



भारत निर्वाचन आयोग
Election Commission of India

Voter Guide

Towards making elections accessible for
Persons with Disabilities & Senior Citizens



PREFACE

Election Commission of India is proud to present the Voters' Guide for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and Senior Citizens. This guide is a culmination of our latest initiatives, thoughtfully compiled to articulate the rights and facilities available to Persons with Disabilities and Senior Citizens voters, whether choosing to vote at polling stations or from the privacy of their homes. This guide endeavours to empower electors with knowledge and resources, ensuring their participation in the electoral process is informed, comfortable, and dignified.

Election Commission of India remains committed to ensuring that every voters journey from roll to poll is as seamless as it is significant. Let us together celebrate the festival of democracy with enthusiasm, inclusivity, and the unwavering belief in the power of every vote.

No Voter to be Left Behind

Constitutional and Legal Provisions



A. Constitutional Provisions

Article 324

The Constitution vests with the Election Commission, the powers for superintendence, direction, conduct of elections and maintenance of the electoral roll.

Article 325

No person shall be ineligible for inclusion in, or to claim to be included in a special, electoral roll on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex.

Article 326

Elections to the House of people and State Legislative Assembly shall be conducted on the basis of Adult Suffrage

B. The Representation of the Peoples' Act, 1951

Section 169 (1) authorises the Central Government, after consulting the Election Commission, to make rules under the Act, by notification in Official Gazette.

Section 169 (2) (c) provides power to make rules prescribing the manner in which votes are to be cast in case of illiterate voters or those with physical and other disability.


C. The Conduct of Election Rules, 1961

Rules 25 and 27 G permit assistance, on request, to an illiterate or physically infirmed voter in casting one's vote.

Rule 40, 49 N and 49 P(4) allow a visually impaired voter to take assistance of an adult companion in the voting compartment.

D. The Right of persons with disabilities Act, 2016

Section 11 of RPwD Act, 2016 regarding accessibility in voting mandates that the Election Commission of India would ensure that all polling stations are accessible to persons with disabilities and all material related to electoral process are easily understandable by and accessible to them.



Enrolment Process

In order to vote, it is essential to enrol by filling up the electoral enrolment form. If already enrolled, one should ensure in time that one's name appears correctly in the electoral roll. One can fill-up the forms online, offline or in hybrid mode and check the status likewise. One could mark oneself as PwD elector, in the relevant forms, thereby being entitled to certain facilities on the poll day.

1. Criteria for enrolment as a general elector, the person must be -



An Indian citizen

An ordinary resident of the Assembly Constituency

Have attained 18 years of age as on the qualifying date

Not disqualified as an elector

2. Four qualifying dates to enroll as an elector

Now a person can get enrolled as a new voter on four available cut-off dates in a year viz.



3. Choose your Form type:

- Form 6 :** For registration of New voters
- Form 6A :** For inclusion of name in Electoral Roll by an Overseas Elector
- Form 7 :** For objection to proposed inclusion/deletion of name in existing electoral roll.
- Form 8 :** For Shifting of residence/ Correction in entries in existing electoral roll /Replacement of EPIC/Marking of PwD.
- Form 6B :** For Aadhaar-EPIC linking/ authentication of Electoral Roll with non-Aadhaar ID (on voluntary basis)



4. Forms can be filled via:

Online mode:

Visit voters.eci.gov.in or Voter Helpline App or Saksham-ECI App, fill and submit form. Track status of application by using the reference ID.

Offline mode:

Forms are available free of cost in O/o Electoral Registration Officers / Assistant Electoral Registration Officers and Booth Level Officers. PwD electors shall be given preference in obtaining and furnishing forms at these offices. The application can be filed in person or sent by post addressed to ERO or can be handed over to the Booth Level Officer.

Hybrid mode:

The aforesaid forms could also be downloaded in PDF format from Voters' Service Portal. A print-out of the same could be filled in, and submitted to ERO/AERO or handed over to the Booth Level Officer.

