be assisted by three officials on the lines of polling officials posted in a polling station, the first official will be in charge of the list of Voters on Election Duty as provided by the Returning Officers and responsible for identification of the voter. He will verify the identity of Voters on Election Duty based on EPIC or any other photo identity document, and obtain signature of each voter in a register as per the **ANNEXURE 5**. After voting is over, the register should be sealed in the same manner as the Register in Form 17A and kept along with other statutory covers mentioned in Rule 93 (1). Copy of the above register may be given to the candidates who request for it.



14.11.2. The second official will be in charge of indelible ink. After identification and signature of voter in the register, the second official shall apply indelible ink in the left hand's forefinger of such voter.

14.11.3. The third official will be in-charge of postal ballots, and will issue postal ballot to the Voter on Election Duty.

14.12. Casting of postal ballot at Facilitation Centre:

14.12.1. After receiving the postal ballot, the voter shall go into the voting compartment and mark his choice against the name of the candidate in the postal ballot in secrecy. He shall write the serial number of the postal ballot paper, if not already filled up, in the space provided for the same in the declaration in Form 13A and on the inner envelope (Form 13B - Cover A) in which the polled postal ballot is kept. The marking of choice on postal ballot and sealing of envelopes will be same as mentioned in paragraph 11.2 above. After sealing of envelope in Form 13C, the same will be dropped in the drop box kept in the drop box kept in facilitation centre.

14.12.2. A large steel trunk with one opening at the top for casting of postal ballots shall be used as a ballot box at the facilitation centre. This will be kept under charge of the concerned Assistant Returning Officer. Before the casting of postal ballots is commenced the empty ballot box will be opened and shown to all present. The ballot box will then be sealed by the Incharge of the Facilitation centre.

14.12.3. After all voters have cast their votes, the envelopes containing postal ballots shall be segregated AC wise and be sent to the Returning Officers of Assembly Constituency concerned.

14.12.4. After each day of voting is over, the polled postal ballots received from facilitation centre shall be kept in a large cotton bag with name of Assembly Constituency, date of polling and number of postal ballots polled written on the bag. The bag shall be deposited with the Returning Officer for each day. There shall be separate bags for different days/ facilitation centre. The Returning Officer shall maintain date wise and facilitation centre wise record of total number of polled ballot papers received by him.

14.13. Arrangements for representatives of candidates/political parties: All Recognized Political Parties will be informed in writing the venue, schedule and details about facilitation centres. They shall be allowed to send their representatives to witness the process of voting at the Facilitation Center. Arrangement shall also be made for candidates to sit and watch the process of



voting. No person shall be allowed to interfere in the voting process and in case of any interference; the incharge of facilitation centre can order such a person to leave the premises immediately.

14.14. Videography of the voting process: The entire process of voting at Facilitation Centres will be videographed.

14.15. Collection of polled postal ballots from facilitation centre: It is further clarified that after all the postal ballots for the day have been cast, the drop box will be opened by the Incharge of the Facilitation Center in the presence of the representatives of political parties/candidates. All the postal ballots will be taken out of the box and the empty box will be shown to all present. The total number of postal ballot envelopes received for each Parliamentary/Assembly Constituency will be entered in a Statement in **FORMAT 1 (ANNEXURE 6)** to be maintained for this purpose at the Facilitation Center. Representatives of political parties/candidates present will be requested to put their signatures and will be given a copy of this **FORMAT 1**. All postal ballot envelopes for the Assembly Constituency will be kept in a large envelope/cotton bag meant for that Assembly Constituency. The number and name of Assembly Constituency, name of the facilitation centre, the date of voting and the number of postal ballots (envelopes in 13C) contained therein will be clearly written on this envelope/cotton bag. This large envelope/cotton bag will then be sent to the Returning officer of the concerned Assembly Constituency along with a copy of **FORMAT 1** through a special messenger appointed for this purpose, not below the rank of Deputy Tahsildar. This exercise shall be done on each day of voting at the facilitation centre. All such big envelopes/ cotton bags containing polled postal ballots and related papers shall be kept under custody of the Returning Officer concerned.

14.16. Storage of Postal Ballots received by the Returning Officer: Returning Officer of the concerned Assembly Constituency shall keep the envelope containing postal ballots along with the copy of **FORMAT 1** in a special strong room made especially for this purpose. Returning Officer shall send a copy of **FORMAT 1** to the District Election Officer.

14.17. Monitoring of the process of Postal Balloting at the Facilitation Centers: On the basis of information given in **FORMAT 1**, the District Election Officer of every district will compile the return in **FORMAT 2 (ANNEXURE 7)** for his district every day till the facilitation for postal ballots is over in the district, for the postal ballots cast in the Facilitation Centers of his



district. A copy of this return will be sent every day to the Chief Electoral Officer. Chief Electoral Officer will compile the returns of the entire State in **FORMAT 3 (ANNEXURE 8)** and will send a copy of the compiled **FORMAT 3** to the Commission phase wise immediately after completion of postal balloting at all the Facilitation Centers setup in the State after each phase of election. Chief Electoral Officer will also send a copy of return in **FORMAT 3** to all recognized political parties.

