



**Republic of the Philippines
Commission on Elections**

Intramuros, Manila

**PROTOCOLS ON THE
CONDUCT OF THE SYSTEM
OF CONTINUING
REGISTRATION OF VOTERS,
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE
HEALTH AND SAFETY
STANDARDS UNDER THE
NEW NORMAL.**

ABAS, Sheriff M.,
GUANZON, Ma. Rowena Amelia V.,
INTING, Socorro B.,
CASQUEJO, Marlon S.,
KHO, Antonio, Jr., T.,

Chairman
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner

Promulgated: **August 12, 2020**

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RESOLUTION No. 10674

WHEREAS, on March 8, 2020, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, under Proclamation No. 922, declared a State of Public Health Emergency throughout the Philippines due to COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 threatens public health and safety, thus, limiting public access to government services, including the registration of voters;

WHEREAS, through Proclamation No. 929 dated March 16, 2020, a State of Calamity was declared throughout the Philippines for a period of six (6) months;

WHEREAS, in Resolution No. 55-A, dated July 14, 2020, the Inter Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease (IATF MEID), approves the recommendation and it adopted, beginning July 16, 2020 until July 31, 2020, the community quarantine classification of Provinces, Highly Urbanized Cities (HUCCs) and Independent Component Cities;

WHEREAS, the Commission on Elections (Commission), joins the nation in its efforts and supports the main objective of the Government, to stop the spread of COVID-19. Further, it adheres to the principle that government services should not be denied to the general public, by institutionalizing preventive health measures, adopting the new normal to protect its personnel and the public clientele;

WHEREAS, the field personnel serve as frontliners of the Commission in the administration and enforcement of election laws and regulations pertaining to voters' registration;

WHEREAS, in view of the serious threat posed by COVID-19 to the health and safety of the people, the Commission suspended the issuance of voters' certification as well as the conduct of registration of voters and related processes;

WHEREAS, in line with Administrative Order No. 30 dated April 21, 2020, the Commission deems it necessary to adopt supplementary procedures and modify its calendar of activities by rescheduling the conduct of the system of continuing registration of voters and other related registration activities, pursuant to Resolution Nos. 10549 (Rules and Regulations on the Resumption of the System of Continuing Registration of Voters) and 10635 (Supplemental Rules and Regulations of Resolution No. 10549 Promulgated on July 18, 2019 on the Resumption of the System of Continuing Registration of Voters);

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Acts No. 8189 (The Voter's Registration Act of 1996), 10367 (Mandatory Biometrics Law) and other related laws, the Commission **RESOLVED**, as it hereby **RESOLVES**, to promulgate the following **PROTOCOLS** institutionalizing the new normal, to be strictly observed together with the minimum public health standards prescribed by the Department of Health (DOH), to wit:

1. The resumption of the system of continuing registration of voters shall commence on **September 1, 2020, except in areas declared under ECQ or MECQ;**
 - 1.1 If an area is under ECQ or MECQ, but later on transitioned to GCQ/MGCQ, or "no community quarantine status", registration of voters shall resume, without need of further authority from the Commission, on the day of the effectivity, and for the duration of the GCQ or MGCQ status;
 - 1.2 If an area under GCQ/MGCQ or "no quarantine status" transitioned to ECQ or MECQ status, registration of voters shall be suspended, without need of further authority from the Commission, on the day of the effectivity, and for the duration of the ECQ or MECQ status;
 - 1.3 In both instances, the Election Officer (EO) shall within twenty – four (24) hours, from the effectivity of the new quarantine status mentioned in Item 1.1. and 1.2 of this Resolution, submit a report to the Provincial Election Supervisor (PES) on the change of quarantine status;

Within twenty – four (24) hours from receipt of the EO's report, the PES shall transmit the report to the Regional Election Director (RED). Within twenty – four (24) hours, from receipt of the PES's report, the RED shall submit

the same to the Election Barangay Affairs Department (EBAD) via email; and

- 1.4 The EO shall post a notice of resumption of registration or suspension of registration, as the case may be, at the bulletin boards of the OEO, city/municipal hall and other conspicuous places.

