



A Handbook for Polling Officials

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2016

FOREWORD



The handbook for Polling Officials is an important resource for officials involved in the conduct of elections at the polling station. It covers the entire polling process as prescribed by the law and provides basic election information to polling Officials.

Therefore, I encourage all Polling Officials to utilise this handbook in order to effectively manage polling station activities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Badru M. Kiggundu'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.

Eng. Dr. Badru M. Kiggundu
CHAIRPERSON, ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Table of Contents

Foreword	iii
Table of contents.....	iv
Introduction.....	v

CHAPTER 1

THE POLLING PROCESS AND THE ROLES OF POLLING DAY OFFICIALS

1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Objectives.....	1
1.2 Stages in the Polling Process.....	1
1.3 Duties of polling day Officials.....	6

CHAPTER 2

OFFENCES COMMITTED BY ELECTION OFFICIALS AND THEIR PENALTIES

2.0 Introduction.....	10
2.1 Objectives.....	10

APPENDICIES

Appendix 1 How to mark a ballot paper	12
Appendix 11 The marking of the cuticle	14
Appendix III Declaration of Results Form.....	15
Appendix IV Accountability of Ballot papers Form	17
Appendix V Official Report Book.....	19

INTRODUCTION

The Electoral Commission is mandated under Article 61 (1) (a) of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, to conduct free and fair elections and referenda. This mandate can only be achieved if all Polling Officials perform their duties with integrity and in accordance with the law.

This Handbook covers the Polling Process as prescribed by the law and it is designed to assist Polling Officials in their tasks. It also clearly states the roles of each category of Polling Officials. It is, therefore, necessary to read it carefully and refer to it at every stage of the Polling process.

CHAPTER 1

THE POLLING PROCESS AND THE ROLES OF POLLING DAY OFFICIALS

1.0 Introduction

The Electoral Commission is mandated under Sec 12 (1) (a) of the Electoral Commission Act Cap 140 to appoint a polling day for any election.

The Returning Officer is mandated under section 34(1) of the Electoral Commission Act and Sec 41 (a) of the Presidential Elections Act 2005 [as amended], to appoint Polling day Officials. These comprise of Presiding Officers, Polling Assistants and Election Constables.

1.1 Objectives

Polling day officials should be able to do the following:

- i) Describe the stages in the polling process
- ii) Explain the purpose of polling
- iii) List the officials and duties of polling day officials,
- iv) Describe the setup of the polling station.
- v) Identify materials used in the polling process
- vi) Define Biometric Voter Verification Kit
- vii) Explain the purpose of Biometric Voter Verification Device
- vi) Fill the relevant forms

1.2 Stages in the Polling process

There are various stages in the polling process. They include opening of polls, polling, and closure of polls, counting of votes, filling of forms, announcement of results and transmission of results to the supervisor.

All Polling Officials should be present throughout the polling process, work as a team and if one member of the team is not present at 7.00 am,

the Presiding Officer should proceed temporarily with the available for at least one hour and thereafter, he should be replaced in consultation with candidates' agents. If all Polling Assistants are missing the Presiding Officer shall appoint any competent persons to assist him temporarily. Where a Presiding Officer dies after his or her appointment, and the Returning Officer has made no appointment of another one, one of the Polling Assistants who is competent and older in age, shall take over as the Presiding Officer and have a competent person appointed in his/her place as Polling Assistant in consultation with candidates agents.

1.2.1 Opening of polls

This is the first stage in the polling process before the actual casting of the ballot starts. At the opening of polls,

- a) The presiding Officer should do the following:
 - i. Explain briefly the voting procedure to the voters present;
 - ii. Hands over Biometric Voter Verification Device
 - iii. Open the Polling Kit;
 - iv. Show it to the public and candidates' agents present;
 - v. Turn it upside down to establish that it is empty;
 - vi. Seal the ballot box;
 - vii. Holds the bundles of wrapped, sealed ballot papers indicating to all present that they have not been tampered with;
 - viii. Mark with an asterisk (*) against the names of the five voters who witnessed the opening of the Polling Kit;
 - ix.. Fill the relevant sections of the Official Report Book (ORB);
 - x. Assign duties to the Constables and Polling Assistants;
 - xi. Inform voters about a Candidates withdrawal if any.

- b) The Biometric Voter Verification Kit Operator should do the following:
 - i) Remove device from box
 - ii) Store box in a safe place at the polling station.