14.18. Orientation of Voters on Election Duty on how to cast vote through postal ballot:

The Commission directs that the entire procedure for casting of votes through postal ballots shall be explained by the Returning Officers/Assistant Returning Officers thoroughly to the Voters on Election Duty of all categories, so that there is no error in casting votes by them.

14.19. It should be clarified that all Voters on Election Duty that once a postal ballot has been issued to a voter by the Returning Officer, the voter has no option to vote in any manner other than voting at facilitation centre. There is no provision for sending the postal ballot by post or through special messenger, if a voter fails to collect his postal ballot and cast his vote at the facilitation centre. The Incharge of facilitation centre shall keep all such postal ballots which have not been collected by the voters concerned in sealed cover and deposit the same with the Returning Officer superscribing on the bigger envelope the name of AC and the no. of such ballot papers.

15. Absentee Voters:

15.1 Rule 27A defines 'Absentee Voter' as a person belonging to such class of persons as may be notified, under clause (c) of Section 60 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and who is employed in essential services and includes an elector belonging to the class of senior citizen or persons with disability (PwD) or the COVID 19 suspect or affected persons.

15.2 Classes of Absentee Voters and their eligibility: In view of the above provision the following classes of persons are eligible for facility of postal ballot system under 'Absentee Voters' –

(i) **Senior citizens (AVSC):** An elector above 80 years of age. The age is mentioned in electoral roll database and is not required to give any additional certificate or undertaking with Form 12D.



(ii) Persons with disability (AVPD): An elector who is flagged in the database for electoral roll and having a benchmark disability certificate (not less than 40% of a specified disability) as certified by the concerned certifying authority, under Section 2 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. Accordingly, these persons are eligible to apply for postal ballot facility. The elector in this category while submitting the application in Form 12D has to enclose copy of benchmark disability certificate with it.

(iii) COVID 19 suspect or affected persons (AVCO): an elector who is hospitalized at the time of election on account of COVID-19, in a hospital within the State or is in Home/ Institutional Quarantine on account of COVID-19 and hence not be in a position to cast vote personally at the polling station as per medical advice and if such elector makes request for issue of Postal Ballot, having a copy of certificate / instructions from competent health authorities which show the applicant is hospitalized in the State or is in quarantine within the State (Home or Institutional) on account of COVID 19.

(iv) Persons employed in essential services (AVES): The Election Commission in consultation with the Government notifies the class of persons employed in essential services. Accordingly, the officials of these categories who are enrolled in the electoral roll in the State and who would be certified to be on duty on the day of poll, and on account of their such official duties, will not be able to be cast their vote at their respective polling stations, will be eligible for voting through postal ballot as absentee voters in the essential service category. They have to submit Form 12D, giving a certificate by the Nodal Officer appointed by the organization concerned, in PART II of Form 12D.

15.3 Voting by Absentee Voters: Rules 27E and 27-I provide that the issue of Postal Ballot paper to the Absentee voters and return thereof after voting by them shall be in such manner as the Election Commission may direct. Accordingly, the Commission has laid down the following procedure/guidelines for facilitating voting through postal ballot by the Absentee Voters of the classes mentioned above.

15.3.1. Form of application and time limit for submission of the same: The facility of postal ballot for Absentee Voters is only an additional option available, in addition to physical voting at



polling station. An Absentee Voter wishing to vote by postal ballot has to make an application in Form 12D to the Returning Officer of the constituency concerned, giving all requisite particulars so as to reach Returning Officer from date of announcement of election to 5 days following the date of notification of the schedule of the election concerned.

15.3.2. Actions by the Returning Officer:

(i) Adequate publicity should be given for the facility being provided to these categories of electors. Form 12D should be distributed to AVSC, AVPD and AVCO through BLOs. Form 12D should be put on the website of the District Election Officer. One Assistant Returning Officer shall be assigned to handle all work related to postal ballot voting by Absentee Voters of all categories. It shall be the responsibility of such Assistant Returning Officer to carry forward the postal voting programme from the stage of receipt of applications in Form 12D and take all necessary action in this regard.

(a) In case of AVCO, the arrangement shall be made in coordination with the Nodal Officer for COVID-19, designated by the Chief Secretary of the state concerned.

(b) In case of AVES, Form 12D should be made available to the Nodal Officer of the respective organizations for dissemination to the electors concerned.