2. Filing of applications shall be from Tuesday to Saturday, including holidays, from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM, at the Office of the Election Officer (OEO);

3. At least two (2) weeks before the start of the registration, the EO shall coordinate with the Local Health Officer for physical assessment/evaluation/inspection of the premises of the OEO, to ensure that minimum health and safety standards are in place. For this purpose, the PES shall monitor and submit a report to the RED, who shall likewise submit a consolidated report to EBAD, not later than **August 25, 2020.**

4. The OEO shall:

- a. Limit the number of registrants per day taking into consideration the following factors:
 1. Office space;
 2. Physical setup of the registration area;
 3. Work force on a given day; and
 4. 3:00 PM cutoff time for the reception of application forms.
- b. Instruct the registrants to fill out the “Coronavirus Self Declaration Form” as provided for in Item No. 5, paragraph b, hereof. If the registrant answered “Yes” in any of the questions provided in the said form, the EO shall not issue/accept the application form and advise the registrant to return to the OEO after fourteen (14) days.
- c. Encourage the registrants to bring duly accomplished application forms which can be downloaded from the Commission’s official website www.comelec.gov.ph or schedule an online appointment through *iRehistro* for the same reasons as above – stated;

Provided that the signature shall be affixed and the oath shall be taken, upon personal appearance of the registrant at the OEO, during the filing of application and biometrics data capturing. Personal appearance is required under Republic Act Nos. 8189 (Voters Registration Act) and 10367 (Mandatory Biometrics Law);

d. Post on the bulletin boards or strategic locations within the OEO and city/municipal halls, notices of the policies on:

1. No Face Mask and Shield-No Registration. As an alternative to face mask, ear loop masks, indigenous, reusable, do-it-yourself masks or combination thereof which can effectively lessen the transmission of COVID – 19 may be used by the registrants, (Section 8, Sub – section 5, IATF MEID Omnibus Guidelines, June 3, 2020);
2. The application of at least 70% alcohol or alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and checking of body temperature prior to access inside the OEO;
3. The execution of a “Coronavirus Self Declaration Form”. Registrants or voters and their personal assistants if any who are not feeling well or had any of the following symptoms: fever, flu-like symptoms, fatigue, shortness of breath/difficulty of breathing, body pains, headache, sore throat, cough, colds, loss of taste and smell, diarrhea, nausea and/or vomiting, are discouraged from transacting business in all field offices;

3.a Guidelines on the reading and interpretation of body temperature (normal or febrile), checklist on the symptoms to look out for, and action to be undertaken for registrants with symptoms, shall be provided to the OEO by the Health Services Division, Personnel Department.

4. The strict observance of physical distancing at all times while in the premises of the OEO.

For this purpose, the EID is tasked to provide in soft copies, the design/template of the notice to be posted by the OEO and the “Coronavirus Self Declaration Form”. Further, the EO is directed to translate to local dialect, the contents of the “Coronavirus Self Declaration Form”. Both the English and the local dialect version of the “Coronavirus Self Declaration Form” shall be posted.

- e. Conduct, through glass windows/plastic sheet barriers, the process of identification/verification and interview of registrants;
- f. Install foot bath and hand sanitation stations at the entrance of the OEO;
- g. Post visible and clear signage on walls in the designated queuing/waiting areas, the policies on wearing of face mask and shield, regular hand washing and physical distancing;

- h. Place markings on the floors or hallways and in chairs or benches with at least one (1) meter apart distance, to be observed by the registrants in the waiting line;
- i. Devise and adopt schemes in the queuing of registrants, such as but not limited to issuance of control numbers and scheduling of barangays, if necessary, to regulate the influx of registrants at the OEO. Proper coordination with the League of Barangay Captains or Chairpersons shall be initiated by the EO;
- j. Observe the policy of providing express lane for the vulnerable sectors (Senior Citizens, Persons with Disabilities, Pregnant Women, Youth, etc.);
- k. Disinfect the VRM peripherals, specifically the fingerprint scanner, signature pad and pen, after every use. For this purpose, alcohol dispensers shall be made available at each biometrics scanning station in the OEO;
- l. Require always the registrants to pass through the foot bath area upon entering the OEO and sanitize their hands before and after biometrics capturing;
- m. Conduct daily disinfection and sanitation of the OEO, including the VRMs and peripherals, furniture and equipment every afternoon before leaving the office;
- n. Devise/adopt such other measures/schemes taking into consideration the size and actual physical setup of their offices, to the end that the health and safety of their personnel and the public is not compromised;
- o. Encourage registrants to bring their own ball pens; and
- p. Observe health and safety protocols relating to the conduct of government transactions issued by the DOH and Local Government Units (LGUs).