1.2.2 Polling

This is the stage at which the voters are allowed to cast their votes. Before one is issued with a ballot paper, the Presiding Officer must ensure the following:

- i. The voter audibly pronounces his/her name for identification purposes;
- ii. Crosscheck the right hand thumb to ensure that the voter has not already voted;
- iii. Conduct basic voter education; i.e. authorized mark of choice (either a tick or a thumb print) and how to fold the ballot paper at regular intervals during the polling exercise;
- iv. Biometric Voter Verification device operator scans Voter Locator slip (QR) code to retrieve voter information.
- v. Verify voter photographic information against the Voter locator slip
- vi. Requests the voter to present finger for biometric verification
- vii. Once voters biometric information is verified
- viii. Confirm the particulars of the voter on the register;
- ix. Issue the voter with a ballot paper or retrieve spoilt ballot paper;
- x. Constantly checking that the stamp pad does not dry up;
- xi. Ensuring that the cuticle of the voter's right hand thumb has been marked with indelible ink before leaving the polling station.
- xii. If manual verification arises the operator consults the Presiding Officer and the Presiding Officer reports to the assigned Support Technician.

1.2.3 Closure of Polls

This is the last stage in the polling exercise. The Election Constable stands behind the last person in the line at 4:00pm prompt. Polling continues until the last person on the line leaves the polling station.

1.2.4 Procedure for closure of Biometric Voter Verification Kit

- i. The Presiding Officer requests for closure of Biometric Voter Verification Kit election round.
- ii. Operator presses “Close election round button”
- iii. The Presiding Officer enters his/her PIN to close election round.
- iv. Operator switches off device, returns it to the box
- v. Completes the checklist both the Operator and the Presiding Officer.

1.2.5 Procedure for Counting of Votes

At this stage Presiding Officer assisted by the Polling Assistants will:

- i. Arrange the station for counting;
- ii. Open the ballot box;
- iii. Empty the contents carefully on the plastic sheet provided;
- iv. Unfold and arrange the ballot papers into piles;
- v. Sort the votes per candidate in full view of the candidates agents and voters present by determining the valid and invalid votes;
- vi. Put aside invalid votes;
- vii. Count the votes for each candidate;
- viii. Count the spoilt, invalid and unused ballot papers;
- ix. Fill the Declaration of Results form and other relevant forms.

1.2.6 Outstanding issues to note during the vote counting process

- i. At the beginning of the counting, the Presiding Officer shall, in full view of all present, open the ballot box and empty its contents onto the polythene sheet provided and with the assistance of the Polling Assistants proceed to count the votes separating the votes polled by each candidate.
- ii. In order to safeguard the interests of his/her candidate, an Agent may be present at each polling station to witness the counting of Ballot Papers but the Agents should NOT touch the Ballot Papers.
- iii. The Presiding Officer has the last decision on invalid votes and

the voter's intention of choice.

1.2.7 Filling of Declaration of Results Forms

The following shall apply in respect to the signing of the Declaration forms and announcement of results:

- (a) Upon counting of votes, the Presiding Officer will record on the Declaration of Results Form (Form DR), votes polled for the first candidate before proceeding to count votes for another candidate.
- (b) The Agents will sign the DR form after all the information has been included by the Presiding Officer.
- (c) Where any of the Agents refuses or fails to sign:
 - (i) He/She shall record on the Declaration Form (Form DR) the reasons for the refusal or failure to sign and
 - (ii) Where he/she refuses or fails to record reasons, the Presiding Officer shall record the fact of the refusal or failure.
- (d) Where any agent is absent, the Presiding Officer shall record the fact of such an Agent's absence on the DR Form.
- (e) The Presiding Officer will announce the results by reading the votes polled by each candidate.

1.2.8 Announcement of election results

After filling the forms, the Presiding Officer will announce the results of the poll to everyone present. The Presiding Officer will secure a copy of the duly filled DR form for the Returning Officer in the Tamper proof envelop, place a copy in the black ballot box, issue a copy to agents of each candidate and display a copy at the polling station.

1.2.9 Transmission of results

A copy of the Declaration of Results Form, Official Report Book and Accountability of Ballot papers Forms are sealed by the Presiding Officer in a tamper proof envelope from the Electoral Commission and delivered to the nearest collection centre for onward transmission to the

Returning Officer.

