

BAR COUNCIL OF PUNJAB & HARYANA

ELECTION-2026

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GUIDANCE OF POLLING OFFICERS

- 1) The polling shall take place:
 - (i) at Chandigarh on Tuesday 17th March 2026 at the High Court premises and District Courts premises from 09.00 AM. to 5.00 PM.
 - (ii) at the District Courts/Sub Divisional Courts/Tehsil Courts/Tribunal in the States of Punjab & Haryana on Wednesday the 18th March, 2026 from 09.00 AM. to 5.00 PM.
- 2) Only such persons are entitled to vote in person whose names appear in the Final Electoral Roll. Two copies of the relevant extract of the Electoral Roll relating to your polling station are being supplied to you. A ballot paper shall **NOT** be issued to any person whose name does not appear in the aforesaid extract of the final Electoral Roll.
- 3) The polling booth shall be set up in the premises as mentioned in the list of polling booths.
- 4) The polling party shall consist of one Supervisor, one polling officer and two other officials (including a Helper) to assist him/her. If any of them is unavoidably prevented to act as such, an alternative arrangement shall be made by the Polling Officer under intimation in all cases;- to the Sh. Rupinderpal Singh Brar, Nodal Officer Bar Council Election (Mobile No. 09779091910), Malkit Singh, Addl. Secretary, Bar Council (M-9855559155) in case of the State of Punjab to ADC General to concerned district, in case of the State of Haryana to the Sh Raj Kumar Joint Electoral Officer, (M- 9467980700) O/o Chief Electoral Officer, Govt. of Haryana and in case of U.T. Chandigarh to Sh. S.K.Arora Joint Electoral Officer O/o Chief Electoral Officer, U.T. Administration, U.T. Chandigarh (Mob.9501602021)
- 5) The polling material as per Appendix I will be supplied at the premises of the Bar Council Punjab & Haryana at Chandigarh for the conduct of poll, on 16th March, 2026 10 AM to 1.00PM
- 6) The polling shall commence sharply at the appointed hour, i.e. 09.00 AM. The polling party should reach the polling booth one hour before the commencement of the polling so as to complete all the formalities well in time prior to the appointed hour. The seat of the polling personnel shall be in the manner indicated in Appendix II. They shall perform the duties as mentioned therein.
- 7) **Preparation of Ballot Box:-**The polling party may begin preparing the ballot box for the poll 15 minutes before the time fixed for the commencement of poll. The polling officer shall paste inside and outside the ballot box a label for the "Ballot Box" duly filled up with all the details for its correct identification at the time of counting. Also tie to it an "Address Tag" showing all the details on the label posted outside the ballot box and the tag-label. Before keeping the ballot box finally for voting it may be allowed to be inspected by the Candidate/s present at that time.
- 8) **INSTRUCTION FOR OPERATING THE BALLOT BOXES:-**
 - (a) To open the ballot box.
 - (b) Undo the wire which secures the window cover to the button.
 - (c) Turn window cover clockwise so as to expose the window fully.
 - (d) Hold your palm upwards and insert a finger through the window and extend it to the middle of the bottom of the lid to contact the bracket.
 - (e) Pull the bracket towards the window and turn the button gently ANTI-CLOCK-WISE until it stops, after less than a quarter turn, the box is now unlocked and the lid can be opened to expose its inside.
 - (f) Allow the candidates to inspect the ballot box without disturbing the mechanism.

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(B) TO PREPARE THE BALLOT BOX FOR VOTING