(ii) **Distribution, receipt and approval of Form 12D:** One Sector Officer shall be designated for a cluster of polling stations who will supervise the work of BLO on daily basis. The BLO will visit to the houses of the absentee voters in category of AVSC, AVPD and AVCO, as per details provided by the Returning Officer, in the Polling Station area and deliver Form 12D to the electors concerned and obtain acknowledgements from them. BLO shall deposit all the acknowledgements obtained from such electors with the Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer on daily basis. If an elector is not available, BLO will share his contact details and revisit the place to collect it within the period of five days following the date of the notification for election in the constituency. It may be made clear that the option of voting through postal ballot is an additional facility and it is not compulsory that such electors have to vote through postal ballot only. The electors may or may not opt for Postal Ballot. If the elector opts for Postal Ballot, then the BLO will collect the filled-in Form 12D from the house of the elector and deposit with the Returning Officer forthwith on daily basis. The task of collecting back filled-in Form 12D shall be completed within the period of 5 days following the date of the



notification. Sector Officer, under the overall supervision of Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer, shall supervise the process to ensure timely distribution and collection of Form 12D through BLOs.

15.3.3 Approval of Form 12D by Returning Officer and drawing of list: On receipt of 12D, the Returning Officer shall check that the particulars given in the Form and enclosed certificate (in case of AVPD and AVCO) are in order and are in time. After approval of Form 12D, the Returning Officer will draw a list of Absentee Voters (AVSC, AVPD and AVCO) who are to exercise the option of voting through Postal Ballot. The list shall be prepared in format enclosed herewith at ANNEXURE 9.

15.3.4. Thereafter, the Returning Officer shall indicate entry 'PB' in the marked copy of the electoral roll against the names of such electors, to show that a postal ballot paper has been issued to them, without however recording therein the sl. no. of the ballot papers issued to them.

15.3.5. The Returning Officer shall also ensure that elector who has been issued postal ballot is not allowed to vote at a polling station.

15.3.6. Further, the Returning Officer shall share list of all such notified absentee electors whose applications in Form 12D for availing Postal Ballot facility have been approved by him, with the Contesting Candidates of recognized political parties in printed hardcopy.

16. Process of delivering and collection of postal ballot from Absentee Voters: The process of absentee voters in the categories of AVSC, AVPD and AVCO is different from the process being followed in respect of AVES. While poll teams visit places/residences/hospital of AVSC, AVPD and AVCO, in case of AVES postal voting centres are established for a specified period. The guidelines issued by the Commission in respect of voting through postal ballot by the above categories of absentee voters are given in the succeeding paragraphs.

16.1. Process of voting through postal ballot by AVSC, AVPD and AVCO:

16.1.1. Material required for team visit:

Each team of poll officers should be provided with all necessary material for taking poll, in particular, the following:

- (i) The list of AVSC, AVPD and AVCO electors;



- (ii) Sufficient number of postal ballot papers as per the number of Absentee Voters assigned to the team, with 10% surplus for the eventuality of some ballot papers getting damaged and requiring issuing of fresh ballot paper under rule 26(2);
- (iii) Sufficient number of Form 13A, inner envelope (Form 13B - Cover A), in which the polled postal ballot is kept and outer envelope (Form 13C - Cover B);
- (iv) Pen for marking vote;
- (v) Ink-pad (for thumb impression wherever required);
- (vi) Glue stick for closing the envelopes;
- (vii) Register for obtaining signatures of electors on issue of ballot paper (ANNEXURE 10);
- (viii) Material for setting up voting compartment;
- (ix) A sufficiently big canvas bag for keeping the envelopes of polled ballots and the counterfoils of ballot papers;
- (x) For the poll officers deputed to AVCO electors, appropriate protection equipment including PPE kit shall be provided in consultation with the concerned Nodal Health Officer;
- (xi) Other essential stationeries that may be considered necessary.

16.1.2. Home Visits of Poll teams:

- (i) Separate teams of poll officers, comprising two officials out of which at least one should be not below the rank/level of the official appointed as polling officer for Polling Station in the State, should be appointed for the purpose. A micro observer should also accompany the teams of Poll officers.
- (ii) Number of teams of Poll Officers to be appointed would depend on the number of Absentee Voters in the constituency to whom postal ballot papers have been issued.
- (iii) The team of poll officers shall visit the electors at the address mentioned in their application in Form 12D for facilitating their voting by postal ballot paper.
- (iv) The electors will be intimated, in advance, about the date and approximate time of visit of poll officers. Such intimation may be given through SMS on the mobile



phone number wherever the same has been mentioned in the application in Form 12D. In other cases, the intimation may be given by post and /or through the BLO.

- (v) If the elector is not present at the given address at the first visit, the team shall pay a second visit after leaving intimation about the time of second visit. If the elector is not present even at the second visit, no further visit or action is required in his/her case.
- (vi) The candidates shall be informed about the schedule of visit for the delivery and collection of postal ballots for this category. They may, if desired, depute their authorized representatives (including BLAs), with prior intimation to the Returning Officer, to watch the process. The appointment should be made by the candidate or the election agent in writing and under their signature. Form 10 (the format for appointment of polling agents in polling stations) may be used for appointment of such agent.
- (vii) The list of AVSCs, AVPDs and AVCOs shall be divided for distribution among the different teams of Poll Officers in such manner that each team gets a list of persons in geographically compact area.
- (viii) The visiting poll officers shall ascertain the identity of the elector before issuing postal ballot paper.
- (ix) Name of elector and the document produced for identification shall also be entered in a register, format of which is enclosed herewith at **ANNEXURE 10**, to be maintained for the purpose, and signature/thumb impression of the elector obtained therein. Further, a tick mark shall be placed against the name of the elector in the list of AVSC, AVPD and AVCO to indicate that the person has voted. The counterfoil with the serial number and part number of elector duly filled up shall be got detached and kept in safe custody by the team to be sent to the RO along with envelopes containing polled postal ballots.
- (x) It shall be the responsibility of each team of poll officers to
 - (a) issue postal ballot to each of the Absentee Voters assigned to it,