1.2.10 Declaration of results

The Presidential Elections Act 2005 [as amended] Sec 57 (1) the Commission shall ascertain, publish and declare in writing under its seal the results of the Presidential Elections within 48 hours from the close of polling.

The Parliamentary Elections Act 2005 [as amended] Sec 58 (1) each Returning Officer shall, immediately after the addition of the votes under sec 53 (1), or after any recount, declare elected the candidate who has obtained the largest number of votes by completing a return in the prescribed form.

1.2.11 Retrieval of Biometric Voter Verification Kit and Election Materials

After the closure of election round, the Biometric Voter Verification Operator signs the checklist, packs the Biometric Voter Verification kit and hands over to the Presiding Officer. The Presiding Officer will deliver the Biometric Voter Verification kit, sealed black box, Reusable materials and the tamper proof envelope containing the results to the Sub County Supervisor.

1.3 Duties of Polling Day Officials

The duties performed by Polling day Officials include:

1.3.1 Presiding Officers

- i) To prepare the Polling Station at least 2 days before polling day.
- ii) To collect the polling kit from the Sub-county headquarters at least 48 hours before polling day and ensures security of the kit.
- iii) To make sure that polls open at 7:00 a.m and to declare the voting closed at 4:00 p.m and record the votes cast in favor of each candidate.
- iv) To mark with an asterisk (*) the names of the five (5) voters who

witnessed the opening of the ballot box when voting commenced.

- v) To inspect the fingers of voters before issuing the ballot paper to ensure that they have not voted already.
- vi) To issue one one ballot paper per voter according to the serial numbers.
- vii) To ensure that voters form one orderly line at least 20 meters away from the table at which each voter is to vote from.
- viii) To conduct elections at a polling station of which he/she is in charge and to supervise the polling officials at the polling station.
- ix) To ensure that those who have cast their votes and other persons in the vicinity other than election officials, agents, observers stand/sit at least 100 meters from the table where voters cast their votes.
- x) To keep peace at the polling station because all Presiding Officers have the power of a justice of the peace during the polls. As justices of peace Presiding Officers.
- xi) To complete copies of the relevant forms and the Official Report Book.
- xii) To empty the ballot box and to count the votes in the full view of all present. The box should be shown to those around to confirm that it is empty.
- xiii) To announce the results of the voting at his/her polling station and to leave a copy of results at the station.
- xiv) To submit the results of the polling station to the Returning Officer as soon as possible.
- xv) To ensure that Declaration of Results Forms are signed by the agents present who wish to do so.
- xvi) To ensure that the ballot box is transferred to safe custody when counting is adjourned.

1.3.2 Polling Assistants

Polling Assistants assist Presiding Officers in the performance of their duties. One of them takes charge in the absence or failure of the

Presiding Officer. Polling Assistants are, therefore expected to fully understand the roles of Presiding Officers and may be asked to do the following;

- i. Check the fingers of voters for the presence of indelible ink before issuing them with a ballot paper
- ii. Check the accuracy of the voter's particulars on the voters card and ensure that they correspond with that on the voter's register
- iii. Mark the register indicating that the voter has already been issued a ballot paper
- iv. Issue the ballot paper in case of multiple voting.
- v. Mark the cuticle of the voter's right hand thumb or any other finger with indelible ink after voting
- vi. Make sure that agents sit in the place allocated to them for monitoring the process
- vii. Assist the Presiding Officers during counting of votes.
- viii. Help the Presiding Officers to fill all necessary forms
- ix. Help in the transfer of the ballot box back to the Sub-county office, and
- x. Listen and follow instructions from the Presiding Officers as the supervisor of the polling station.

1.3.3 Election Constables

The duties of election constables include the following:

- i. Keep law and order at the polling station,
- ii. Make sure that voter's form one line, so as to vote in an orderly manner.
- iii. Identify and give priority to vulnerable persons to vote such as expectant mothers, older persons, the sick, PWDs and public officers like medical personnel.
- iv. Keep crowds away from the polling station,
- v. Ensure the safety of polling materials
- vi. Stand behind the last voter at 5:00 p.m prompt to signify the end of the voting process.
- vii. Effecting lawful arrests
- viii. Escort the polling kit to and from the Sub County headquarters

1.3.4 Orderly Officers

There shall be appointed at every polling centre established under section 33(2) of the Electoral Commission Act, one person to ensure the orderly and prompt entrance of the voters into their proper polling station within the centre.