- (i) Take the paper seal, either green or pink, have it signed near its wider end on its white face by the candidates who may desire to sign. Also sign yourself and record the date.
- (ii) Keep a record of the serial number of the paper seal in the prescribed Form and allow the candidates to note the number.
- (iii) Insert the ends of the paper seal through the inner chinks on either side of the central part of the frame so that the white side of the paper seal with the signatures should be visible below the lid of the box.
- (iv) Secure the two top corners of the card-board of the paper seal and to the inner side of the lid of the ballot box by the sealing wax.
- (v) If any candidate arrived late and could not sign on the paper seal before its insertion into the frame, he/she should be allowed to sign or affix his/her seal on the longer portion of the paper seal at this stage if he/she so desires.
- (vi) Then close the lid of the box gently. Take care that the loose ends of the paper seal remain within the ballot box. Turn the button slightly clockwise until it stops with a click. The slit should now be fully open in the correct balloting position. Do not turn the button further otherwise the slit will get closed and no ballot paper can be inserted thereafter. In case this happens due to any lapse or carelessness, the box will have to be reopened after destroying the paper seal and will have to be prepared once again for voting with a fresh paper seal.
- (vii) Turn the window cover anti-clock wise so that the window is covered by it fully. Run a piece of wire through the hole in the window cover and the corresponding hole in the button and twist the ends of the wire together tightly a few times so that the window cover is secured effectively to the button which cannot be turned thereafter. Then run a piece of twine through the holes in the window cover and the button and tie it tightly with multiple knots. Hold the free ends of the twine together and put your seal on them as close to knots as practicable after placing the ends on a piece of the thick strong paper.

(C) To close the slit and seal the ballot box after voting

- (i) After the last voter has voted, remove the wire and cut the twine so as to free the window cover.
- (ii) Move the window cover clock-wise and turn the button hard in the clock-wise direction until it stops and closes the slit completely.
- (iii) Turn the window cover anti-clockwise so as to close the window fully. Hold the button and the window cover together, run a piece of wire through the hole in the window cover and the corresponding hole in the button and secure them together firmly by twisting the ends of wire together tightly a few times.
- (iv) After closing and securing the ballot box or the boxes of the polling booth, run a ribbon or tape on the four sides of the boxes lengthwise and breadth-wise crossing each other on the lid passing under the handle. If there is one end, tie the knot firmly and the seal the knot on a piece of thick paper or cardboard with your seal. The Candidates should also be asked to affix their seals or their signatures if they so desire. After this, the ballot box should be placed in a bag with provision for closing it with a strong rope or other locking arrangement and the bag shall be closed and sealed by you. Also it be attached properly with the address tag and the label.

9. **Voting Process:** Voting paper shall be delivered to each voter when he/she appears in person. Take his/her signature on the list of voters viz on the copy of the Extract of the Electoral Roll which shall hereinafter be referred to as the marked copy of the Electoral Roll. The other copy of the Extract of Electoral roll may be used by you for reference purposes to dispose of the disputed cases, if, any, and should not be sealed along with the 'Marked' Copy of the Electoral roll. After the poll is over, it should, however, be kept in a separate envelop.

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10. Copy of the instructions for the guidance of the voters (as also given on the back of the ballot paper) are also being sent to you for being exhibited outside the polling booth for the facility of the voters so that they may not take longer time inside the polling booth for marking their ballot papers.
11. A voter on receiving a voting paper shall go to the place which is screened from the outside view and shall mark his/her preference in the manner prescribed. The voter shall then put his/her voting paper duly folded in the ballot box kept for the voting purposes at your table. No voter should be allowed to leave the polling booth unless he/she has put his/her voting paper in the ballot box.
- Note:- One or two or three screened compartment (s) as may be considered necessary, may be provided there. For instance, four small sticks of three feet height may be tied to the four legs of an office table and the same be covered with a cloth (curtain pardah/cloth Sheet /Chaddar) from three sides by tying the same with the sticks with the help of ropes).**
12. A second voting paper shall not be issued to any voter unless he/she satisfies the polling officer that the voting paper issued to him/her has been spoilt or mutilated. The voting paper already issued in that case shall be taken back from him/her and cancelled, kept in an envelope set apart for the purpose and the envelope be marked as "cancelled ballot papers".
13. No voter who reaches the polling booth after 5.00 P.M. shall be allowed to cast his /her vote. Care should, however, be taken to see that all voters who have reached the polling booth before 5.00 P.M. are allowed to cast their votes. With a view to preventing the late comers (who arrive after 5.00 P.M.) from casting their vote, you should announce a few minutes before the closing hour that all those present within the limits of the polling booth (who are waiting to vote) will be allowed to cast their votes. You may distribute to all such voters initialed blank slips and you may continue the poll till all those waiting voters have cast their votes.
14. At the close of poll, prepare an account of the voting papers in Form 'D' and kept it in a separate cover with the words ('Voting Paper Account') mentioned thereon.
15. You shall then keep into separate packets
- the marked copy of the electoral roll
 - the unused ballot papers
 - the cancelled ballot paper
 - the disputed ballot papers
 - the paper seal Accounts
 - Any other paper as directed to be kept in a sealed packet. Each such packet shall be sealed by your seal and also by the candidate who may desire to affix their seals thereon.
- As an additional precaution, all the above mentioned sealed packets should be kept in a large-lined envelop supplied to you. The large envelop should be closed only after all the packets are kept therein.
16. The ballot boxes as well as all the election papers shall be delivered at the place according to the instructions and the route plan being issued separately by Election department.
17. The ballot papers supplied to you should be checked up carefully at the time you receive them. Those shall be kept in safe custody till the commencement of the poll. Similarly, after the poll, ballot boxes containing the ballot papers and all the other election papers should be kept in safe custody by you till the same are delivered to the authorized representative of the Returning Officer in the premises of the Hon'ble High Court of Punjab and Haryana at Chandigarh.
18. All other articles supplied to you, which are of non-consumable nature, should be returned in the small kit bag being supplied to you.
19. **Dispute about Identity of Voter:-** If during the polling, any candidate disputes the identity of a voter, the Polling Officer shall verify the identification of the voter by way of the original Identity card or Enrolment Certificate issued by the Bar Council or the Driving Licence, Passport and Voter I/card.