- (b) brief the elector about the procedure to be followed for voting through postal ballot,
- (c) make sure that the elector votes without anyone influencing his choice, and ensuring the secrecy of voting, all activities at the address of the elector concerned. However, if any elector is not able to cast vote by him due to blindness or physical infirmity, he shall be allowed to take the assistance of any adult person for casting vote, assistance of polling agents or candidates or prohibited parties may not be taken. In this matter, all the provisions of Rule 40 will be applicable. The companion has to give declaration (ANNEXURE 11) that he will keep secret the vote recorded by him on behalf of the elector and that he has not already acted as the companion of any other elector and Poll officers shall keep a record of such cases in Form 14A.
- (xi) While briefing the electors about the procedure of voting and formalities to be observed on their part, the poll official shall clearly explain the following points to them:
- (a) signing the declaration in Form 13A and getting it attested by the poll officer himself,
 - (b) entering the serial number of postal ballot paper, in the space provided for the same, both on Form 13A and on the smaller inner envelope (Form 13B - Cover A), in which the polled postal ballot is kept,
 - (c) manner of marking vote, i.e. by placing either cross mark or tick mark against the name of the candidate of choice. The polled postal ballot should not be shown to the officer whose attestation is obtained on the declaration in Form 13A,
 - (d) folding and placing the marked ballot in the inner envelope meant for this purpose and seal it properly
 - (e) placing the declaration in Form 13A, duly filled up, signed and attested along with inner envelope (Form 13B - Cover A) containing the marked ballot paper, inside the outer envelope (Form 13C - Cover B) and seal this as well,



- (xii) Handing over the outer envelope (Form 13C - Cover B) to the poll officer.
- (xiii) Poll officer is authorized to attest the declaration in Form 13A. While attesting the declaration, the poll officer shall write his full name and also the designation 'poll officer'. In the case of an AVCO on treatment in Hospital, the Medical Officer attending to the person also authorised to attest the declaration.
- (xiv) After vote is cast on postal ballot and the envelope in Form 13C is ready, the Poll Officers will collect the same.
- (xv) Police Security cover shall be provided to the poll officers for their visits. Arrangement for videography of the proceedings at the address of Absentee Voters should also be made. For this purpose, a videographer should accompany the poll officers. It shall be ensured that the secrecy of vote is not violated while carrying out the videography exercise.
- (xvi) Visits by poll teams to the address of Absentee Voters should be planned in such a way that the same is completed one day prior to the date fixed for poll in the constituency. For instance, if poll is scheduled for 10th of Month, the postal voting for AVSC, AVPD and AVCO should be completed by 9th of that month.

16.2. Guidelines for Voting through postal ballot by Absentee Voters in the category of Essential Service (AVES):

As soon as the Election Commission notifies the classes of persons employed in essential services such officials who are enrolled in the electoral roll in the State and who would be certified to be on duty on the date of poll shall be eligible to cast their votes by postal ballot as absentee voters in the category of Essential Services.

16.2.1. Centre for voting through postal ballot:

- (i) Sub-rule (3) of Rule-27F provides that recording of vote by Absentee Voter shall be in such centre as specified by the Commission.
- (ii) The Returning Officer shall identify a suitable venue and room at a suitable location to be used as the Postal Voting Centre (PVC) for issuing of postal ballot paper to such Absentee Voters facilitating their voting, and thereafter for collection of such postal



ballot paper from the PVC. For this purpose, the Returning Officer shall identify a suitable location to be PVC for Absentee Voters within the territory of the Constituency, and should be located, as much as possible, towards the central part of the constituency area so that the travelling time to reach the PVC is not unduly long.

16.2.2. Intimation regarding issue of Postal Ballot Paper and Voting:

- (i) All the persons who have applied for postal ballot paper in AVES category shall be duly intimated about the following:
 - (a) The full address of the PVC venue where postal ballot voting is to be arranged;
 - (b) Dates on which the postal ballot voting facility will remain open;
 - (c) The hours fixed for postal ballot voting.
- (ii) The intimation may be given through SMS on the mobile phone number wherever the same has been mentioned in the application in Form 12D. In other cases, the intimation may be given by post and/or through the BLO. In addition, this information should also be disseminated through the Nodal Officer of the Organization concerned and advertisements in local newspapers and also through the website of the District Election Officer. It should be explained that Absentee Voters who have applied for postal ballot voting may come for casting vote on any of the three days and during the hours fixed for the purpose. It should also be explained that those who have been approved for voting through this facility can only vote at such PVCs and not in any other manner.
- (iii) The contesting candidates in the constituency shall also be given prior intimation on the abovementioned points. While intimating about the process of postal voting at the PVC, they should also be informed in writing that they may appoint their agents for watching the proceedings. The appointment should be made by the candidate or the election agent in writing and under their signature. Form 10 (the format for appointment of polling agents in polling stations) may be used for appointment of agent for the PVC.