1.3.5 Materials to be sealed in the Black Ballot Box after counting

- i. A copy of a duly signed Declaration of Results Form (DR Form)
- ii. A copy of a duly signed Accountability of Ballot paper Form (ABP Form)
- iii. Other forms (Report of arrest, Declaration of Identity, Oaths)
- iv. All Ballot Papers received by each candidate, tied in separate bundles.
- v. Invalid Ballot Papers tied in one bundle.
- vi. Spoilt ballot papers tied in one bundle.
- vii. Unused ballot papers tied in one bundle.
- viii. Voter's Register used at the polling station.
- ix. Counterfoils of all used ballot papers
- x. Copies of appointment letters of Candidates Agents
- xi. Used and unused seals

1.3.6 Reusable Materials

- i. Cordoning tapes
- ii. Basins
- iii. Torches/lanterns
- iv. Endorsing ink
- v. Aprons
- vi. Stamp pads
- vii. Indelible marker
- viii. Transparent ballot boxes
- ix. Black polyethene sheets
- x. Cotton strings

CHAPTER 2

OFFENCES COMMITTED BY ELECTION OFFICIALS AND THEIR PENALTIES

2.0 Introduction

Elections are governed by the law and all stakeholders should abide by the law to enable the conduct of smooth elections.

2.1 Objectives

Identify and list offences related to the duties of Election Officials.

Election Officials should note the following:

- i) Voting more than once is an offence and on conviction a person is liable to a fine not exceeding 500,000/= (Five hundred thousand shillings) or to imprisonment not exceeding five years or both.
- ii) Refusing to have one's fingers to be inspected is an offence and the offender is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding 200,000/= (Two hundred thousand shillings) or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding two years or both.
- iii) When an Election officer, an agent or observer, at any polling station, assists any voter with a disability, he/she commits an offence.
- iv) Pretending to have a disability is an offence and any person who commits this offence is liable to a fine not exceeding 100,000/= (One hundred thousand shillings) or imprisonment not exceeding two years or both.
- v) Assisting a voter without authority is an offence and the offender will on conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding 200,000/= (Two hundred thousand shillings) or two years imprisonment or both.
- vi) Failure by the Presiding Officer to submit voting results is an

offence and the offender is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding 100,000/= (One hundred thousand shillings) or imprisonment not exceeding one year or both.








- vii) Preventing a person from voting is an offence and anyone who commits the offence of obstruction is liable to a fine of 200,000/= (Two hundred thousand shillings) or imprisonment for two years.
- viii) Any Election Officer who knowingly counts a ballot paper in favor of the candidate for whom it was not cast, commits an offence. On conviction a person is liable to a fine not exceeding 500,000/= (Five hundred thousand shillings) or imprisonment not exceeding five years or both.
- ix) Voting on behalf of another person (living or dead) is an offence and on conviction one is liable to imprisonment of five years (without option of a fine).
- x) Selling alcohol within four hundred metres of any polling station is an offence and any person who commits this offence is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding 200,000/= (Two hundred thousand shillings) or imprisonment not exceeding twelve months or both.
- xi) Any person who arms himself or herself during any part of polling day with any arms or ammunition without lawful authority commits an offence and shall on conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding 200,000/= (Two hundred thousand shillings) or imprisonment not exceeding two years or both.

APPENDICIES

I: HOW TO MARK A BALLOT PAPER

The Authorised mark of choice is either a tick or a thumbprint.

Illustration of marking a ballot paper using a tick








 SAMPLE BALLOT PAPER			
NAME OF CANDIDATE	CANDIDATES' PHOTOGRAPH	SYMBOL OF A PARTY/ ORGANISATIONSS / INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE	Authorised Mark of Chioice <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
AMUGE MARY		TABLE	<input type="checkbox"/>
AMUDU GEOFFREY		SAUCE PAN	<input type="checkbox"/>
BEMBA MOSH		RADIO	<input type="checkbox"/>
NANDINGOBE RITAH		POT	<input type="checkbox"/>
PINTO PIUS		KETTLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
TENDO NORAH		CLOCK	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: A vote is valid when the voter's intention is clear, regardless of the position of the authorised mark of choice. For instance when the authorised mark of choice is placed in the box for a candidates name, photograph, symbol and the designated box for marking.