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(i) Instruction to Voters:- All the voters are requested to carry their Identity cards issued by the State Bar Council or the Enrolment Certificate with photograph in original, issued by the State Bar Council Punjab and Haryana, Chandigarh, so that they may prove their identity as a lawyer and may not face any inconvenience at the time of voting at the polling booth.


(ii) Special Instruction as per High Court order dated 11.3.2013:-In case, the photograph of any voter is not found printed on the Electoral Roll, he/ she would be required to prove his/her identity by producing (i) the original identity card issued by the State Bar Council of Punjab and Haryana, Chandigarh or (ii) the original Enrolment Certificate with photograph or (iii) the voter Identity card or (iv) the Driving Licence or (v) the passport.

Photostat copy of any of the aforesaid proof of Identity will not be allowed for the purpose of voting by the Polling Officer.

20. Prohibition of use of Mobile Phone/Camera inside the Polling Booth:-

- (I) No candidate or voter shall be permitted to carry a mobile phone/ camera at the time of polling inside the polling booth.
- (II) No candidate shall not talk to any voter inside the polling booth so as to canvass for any one.
- (III) If a voter is found with a mobile phone/ camera inside the polling booth and is found to be talking to someone on his/her mobile phone or is found to have taken a photograph of his/her ballot paper, or any other ballot paper, such a ballot paper shall not be put /cast in the ballot box but shall be kept by the Polling Officer in a separate envelope with the remarks "**disputed ballot paper**". The Polling Officer shall prepare a list of all such ballot papers at the end of the polling and give his/her remarks against each ballot paper number mentioned in the list. All the envelopes of such disputed ballot papers and the list of such ballot papers shall be kept in a big packet and shall be sealed by the Polling Officer. Such votes/ ballot papers may be treated as invalid at the time of the counting of votes after examination by the Returning Officer/ High Powered Election Committee. A copy of this order be forwarded to all the candidates and polling officers.

21. Videography at Polling Booths: The matter has been considered, and videography is arranged at all polling booths in the States of Punjab and Haryana, as well as in U.T. Chandigarh. The videography of the voting process at all polling booths is conducted under the supervision of the Chief Electoral Officer of Punjab, Haryana, and U.T. Chandigarh. With regard to the apprehension that fake voting may take place, it has now been ordered that no voter shall be allowed to enter the polling booth unless he/ she carries a valid photo identity card. Furthermore, since the electoral roll contains photographs of the voters, the Polling Officer shall ensure that no bogus or fake voting takes place.


Justice Jaishree Thakur (Retd.)
Judge, Punjab and Haryana High Court
Returning Officer
Bar Council of Punjab and Haryana
Chandigarh

Approved

Justice Ranjit Singh (Retd.)
Judge, Punjab and Haryana High Court
Chairperson
High Powered Election Committee