16.2.3. Period and hours during which Postal Voting Centre (PVC) shall be open:

- (i) Postal Voting Centre (PVC) shall be open for up to three consecutive days in each of the constituencies. The three days' period shall be so fixed that it is completed at least three days before the date fixed for poll in the constituency.
- (ii) On each of the three days, the PVC shall remain open from 9 AM to 5 PM.

16.2.4. Deployment of polling staff for the postal voting centre (PVC):

- (i) Each postal voting centre should have adequate staff for smoothly carrying out the work in such PVC. The number of staff required should be worked out based on the number of AVES category voters who are voting in the PVC.
- (ii) Each PVC should have at least one Group A or Group B officer for attesting the declaration of elector in Form 13A. The number may be increased depending on the number of electors in the particular PVC.

16.2.5. Responsibilities of staff for Postal Voting Centre - Work and functions of Staff of postal voting centre are as follows:

- (i) Issuing postal ballot paper along with all connected documents after duly verifying the identity of the voter.
- (ii) Form 13D need not be given to individual electors. A copy of the same can be made available in the PVC for reference, if sought, by any elector. However, the electors should be briefed about the requirements on their part. Form 13D and a chart indicating the procedure for voting should be displayed at the PVC for the information of the electors.
- (iii) Name of elector and the document produced for identification shall also be entered in a register to be maintained for the purpose, and signature/thumb impression of the elector obtained therein. A format for the register is annexed at **ANNEXURE 10**. Further, a tick mark shall be placed against the name of the elector in the list of AVES to indicate that the person has voted. The counterfoil with the serial number and part number of elector duly filled up shall be detached and kept in safe custody to be sent to the RO along with envelopes containing polled postal ballots.



- (iv) The electors should be briefed about the procedure for voting and formalities to be observed on their part. They should be clearly briefed on the following points:
- (a) signing the declaration in Form 13A and getting it attested by the gazetted officer present in the PVC,
 - (b) entering the serial number of postal ballot paper, in the space provided for the same, both on Form 13A and on the inner envelope (Form 13B - Cover A), in which the polled postal ballot is kept,
 - (c) manner of marking vote, i.e. by placing either cross mark or tick mark against the name of the candidate of choice. The polled postal ballot should not be shown to the officer whose attestation is obtained on the declaration in Form 13A,
 - (d) manner of folding and placing the marked ballot in the inner envelope meant for this purpose and seal it properly,
 - (e) manner of placing the declaration in Form 13A, duly filled up, signed and attested along with Form 13B containing the marked ballot paper, inside Form 13C and seal this as well,
 - (f) manner of dropping Form 13C in the drop box kept in the PVC for this purpose.

16.2.6. Material required in PVC:

Each PVC should be provided with all necessary material for taking poll, in particular, the following:

- (i) List of Absentee Voters assigned for voting in the PVC with three extra copies (**ANNEXURE 12**);
- (ii) Sufficient number of postal ballot papers as per the number of Absentee Voters assigned to the PVC, with 10% surplus for the eventuality of some ballot papers getting damaged and requiring issuing of fresh ballot paper under rule 26(2);
- (iii) Sufficient number of Form 13A, Form 13B, in which the polled postal ballot is kept and Form 13C;
- (iv) Pen for marking vote;
- (v) Ink-pad (for thumb impression wherever required);



- (vi) Glue stick for closing the envelopes;
- (vii) Drop Box in which the envelopes containing marked ballot paper is to be dropped;
- (viii) Register for obtaining signatures of electors on issue of ballot paper (**ANNEXURE 10**);
- (ix) Material for setting up voting compartment;
- (x) A sufficiently big canvas bag for sending the ballots after voting and the counterfoils of ballot papers to the RO on a daily basis;
- (xi) Furniture for the polling staff, agents of candidates and for setting up voting compartment.
- (xii) Other essential stationeries that may be considered necessary;

16.2.7. Close of poll protocol on each day:

- (i) After the day poll closes, the envelopes in Form 13C in the drop box shall be taken out, and sealed in a larger packet super scribed "**Postal Ballots in PVC**". The following particulars should be clearly mentioned on this large packet:
 - (a) Name and number of Constituency,
 - (b) Name of the Essential Service,
 - (c) Name of location of PVC,
 - (d) The date on which the votes were cast,
 - (e) The number of envelopes in Form 13C in the packet.
- (ii) The counterfoils of postal ballots shall also be seated in a separate packet super scribed "**Counter foils of PBs in PVC**". The particulars given under item (i) above except no. (e) shall also be entered on such packet.
- (iii) Both the packets containing the polled postal ballots and the counterfoils shall be sent to the Returning Officer on the same day.
- (iv) Signature of the agents of candidates present in the PVC should be obtained on each day of voting in the PVC. (**ANNEXURE 13**)



- (v) At the end of the three days voting period, all other material supplied to the PVC shall be collected by the ARO in charge of the PVC and retained at the headquarters as per standard protocol for the material concerned.
- (vi) If an Absentee Voter does not turn up for voting in the PVC, there is no requirement of sending the postal ballot to him/her by post. The procedure prescribed for postal voting by them is voting in the PVC and in no other manner.