5. The registrants shall:

- a. Wear face masks and shields while in the premises of the OEO;
- b. Fill out and affix signature in the “Coronavirus Self Declaration Form” and provide the following information such as but not limited to:

1. Travel abroad in the last fourteen (14) days;
 - a) Name of country visited
 - b) Date of return to the Philippines
 2. Travel to cities/municipalities in the Philippines with high COVID – 19 cases in the last fourteen (14) days;
 - a) Place visited
 - b) Date of travel
 3. Contact with people with known COVID infection in the last fourteen (14) days;
 - a) Relationship with such person
 - b) Date of contact with such person
 4. Whether experiencing any of the following symptoms such as fever, flu-like symptoms, fatigue, shortness of breath/difficulty of breathing, body pains, headache, sore throat, cough, colds, loss of taste and smell, diarrhea, nausea and/or vomiting.
- c. Sanitize their hands, with alcohol/alcohol-based sanitizer and pass through the foot bath, before entering the OEO;
 - d. Fill out the application form using their own ball pens if possible, in the designated area and shall strictly observe physical distancing of at least one (1) meter apart from other registrants, separated with physical barriers, for registrants who have no ready filled out application forms or did not avail of the *iRehistro*;
 - e. Sanitize their hands with alcohol or alcohol-based sanitizer before signing in the signature pad and imprinting their thumbprints in the fingerprint scanner;
 - f. Remove their face masks and shields only during the exact time of the capturing of photograph and put it back immediately after the taking of photos;
 - g. Sanitize their hands and the signature pad and pen and fingerprint scanner with alcohol or alcohol-based sanitizer, after the biometrics capturing. VRM operator shall strictly monitor compliance and if necessary, instruct the registrants on how to sanitize properly the VRM peripherals to prevent possible contamination;
 - h. Leave the OEO premises at once after the transaction; and

- i. In the case of Senior Citizens (SCs), Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), Indigenous Peoples (IPs) or illiterate registrants who cannot accomplish the application for registration by themselves, said vulnerable registrants as well as their personal assistants or assisting personnel of the Commission, shall observe the protocol of wearing face mask and shield, proper hygiene and physical distancing while interacting with each other.
6. The Information Technology Department (ITD) shall make the necessary preparation and coordination with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) to ensure the effective, efficient and secure nationwide implementation of the *iRehistro* program. *iRehistro* is an online facility, where the registrants/voters may conveniently access the application forms, for voter registration purposes and select the appointment date for personal appearance at the OEO. Procedure on the use of *iRehistro* and *FuMer* shall be provided to the OEO by the ITD; and
7. The Education and Information Department (EID) in coordination with EBAD and the Health Services Division, Personnel Department, shall prepare the necessary informative or interactive materials, regarding the protocol for the conduct of registration of voters under the new normal, and such other vital information which shall be published in the newspapers or social media (TV /radio broadcast) platforms and soft copies thereof, provided to the OEO.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the conduct of satellite registration of voters pursuant to Sections 8 and 9 Chapter II of Resolution No. 10549 shall remain **SUSPENDED** until further notice. However, in cities/municipalities with zero (suspect, probable, confirmed) COVID – 19 cases, in the last fourteen (14) days, before the actual conduct of satellite registration, as determined by the City/Municipal Health Officer, OEOs may conduct satellite registration, subject to the following **additional conditions**:

1. Proper coordination with the City/Municipal Health Offices; and
2. Strict observance of other applicable provisions in Item 4 hereof.

Guidelines for the conduct of satellite registration are provided for in Sections 8 and 9, Resolution No. 10549 (Rules and Regulations on the Resumption of the System of Continuing Registration of Voters).

RESOLVED MOREOVER that the foregoing protocols will be subject to modification and enhancement depending on the policy and guidelines that will be implemented by the IATF MEID monitoring the COVID-19 situation.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately after its publication in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines. The EID is hereby directed to cause the widest dissemination of this Resolution and its publication. The ITD shall cause the posting of this Resolution in the Commission's official website.

Let the Offices of the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director for Operations, Information Technology Department, Education and Information Department, Election and Barangay Affairs Department, Health Services Division, Personnel Department, Regional Election Directors, Provincial Election Supervisors and Election Officers, implement this Resolution.

SO ORDERED.

SHERIFF M. ABAS
Chairman

MA. ROWENA AMELIA V. GUANZON
Commissioner

SOCORRO B. INTING
Commissioner

MARLON S. CASQUEJO
Commissioner

ANTONIO T. KHO, JR
Commissioner

CERTIFICATION

APPROVED on August 12, 2020 by the Commission En Banc during its on line regular En Banc meeting pursuant to Resolution No. 10671, promulgated June 9, 2020, entitled, "*Supplemental Resolution to Comelec Resolution No. 9936 promulgated March 25, 2015 entitled, 'Rule on the Enactment and Promulgation of Executive or Administrative Resolutions' Providing for other Format of Meetings to Include On Line Meetings Applicable in Times of the COVID19 Pandemic and the Imposition of Community Quarantines and Similar Emergency Situations.*"



CONSUELO B. DIOLA
Acting Comelec Secretary