Illustration of marking a ballot paper using a thumbprint



SAMPLE BALLOT PAPER

NAME OF CANDIDATE	CANDIDATES' PHOTOGRAPH	SYMBOL OF A PARTY/ ORGANISATIONSS / INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE	Authorised Mark of Chioce <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
AMUGE MARY		TABLE	
AMUDU GEOFREY		SAUCE PAN	
BEMBA MOSH		RADIO	
NANDINGOBE RITAH		POT	
PINTO PIUS		KETTLE	
TENDO NORAH		CLOCK	

II: The Marking of the Cuticle

The cuticle of the thumb is marked with Indelible marker to confirm that you voted



Candidates Contesting	No.	Names of Candidate's Agents present	Agent's Signature
	1.		
	2.		
	1.		
	2.		
	1.		
	2.		
	1.		
	2.		
	1.		
	2.		
	1.		
	2.		

(Where any agent refuses to sign he / she should record reasons in the space provided below)

.....

.....

.....

(Where any agent refuses or fails to record the reasons for his / her refusal to sign, The Presiding Officer must record the facts of the refusal or failure).

.....

.....

.....

I, the undersigned, certify that the above information is true and correct.

Presiding Officer:

Names Signature:

Place..... Date: Time:.....



PARLIAMENTARY BY-ELECTIONS, 2016

(Parliamentary Elections Act, 2005)

DIRECTLY ELECTED MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

ACCOUNTABILITY OF BALLOT PAPERS AT THE POLLING STATION

(To be filled in duplicate)

District: Code.....
 Constituency: Code.....
 Sub County/Town/Municipal Division: Code.....
 Parish/Ward: Code.....
 Polling Station: Code.....

Details of Ballot Papers	Total Number
Ballot Papers received from the Commission	
Serial numbers : From..... to	
Unused ballot papers the serial numbers of which are appended	
Spoilt ballot papers the serial numbers of which are appended	
Invalid ballot papers the serial numbers of which are appended	
Valid votes cast	
Voters who cast votes (Valid and invalid Ballot papers)	

SERIAL NUMBERS OF UNUSED, SPOILT, AND INVALID BALLOT PAPERS					
Serial Numbers of Unused Ballot Papers		Serial Numbers of Spoilt Ballot Papers		Serial Numbers of Invalid Ballot Papers	

AGENTS PRESENT

NAMES OF CANDIDATES	POLITICAL PARTY/ ORGANISATION	NO.	AGENTS' NAMES	SIGNATURE
		1.		
		2.		
		1.		
		2.		
		1.		
		2.		
		1.		
		2.		
		1.		
		2.		
		1.		
		2.		
		1.		
		2.		
		1.		
		2.		

I, the undersigned, certify that the above information is true and correct.

Presiding Officer: Names Signature:

Place: Date: Time:



PARLIAMENTARY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS BY-ELECTIONS, 2011

(Parliamentary Elections Act, 2005; Local Governments Act, Cap 243)

OFFICIAL REPORT BOOK

District: Code.....
 Constituency: Code.....
 Sub County/Town/Municipal Division: Code.....
 Parish/Ward: Code.....
 Polling Station: Code.....

**PART A
 RECEIPT OF MATERIALS**

I, Presiding Officer for
 Polling Station has today of received the following materials provided by the Electoral Commission:

No.	Items	Number of Items Sent	Number of Items Received
1.	Ballot papers for Parliamentary Elections (Directly Elected Member of Parliament)		
2.	Ballot Papers for District Directly Elected Councillor		
3.	Copy of the Voters' Roll (Register)	One	
4.	Transparent Ballot Box	One	
5.	Ink Pad	One	
6.	Bottle of Ink for Pads (Endorsing Ink)	One	
7.	Big Seals for the Ballot Boxes (Four for polling and six for storage)	Ten	
8.	One small Seal for the Ballot Box (for storage)	One	
9.	Indelible Ink Marker (for marking voters after voting)	One	
10.	Tamper evident envelopes for transmitting results for Parliamentary Elections	One	
11.	Tamper evident envelope for transmitting results for District Directly Elected Councillors	One	
12.	Pens for use at the Polling Station	Five	
13.	Piece of polythene sheeting (2 metres)	One	
14.	Roll of cordoning tape	One	
15.	Piece of cotton string for tying the pen on the table for marking the ballot papers (2 metres)	One	
16.	Rubber bands	Enough	
17.	Declaration of Results Forms (Form DR) Directly Elected Member of Parliament	One	
18.	Declaration of Results Forms (Form DR) District Directly Elected Councillor	One	
19.	Accountability of Ballot papers (Form ABP) for Parliamentary Elections (Directly Elected Member of Parliament)	One	
20.	Accountability of Ballot Papers (Form ABP) for District Directly Elected Councillor	One	
21.	Oath of Identity Forms (Form ID)	Three	
22.	Report of Arrest Forms	Three	