17. Deposit of canvas bag containing marked ballot papers:

17.1 At the end of each day of postal balloting by Absentee Voters, the envelopes in Form 13C containing postal ballot paper etc., the counterfoils of ballot papers and the register containing the signature/thumb impression of electors and other particulars shall be collected by the designated Assistant Returning Officer from the team of poll officers and PVC. The Assistant Returning Officer shall make arrangements to have the same delivered at the headquarters of the Returning Officer for keeping them in safe custody and shall maintain the record indicating the number of ballots sent on each day of postal balloting. This record shall also be shared with the Returning Officer.

17.2. Information regarding Postal Ballot in the categories of Absentee Voters shall be compiled by the Returning Officer on each day of postal balloting in **FORMAT 4 (ANNEXURE 14)**. The Returning Officer shall send this information to the District Election Officer immediately after completion of postal balloting. The Chief Electoral Officer shall obtain the requisite information in respect of the ongoing election from the District Election Officers concerned and furnish the same in compiled form in respect of entire State phase wise in **FORMAT 5 (ANNEXURE 15)**.

18. Electors Subjected to Preventive Detention and issue of postal ballot to them: The names of electors under preventive detention, if any, may have been entered in one or the other parts of the electoral roll for the constituency.

18.1. As per Rule 21, the appropriate Government shall, within fifteen days of the calling of an election, ascertain and intimate to Returning Officer the names of the electors, if any, under preventive detention together with their addresses and electoral roll numbers and the particulars about their places of detention. An elector under Preventive Detention may himself also give the



intimation of the above effect to Returning Officer within fifteen days of calling the election that he wishes to vote by post, specifying his name, address, electoral roll number and place of detention.

18.2. The Returning Officer shall prepare a list of all electors subjected to Preventive Detention whose intimation along with place of detention has been received by him, directly through such person or the appropriate govt., and issue postal ballots to each of them to the address intimated to him.

18.3. The specification of the Postal Ballot and envelopes for the special voters shall be similar to the specification of the Postal Ballots for Voters on Election Duty as mentioned at Para 6.2 above.

18.4. The marking of choice and sealing of the ballot paper by the Electors Subjected to Preventive Detention shall be done in the same manner as mentioned at Para 8 above and thereafter dispatch the ballot paper to the Returning Officer. The incharge of the detention place shall make arrangements to deliver the polled postal ballots to the Returning Officer concerned, by post or through messenger, as the case may be.

III. Instructions on return of postal ballots and their storage:

19. Receipt of Postal Ballots by Post (Service Voters, special voters and preventive detention voters):

19.1 Arrangement to be made with Postal Department: For receiving back postal ballots by post, the Chief Electoral Officer will make an arrangement with the Postal Department and ask them to nominate one post office for each Parliamentary/Assembly Constituency which will deliver postal ballots every day to the respective Returning Officer. The time of delivery will be fixed at 3 PM every day at the office of the Returning Officer, except for the counting day when the time for delivery will be before 8 AM or such other time fixed for commencement of counting, at the counting center for that Assembly/Parliamentary Constituency. The list of counting centers and the addresses of ROs offices will be communicated in writing to the Postal Department by the CEO.

19.2 Political Parties and Candidates to be present at the time of receipt of postal ballots by post: All recognized political parties and contesting candidates will be informed in writing that they or their representatives may remain present at the time of delivery of postal ballots by



the post office. A pass should be issued to the nominated postal department employee to enter the counting center on counting day for this purpose.

19.3. Procedure of receiving postal ballots by post: An acknowledgement of the number of postal ballots received will be given to the post office. A copy of this acknowledgement shall be kept in the record of the Returning Officer. The entire process will be videographed.

19.4. Storage of postal ballots received by post: The Returning Officer will keep all postal ballots received from the post office every day in a separate envelope for that day and write on the envelope the date and words "Postal Ballots Received by Post". He will keep this envelope also in the strong room for postal ballots every day after the post has been received.