5. How to mark oneself as a PwD Elector?

New elector -
Fill row 9 of Form 6 (online or offline mode)

(9) Category of disability, if any (Optional) If any other (Give description) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Locomotive	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual	<input type="checkbox"/> Deaf & Dumb
Percentage of disability: <input type="checkbox"/> %, Certificate attached (Tick the appropriate box)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	

Existing elector -
Fill row 4 of Form 8 (online or offline mode)

4. Application for Marking Person with Disability Category of disability (Tick the appropriate box for category of disability)	<input type="checkbox"/> Locomotive	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual	<input type="checkbox"/> Deaf & Dumb	<input type="checkbox"/> If any other (Give description) _____
Percentage of disability: <input type="checkbox"/> %, Certificate attached (Tick the appropriate box)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No		

Things to know prior to Poll Day

Know your BLO (Booth Level Officer)

Booth Level Officers (BLO) are responsible for keeping the part of the electoral roll, corresponding to every polling station, updated. They physically visit every house to ensure the fidelity of the list. Every elector is advised to keep in touch with the concerned BLO, generally a resident of that locality. An elector can know the details of his/her BLO through Voter Service Portal, Voter Helpline App and Saksham-ECI App.



Search name in the electoral roll:

Possessing an EPIC (Electors Photo Identity Card) is not sure entitlement for voting. One must ensure one's name in the electoral roll. The electoral roll is now updated four times a year to maintain its fidelity. The same can be checked both in online and offline mode.

- Voters Helpline App – (available on Android/iOS)
- Visit Voters' Portal- <https://voters.eci.gov.in/>
- SMS to 1950: ECI<SPACE><EPIC No>
- Saksham-ECI App(Andriod) / Saksham-ECI App (iOS)

Know about your candidates before casting vote:

Through Voter Helpline App:

- Step 1- Login to Voter Helpline App
- Step 2- Select Candidate Information option
- Step 3- Choose the Election (GE to AC/PC)
- Step 4- Choose Candidate
- Step 5- Click on the affidavit filed by the candidate

Through KYC App:

- Step 1- Login to the KYC app
- Step 2- Choose the Election type (GE to AC/PC)
- Step 3- Choose Candidate
- Step 4- Click on the affidavit filed by the candidate
- Step 5- Get information about the affidavit filed by the candidate and his/her criminal antecedents if any.

Poll Day

One should be prepared beforehand for the poll day, check your names in the electoral roll and check your polling station.

Voter Information Slip:

To facilitate voters in knowing the serial number of electoral roll in their polling station, date of poll, time etc, Voter information Slip is issued by the BLO, at least 5 days before the date of poll to all the enrolled electors, by the District Election Officer. It includes information like Polling Station, date, time etc with QR code but not the photograph of the voter. This is not allowed as proof of identity. For persons with visual impairment, Voter Information Slips are issued with Braille features along with normal voter information slips.