PARLIAMENTARY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS BY-ELECTIONS, 2011

23.	Statement of Ballot Papers for Directly Elected Member of Parliament	One	
24.	Statement of Ballot Papers for District Directly Elected Councillor	One	
25.	Polling Centre Direction Label (for polling stations within polling centres)	One	
26.	Poster for Polling Station Layout	One	
27.	Posters for Authorised Mark of Choice	One	
28.	Aprons for (Presiding Officer)	One	
29.	Apron for (Polling Assistant)	Two	
30.	Rechargeable Lamp	One	
31.	Basin	One	

Presiding Officer (Name and Signature)

Place Time

PART B. OPENING OF THE POLLS

(To be completed at the Opening of the Polling Station)

Opening Time Total number of registered voters in the register

Due to the absence of designated Election Officer, Mr./Mrs./Ms.
(please write name)

the Presiding Officer substituted him/her with Mr./Mrs./Ms.
(please write name)

	Names of Election Officers Present	Signature
1.	Presiding Officer Mr./Mrs/Ms	
2.	Polling Assistant Mr./Mrs/Ms	
3.	Polling Assistant Mr./Mrs/Ms	
4.	Election Constable Mr./Mrs/Ms	

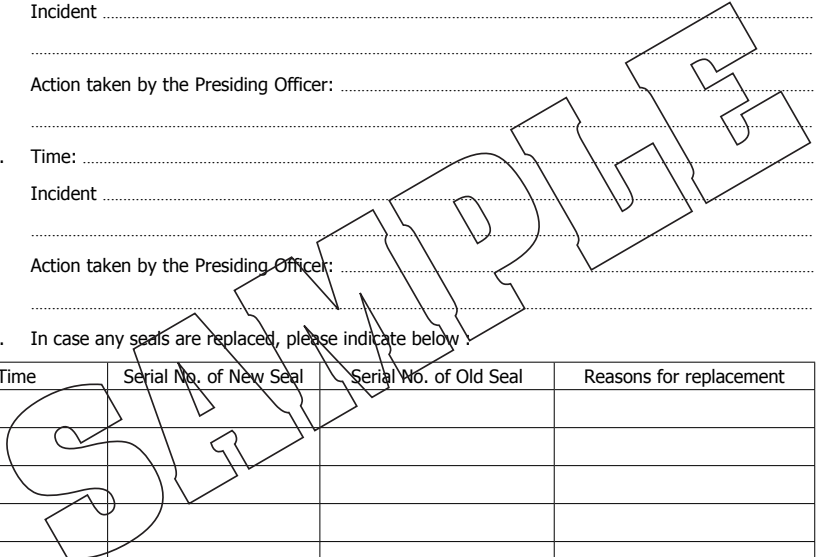
PART C
RECORD OF INCIDENTS AT POLLING STATION

(The Record includes objections/changes made in respect of ballot papers, seals and arrests)

1. Time:
Incident
.....
Action taken by the Presiding Officer:
.....
2. Time:
Incident
.....
Action taken by the Presiding Officer:
.....
3. Time:
Incident
.....
Action taken by the Presiding Officer:
.....

4. In case any seals are replaced, please indicate below.

Time	Serial No. of New Seal	Serial No. of Old Seal	Reasons for replacement





PARLIAMENTARY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS BY-ELECTIONS, 2011

Name of Political Party/ Organisation/Independent Candidate	Names of Agent	Agent's Signature

SAMPLE

**PART D
CLOSURE OF THE POLLS**

(To be completed at the closing of the Polling Station)

The last voter (Time)

Presiding Officer

Polling Assistant (1)

Polling Assistant (2)

Election Constable