20. Sending postal ballots to the place of counting where counting is not done at RO Headquarters: In those cases where the counting is done at a place other than the RO headquarters, the postal ballots for the Parliamentary/Assembly Constituency will be transferred to another strong room for the postal ballots for the concerned Parliamentary/Assembly Constituency at the counting centers, one day before the day of counting. For this purpose, the RO shall inform in writing to the candidates the time at which this will be done. The strong room for postal ballots shall be opened in the presence of the candidates or their representatives present. All postal ballots will then be kept in a large steel box which will be sealed in the presence of candidates and their representatives. This box will then be carried under guard of armed CPF to the strong room for postal ballots at the counting center. Candidates and their representatives shall be allowed to follow the vehicle carrying postal ballots. The box containing postal ballots will then be kept in the strong room for postal ballots at the counting center in the presence of the candidates and their representative's, strong room will then be sealed and signatures of candidates and their representatives shall be taken as proof of their presence. Candidates and their representatives shall be allowed to keep watch on the strong room for which they will be provided reasonable facilities by the DEO. The whole process will be video graphed. On the day of the counting, the returning officer will open the strong room and bring all postal ballots and copies of the relevant pages of registers received from the Facilitation Centers to the table where the postal ballots will be counted.

21. Tallying of postal ballot numbers before counting: The envelopes received from Facilitation Centers will be opened one by one and the number of postal ballots found in each



envelope will be tallied with the numbers mentioned in the copies of relevant pages of the registers received from the Facilitation Center. The result of such tallying will be shown to the candidates and their election agents before the counting of postal ballots. Similarly, the register maintained for the postal ballots received by post and from PVC shall also be shown to the candidates and their election agents.

22. Return of Postal Ballots for Simultaneous Elections:

22.1 The postal ballot papers in respect of Parliamentary Constituencies are to be returned to the Returning Officers of the constituency and not to the Assistant Returning Officers. With that end in view at a simultaneous election, all the Forms viz., Forms 13A, 13B, 13C and 13D must be sent in two sets, one pertaining to the Parliamentary and the other to the Assembly Constituency.

22.2 Each of these sets should be put in the respective covers, viz, Form 13C, with the address of Returning Officer concerned specified thereon.

22.3 It is clarified that during Lok Sabha elections, the printing and dispatch of postal ballot papers shall be done at the level of the Returning officers of the Parliamentary Constituency concerned. In the case of simultaneous general or bye-election to the State Legislative Assembly with general or bye elections to the Lok Sabha, the printing and dispatch of postal ballot papers for the Assembly election shall also be done at the level of the Returning Officer for the Parliamentary constituency, with the assistance of the Assistant Returning Officers in all the Assembly segments falling under the Parliamentary Constituency.

23. As for the counting of postal ballot papers, detailed instructions have been issued vide the Commission's letter No.464/Counting Process/2023/EPS dated 19th July, 2023.

24. The above instructions shall be brought to notice of all concerned including District Election Officers, Returning Officers and other officers engaged for election related work, for their information and strict compliance.

Yours faithfully,



(S. B. JOSHI)
Principal Secretary

SAMPLE

(reverse side of counterfoil)

SIGNATURE

(Perforation)

(Reverse side of postal ballot)

SIGNATURE



Format 7

**Statement of Postal Ballots in the category of Service Voters received by RO
(To be kept with CEO)**

Date:-

Name of State/UT.....

No. & Name of AC/PC.....

Name of District.....

Total Electors.....

| No. of service voters | Number of PB issued | Total no. of Postal Ballots Received by RO | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| | | Received on Date | Received cumulative till date |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Signature of RO

Note:This format shall be sent by the RO to the CEO through DEO.



Format 8
Statement of Postal Ballots in the category of Service Voters

Date:-

Name of State/UT.....

Total no. of ACs/PCs.....

| Total no. of service voters in the State | Number of PB issued | Total no. of Postal Ballots Received | |
|--|---------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | Received on Date | Received cumulative till date |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Signature of CEO

Note: This format shall be sent by the CEO to the concerned Pr. Secretary/ Secretary of Zonal Section after each phase of election.



ANNEXURE 4

List of voters on election duty (polling staff/ police personnel/ driver, conductors, videographers etc.)*

Name of State : _____

Name of Election : _____

Name of Constituency: _____

| Sl. No. | Name of District | No. & Name of the PC/AC | Name of Elector | Part Number | Sl. Number in the Part | EPIC Number |
|---------|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|
| 1. | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | |

.....
Returning Officer

Date:.....

*Separate list of each category shall be prepared by the RO.



ANNEXURE 5

Register of voters on election duty issued with postal ballot

Name of State : _____

Name of Election : _____

Name of Constituency: _____

Name/address/Venue of Facilitation Centre: _____

| Sl. No. | Name of Elector | Sl. Number in the list of voters on election duty | Details of the documents produced by the elector in proof of his/her identification | Date on which voted | Signature/TI of elector |
|----------------|------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Signature of Poll Officer



Format 1

Statement regarding postal ballots cast at Facilitation Center

Name of State: _____
Name of Election: _____
Name of Constituency and District: _____
Name/address/Venue of Facilitation Centre: _____
Date of Postal balloting at FC: _____
Total no. of Postal Ballot Cast on this date: _____
Cumulative total no. of Postal Ballot Cast till date: _____

Name and Signature of the representatives of political parties/candidates: -

- 1.
- 2.