Know your way around the Polling Station

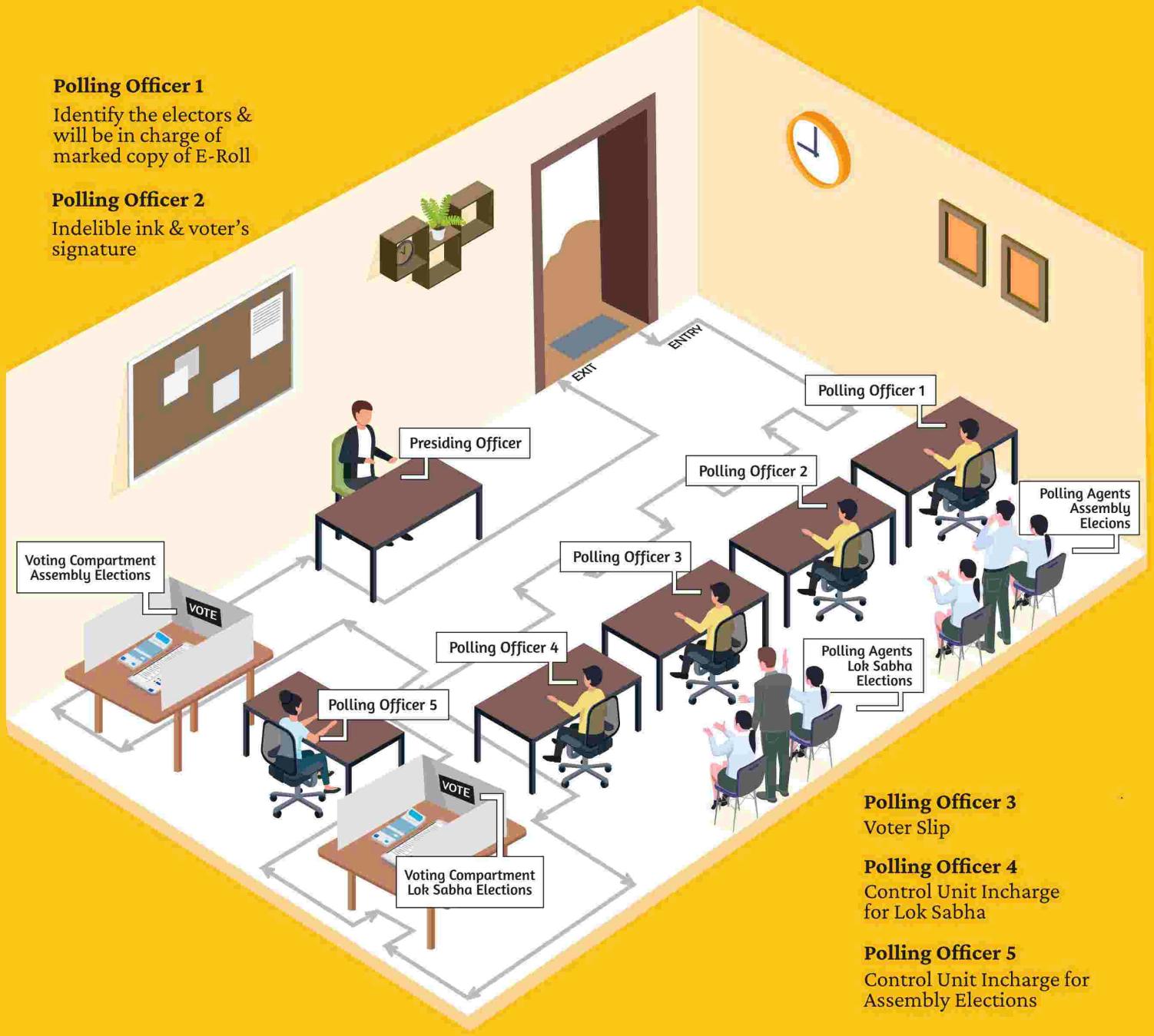
Model Layout of Polling Station

Single Election (Assembly Constituency and Parliamentary Constituency)



Model Layout of Polling Station

Simultaneous Election (Assembly Constituency and Parliamentary Constituency)



Prominent Signages at Polling Station and their meaning:



Priority Access



Special Volunteers



Transport Facility



Sign Language



Help Desk



Ramp for Wheelchair



Accessible Toilets



Signage



Voter Helpline



EVM with Braille

Documents accepted as proof of identity at Polling Station

Voter ID Card (EPIC)

Aadhaar Card

PAN Card

Unique Disability ID (UDID) Card

Service Identity Card

Passbook with photo by Bank/Post Office

Health Insurance Smart Card (M/o Labour)

Driving License

Passport

Smart card issued by RGI under NPR

Pension Document

Official identity card issued to MPs/MLAs/MLCs

MNREGA Job Card



Polling Process



Important Note!

