



## DÓMSMÁLARÁÐUNEYTIÐ

### *Ministry of Justice*

## ***Instructions to election officials regarding pre-election voting in the General Election on September 25, 2021***

The following instructions are intended for district commissioners and other election managers concerning the conduct of pre-election voting.

### *A. Electoral materials*

- Votes cast outside regular polling sessions are valid only if the prescribed electoral materials are used.
- Electoral materials consist of: ballot papers, envelopes for ballot papers (into which the ballot is placed), letters of conveyance and postal envelopes (into which the conveyance letter and ballot envelope are placed).
- Only the term *ballot paper*, in upper case lettering, is printed on the ballot paper.

### *B. Election process*

- Voters are required to prove their identity to the election official by producing an identification document with a photograph and, as the case may be, the signature of the holder (such as a passport, ID card or driver's licence), or by satisfactorily demonstrating their identity to the election official in another manner.
- Voters are registered in a special electoral register database from Statistics Iceland, to which election officials have access.
- Election officials may not disallow a voter from casting a pre-election vote, even if he or she cannot be found in the electoral register.
- The voter receives a ballot paper and ballot envelope and must then, without assistance and without anyone seeing, stamp or write his or her vote on the ballot paper.
- The voter stamps or writes the alphabetical letter denoting the list he or she wishes to vote for on the ballot paper. The voter also has the right to indicate a preference regarding the order of the candidates on the list he or she is voting for. This can be done by writing their names in order of preference and numbering them. The voter can also reject a specific candidate on the list he or she is voting for by writing down their name and striking it out.
- After the letter of conveyance has been printed or written on, it is to be handed over to the voter.
- The voter shall sign the letter of conveyance in the presence of the election official.
- The election official shall witness the vote by adding his or her signature, the date and a stamp of office, if this is available.
- The postal envelope must be addressed to the District Commissioner or the Electoral Commission in the district where the voter considers himself or herself to be on the electoral register. The name, ID number, legal domicile and municipality of the voter must be filled in on the reverse side of the postal envelope.
- The sealed ballot envelope, together with the letter of conveyance, must be placed in the postal envelope, which must then be carefully sealed.

### *C. Election official's assistance to the voter*

- If the voter informs the election official that he or she is not able to write on the ballot paper in the prescribed manner, or is unable to write an address on the letter of conveyance and sign it due to poor eyesight or because the voter is not able to use his or her hand, the election official shall provide

assistance in doing so in private. The official is bound by professional confidentiality not to divulge what has transpired between the two.

- Assistance in writing on the ballot paper shall only be rendered if the voter is able unequivocally to state to the person rendering the assistance how the voter wishes to cast his or her vote.
- The assistance and the reason for the assistance must be stated in the obligatory registry and also in the letter of conveyance.

*D. A representative of the voter provides assistance in the voting process*

- If a voter in the situation described in Section C above requests that a representative whom the voter has chosen help him or her with voting, the electoral official shall call a break in the voting until other voters who may be present have finished casting their votes.
- The election official shall immediately prepare a ruling on the voter's request, the voter's representative leaving the room while this is done.
- The election official shall authorise the representative to help the voter to cast his or her vote if the voter is himself or herself able to tell the election official, without coercion, that he or she wishes to have the assistance of the specific representative that he or she has chosen.
- Where a voter is not able, by himself or herself, to express this will, the election official shall only authorise the representative to assist the voter with voting if the voter presents a certificate from a rights protection officer who works in accordance with the Act on the Protection of the Rights of Disabled Persons in which it is confirmed that the voter has himself or herself chosen that specific, named, representative to assist him or her with voting.
- If the voter does not fulfil the above conditions, the voter will not be able to cast his or her vote in this manner. The decision of the election official to this effect is final.
- The fact that assistance was given must be stated in the obligatory registry and also in the letter of conveyance. Articles 62-67 of the General Elections Act shall apply to representatives who assist voters with casting their votes.
- The representative of the voter is bound by confidentiality obligations and confirms such confidentiality obligation by signing a form thereto provided on the election website of the Ministry of Justice: [https://www.stjornarradid.is/library/03-Verkefni/Kosningar/Eydublod/Umsokn\\_atkvaedi\\_heimahusi.pdf](https://www.stjornarradid.is/library/03-Verkefni/Kosningar/Eydublod/Umsokn_atkvaedi_heimahusi.pdf)
- It is regarded as a punishable offence for the representative of a voter to undertake to be a representative of more than one voter in the same elections.

*E. If ballot materials are spoiled*

- If a voter spoils a ballot paper, then another ballot paper can be provided to replace the old one.
- The election official must preserve spoiled ballot papers.

*F. Submission and receipt of cast votes*

- Voters who cast their votes under the supervision of election officials in the constituencies where they are on the voters' roll shall themselves put their ballots into ordinary ballot boxes.
- The ballot box shall be sealed by the election official together with the relevant electoral commission; agents of the candidate lists may also seal the box if they so wish.
- The election official shall register on a special list the names of the voters who cast their votes with that official, stating the name and the domicile of the voters, their ID numbers, and the date that the ballot was cast.
- A voter may demand that anybody keeping a letter with his or her vote, if it is not kept in a sealed ballot box, hand over said letter to the voter until the time when the vote has been validated by the electoral commission.

*G. Delivery of votes cast overseas*

- Voters who are overseas are themselves responsible for ensuring that their votes are delivered to Iceland. The ballot must be sent to the District Commissioner or the Electoral Commission in the district where the voter considers himself or herself to be on the electoral register.

- The election official is, however, obliged if the voter so wishes, to post the letter, provided that the voter pays the postage fee.
- If the voter does not want his or her name and ID number in Iceland to be visible to others, the voter may place the postal envelope in another envelope and address it to the appropriate District Commissioner of the Electoral Commission.
- Pre-election ballots can be sent by mail or delivered in another manner into the hands of the Electoral Commission, provided they are delivered before the end of the polling session on Election Day in order for the ballot to be included in the election. It is sufficient to bring a letter with a pre-election ballot into any polling ward of the constituency where the voter is on the electoral register.