Signature

Name & Designation of Head of FC

- Note:**
1. This format shall be handed over to the ARO appointed for this purpose on each day of postal balloting.
 2. The ARO shall deposit it to the RO.
 3. The RO shall sent a copy of this format to the DEO of the concerned PC/AC.



Format 2

Statement regarding postal ballots cast at Facilitation Centers in the district

Name of State: _____
 Name of Election: _____
 Name of District: _____
 Date of Postal balloting at FC: _____
 Total no. of Postal Ballot Cast: _____

| S. No. | No. and Name of Parliamentary/ Assembly Constituency | No. of postal ballot cast on the date mentioned | Cumulative total no. of postal ballot cast till date |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| | | | |
| Grand Total | | | |

Signature of the DEO.....

Note: 1. This format shall be sent by the DEO to the CEO..



ANNEXURE 8

Format 3

Statement regarding postal ballots cast at Facilitation Centers in the State/ UT

Name of State/ UT: _____
Name of Election: _____

| S. No. | Name of District | No. and Name of Parliamentary/ Assembly Constituency | No. of postal ballot cast |
|-------------|------------------|--|---------------------------|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| | | | |
| Grand Total | | | |

Signature of the CEO.....

Note: 1. This format shall be sent by the CEO to the concerned Pr. Secretary/ Secretary of Zonal Section after each phase of election.



ANNEXURE 9

List of* (AVSC/AVPD/COVID-19/AVES) whose applications have been received in Form 12D

Name of State : _____

Name of Election : _____

Name of Constituency: _____

| Sl. No. | Name of Elector | Part Number | Sl. Number in the Part | EPIC Number | Whether Form 12D has been approved or rejected, if rejected, reason for rejection |
|---------|-----------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|---|
| 1. | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | |

.....
Returning Officer

Date:.....

* mention appropriate category of absentee voters



ANNEXURE 10

Register of voters of* (AVSC/AVPD/COVID-19/AVES) issued with postal ballot

Name of State : _____

Name of Election : _____

Name of Constituency: _____

Name/address/Venue of PVC#: _____

| Sl. No. | Name of Elector | Sl. Number in the list of AVSC/AVPD/COVID-19/AVES* electors | Details of the documents produced by the elector in proof of his/her identification | Date on which voted | Signature/TI of elector |
|----------------|------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Signature of Poll Officer

Name _____

Date:

* mention appropriate category of absentee voters



DECLARATION BY COMPANION OF A BLIND OR INFIRM

ELECTOR

Absentee voters in the category of*
(AVSC/AVPD/COVID-19/AVES) electors issued with postal ballot

Name of State : _____

Name of Election : _____

Name of Constituency: _____

Name/address/Venue of PVC#: _____

I hereby declare that I, (name of the companion) will keep secret the vote recorded by me on behalf of (name of absentee voter) and has not already acted as the companion of any other elector today.

Signature of companion

Date:

Name and signature of Poll Officer

* mention appropriate category of absentee voters



ANNEXURE 12

**List of* (AVSC/AVPD/COVID-19/AVES)
electors whose applications have been received in time and are in
order for issue of postal ballot paper**

Name of State : _____

Name of Election : _____

Name of Constituency: _____

| Sl. No. | Name of Elector | Part Number | Sl. Number in the Part | EPIC Number |
|----------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

.....
Returning Officer

Date:.....

*** mention appropriate category of absentee voters**



ANNEXURE 13

Signature of Agents of candidates present in the PVC

Name of State: _____
Name of Election: _____
Name of Constituency: _____
Venue of PVC: _____
Date: _____

| Sl. No. | Name of Agent | Name of the Candidate whom the agent is representing | Signature |
|---------|---------------|--|-----------|
| | | | |
| | | | |

Signature of Presiding Officer

Name _____

Date: _____

Note:- Separate list should be prepared for each day of postal voting.



Format 4

Statement of Postal Ballots in the category of Absentee Voters received by RO

Date:-

Name of State/UT.....
 Name of District.....

No. & Name of AC/PC.....
 Total Electors.....

| Sl.No. | Category | Number of Form12D approved by RO for PB | Total Postal Ballots Received from absentee voters | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------|
| | | | Received on Date | Received cumulative till date |
| 1. | 80+ | | | |
| 2. | PWD | | | |
| 3. | Covid-19 suspect or affected voters | | | |
| 4. | Essential Services | | | |
| Grand Total | | | | |

Signature of RO



Note: This format shall be sent by the RO to the DEO.

Format 5**Statement of Postal Ballots in the category of Absentee Voters****Date:**

Name of State/UT.....

Name of District.....

| Sl.No. | No. and Name of PC/AC | Category | Number of Form12D approved by RO for PB | Total Postal Ballots Received from absentee voters | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------|
| | | | | Received on Date | Received cumulative till date |
| 1. | | 80+ | | | |
| | | PWD | | | |
| | | Covid-19 suspect or affected voters | | | |
| | | Essential Services | | | |
| 2. | | | | | |
| Grand Total | | | | | |

Signature of DEO

Note: This format shall be sent by the DEO to the CEO.