If you do not see the paper slip in the VVPAT or hear the loud beep, contact the Presiding Officer

The slip will be visible through the glass for approx 7 seconds. Printed slip will be secured in the VVPAT

None Of The Above (NOTA) available as the last option on EVM machines



Facilities extended by ECI for PwDs and Senior Citizen electors:

Polling Stations on ground floor for convenience of electors

PwD-friendly facilities under Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) at Polling Station (Like: Ramps with gradient and sufficient handrail)

A separate queue at Polling Station/ Priority entry

Provision for Wheelchairs at polling station

Adequate Transport facility on Poll day

Disability specific Poll Volunteers at polling station

Signage, obstacle free wide levelled pathway from entrance to voting compartment.

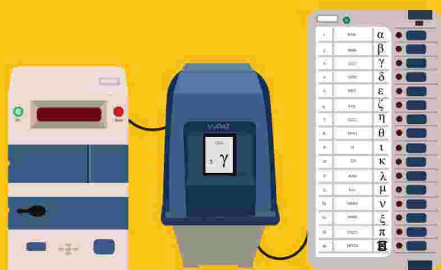
Voter Information Slips (VIS)/EPICs in Braille

Dummy Ballot sheets in Braille

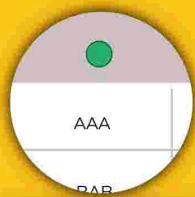
Braille on EVMs

Magnifying glasses/sheets for persons with reduced visibility.

Home Voting facility for Persons with benchmark disabilities and Senior Citizens of above 85 years of age, by availing the option of Postal Ballot Facility through Form -12D.



Casting your Vote through EVM



Ready to Vote

The 3rd Polling Officer enables the Ballot Unit (BU) as you enter the voting compartment. The 'READY' light of BU will glow

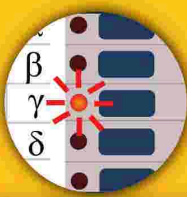
1



Cast your Vote

Press the Blue Button on the Ballot Unit against the name/ symbol of candidate of your choice/ NOTA option

2



See the Light

The red light against the name/ symbol of candidate/ NOTA option chosen will glow

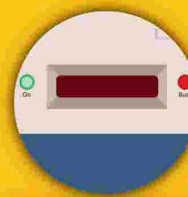
3



Verify your Vote

The VVPAT will print & display the paper slip containing Serial Number, Name and Symbol of the chosen candidate/ NOTA

4



Hear the 'BEEP'

The BEEP sound from the Control Unit marks that vote has been cast successfully

5

Home Voting Facility for PwD (with Benchmark Disability) and Senior Citizen (Above 85 years)

The Election Commission of India encourages all electors to come out and vote at their respective polling stations. However, for those who still cannot vote on-site for reasons of physical disability or advanced age, among others, the concept of Absentee Voter (AV) has been introduced in recent years. To avail this facility, an elector has to be a Person with benchmark Disabilities or Senior Citizen of above 85 years. The voting would be by postal ballot paper, and ahead of the normal poll date. Complete secrecy of the ballot would be maintained, as the ballot paper would be sealed in a double envelope to be delivered to the Returning Officer.

Eligibility conditions to cast vote through postal ballot by PwD/Sr. Citizen Electors:

Persons with Disabilities (AVPD): An elector who is marked 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. The elector in this category while submitting the application in Form 12D has to enclose a copy of benchmark disability certificate with it.

Senior citizens (AVSC):

An elector above 85 years of age. The age is mentioned in the electoral roll database and the elector is not required to give any additional certificate or undertaking with Form 12D.

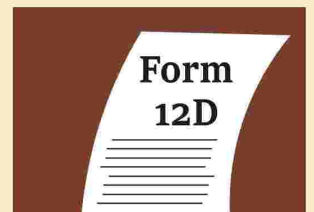


Standard Operating Procedure for Absentee Vote by Postal Ballot

Step 1 : BLO will visit the houses of the absentee voters (above 85 years age and PwD with benchmark disability) as per the details provided by the Returning Officer and deliver the Form-12 D to the concerned elector and obtain acknowledgement from them.



Step 2 : BLO will collect the filled in Form-12 D from the house of the elector, who opt for it, within 5 days of the notification and deposit with the Returning Officer forthwith.



Step 3 : All the electors whose particulars in Form-12 D have been found correct will be issued a postal ballot paper. A team of polling officials along with micro observers shall visit the electors at the address mentioned in their Form-12 D application.



Step 4 : Identity of the elector shall be verified. Elector will be given the postal ballot. Elector will mark his vote and place the ballot in a smaller envelope.



Step 5 : The duly filled up and signed declaration in Form 13A attested by the authorised poll officer along with closed envelope (Form 13B) containing the marked ballot paper shall be placed inside the larger envelope (Form 13C)



Step 6 : Close the larger envelope and hand over the same to the poll officer.



Facilitation Apps of ECI

Mobile applications (Apps) are assets, in the digital era. Election Commission of India has several trusted mobile applications that electors will find useful and convenient to use. These are available in both Android and iOS versions, and downloadable for free. Here are a few that Persons with Disabilities (PwD) and Senior Citizens could use with benefit.

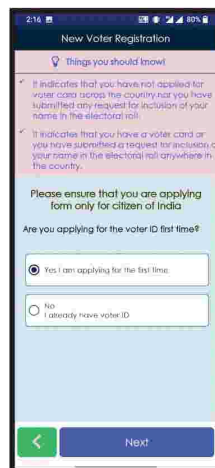
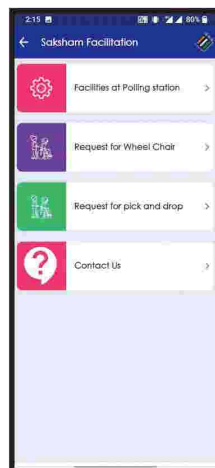
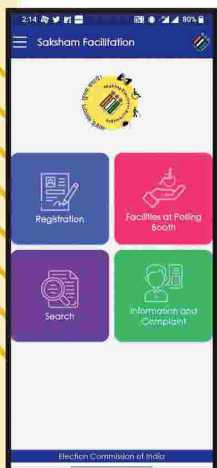


Saksham-ECI App

Saksham-ECI App is the digital enabler for Persons with Disabilities (PwD).

Key Features

- Register as an elector
- Mark PwD status
- Request for correction/request for migration
- Know polling station location/contact details of polling officers
- Request pick-and-drop/wheelchair/assistance at polling station
- File complaint for any problems faced while participating in electoral process
- Voice Assistance for visually impaired PwD
- Text to Speech facility for hearing impaired PwD
- Large font size and high contrasting colours





Voter Helpline App

Voter Helpline App is one-stop solution for all electoral needs from enrolment to election results

Key Features

- Search/register your name in electoral roll
- Request modification of demographic details
- Fill all types of VSP forms and get updates
- Link Aadhaar with EPIC
- Download your digital voter slip
- File complaint
- Get election schedule/maps/announcements
- Get digital photo voter slip
- Find queue position at polling station
- Know candidates' profile
- Know about EVM & VVPAT use
- Get statistical report of previous elections
- See voter awareness and training videos
- Get election results
- Search your polling station



cVigil App

cVigil App empowers citizenry to report authentic cases of violation of Model Code of Conduct during elections. The App provides time-stamping, live photo with auto location features that helps the electoral machinery to identify the spot of violation and take prompt action by dispatching flying squads. The GIS-based dashboard provides a strong decision tool to drop and dispose of frivolous and unrelated cases before they are acted upon. Complaints filed by cVigil App are accessible to the Election Observers on Observer App.

Key Features

- Location automatically captured from the application
- Time stamping
- Anonymous and non-Anonymous logins allowed
- 5-min to capture real photo/video and submit from Mobile application
- Photo cannot be clicked outside the mobile application
- Allow only Live video and photo to be captured



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