

## **GUIDE**

The booklet is considered for local and international (foreign) observers.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Election day: <b>29 January 2025</b></li><li>a) the voting starts: <b>at 8.00</b></li><li>b) the voting ends: <b>at 19.00</b></li></ul> |
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- Every citizen of the Republic of Azerbaijan who has an active election right and has reached 18 years old on the day of the elections (including this day) may participate as an observer in elections.

- The persons whose incapability has been approved by court decision shall be disfranchised of their active election right.

- Observers shall be accredited and provided with a relevant badge by the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan (hereafter referred to as - CEC) or Constituency Election Commission. The observers accredited by CEC may conduct observation in the whole territory of the country and the observers accredited by the Constituency Election Commission may conduct observation within the territory of the election constituency which has accredited them.

- The observer who intends to observe the sessions held by the election commission up to the voting day shall get a specific permission upon the accreditation by CEC. This observer shall not be required a specific permission to observe sessions held by the election commission on the voting day.

International observers shall get accredited at CEC within the manner defined by law.

**REMEMBER!**

- ✓ *Citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan cannot get status of an international observer.*
- ✓ *International observers shall be under the state protection during the presence within the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Election commissions, governmental bodies and municipalities shall render the necessary assistance to them.*
- ✓ *If necessary, an international observer shall be provided with an interpreter.*

An observer shall comply with the requirements of the election legislation and carry the relevant badge while conducting observation.

**ATTENTION!**

*The badge shall be considered valid upon the submission of an ID card or a substitute document.*

## **Some basic concepts included in the Election Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

**election right** – the right to elect municipality members, also to be elected to these bodies, as well as, to participate in the nomination of candidates, pre-election campaign, activity of election commissions, observation of elections (including the determination of election results), voting and implementation of other election actions;

**voter** – a person possessing election right;

**the persons entitled to participate in the implementation of election actions** – candidates to municipality membership, registered candidates, political parties, political party blocs, their authorized representatives and agents, local and international (foreign) observers, members with consultative rights of election commissions, representatives of media outlets;

**candidate** – a nominee to be elected to municipality membership in accordance with the Election Code;

**registered candidate** - a person registered by the relevant election commission to be elected to municipality membership in accordance with the Election Code;

**a bloc of political parties** – a bloc comprising of two or more political parties which participate jointly in elections and have the same rights with political parties during elections;

**authorized representative** – a person appointed by candidates to municipality membership, political parties, bloc of political parties which have nominated candidates to implement the election actions implied by the Election Code, who represent them in election commissions and who are entitled to undertake actions of legal importance including pre-election campaign on behalf of those subjects;

**agent** - a person appointed by the registered candidate, political parties and political party blocs with registered

candidates, who has the right to observe and conduct the campaign for the election of registered candidate and is engaged in other similar activities;

**observation** – collection of information and preparation of an expert opinion basing on the assessment of this information;

**observer** – the person accredited by the relevant election commission to observe the election process during the conduct of elections;

**international (foreign) observer** – the person who has been entitled to observe elections and represents a foreign state, foreign or international organization;

**voters' lists** – lists of the citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan who have active election right and live within the precinct of the relevant constituency;

**pre-election campaign** - activity of citizens and political parties calling or intending to call upon voters to participate in the election, to vote (or not vote) for one or another candidate;

**campaign materials** – printed, audio-visual and other materials devoted to the pre-election campaign, envisioned to be published or distributed through other means during election campaign.

#### **Methods of holding pre-election campaign:**

- via media;
- through the conduct of mass activities (assemblies and meetings with voters, mass discussions, talks, etc.);
- through the issue and distribution of printed, audio-visual and other campaign materials;
- by other means not prohibited by law.

#### **Principles of observation:**

- it shall be prohibited to influence the election process in the interest of any candidate or political party;
- all the circumstances and facts related to the observed activities shall be taken into consideration;
- observation shall be open;

- results of the observation shall be based on facts.

**Observers shall abide by the following terms:**

- *to not interfere in free and independent expression of voters' will;*
- *to maintain and assist the maintenance of secrecy and confidentiality of the voting;*
- *to respect freedom of media;*
- *to not obstruct the professional activities of representatives of the media outlets which deal with their professional activity, to not violate or interfere in election campaigns of candidates, political parties and blocs of political parties;*
- *to not obstruct the dissemination of pre-election campaign materials, to not spoil or destroy them;*
- *to not obstruct the conduct of pre-election mass activities;*
- *to cooperate with electoral bodies and their incumbents for the conduct of free, independent, peaceful and orderly elections;*
- *to not force voters to vote or refrain from voting through pressure, bribe or other illegal methods;*
- *to not force voters to participate or to not participate in pre-election campaign through pressure, bribe or other illegal methods;*
- *to respect authorized persons and observers and cooperate with them;*
- *to not interfere unduly in the activity of election commissions, to not violate the process of voting or vote counting;*
- *to respect legally approved results of elections, to submit each complaint regarding the elections to the authorized body and to abide by the decision of that body regarding the relevant complaint;*
- *to not make speeches that intimidate, slander or call to violence or distribute materials with such content;*
- *to not use administrative, municipal or other public resources outside the circumstances prescribed in the Election Code.*

## **A T T E N T I O N !**

*The violation of the above-mentioned requirements shall cause liability implied by the Code of Administrative Offences and Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan.*

## **REMEMBER!**

*The observer shall officially record the discovered facts upon compiling a relevant act in a specified manner.*

*If possible, observer shall involve the persons interested in officially recording those facts.*

*When observers submit their opinions on observation results to the chairman of the relevant election commission, that opinion shall be attached to the protocol on voting results.*

### **Observers shall have the following rights:**

- to be present in the voting booth of the relevant election precinct at any time they choose on voting day;
- to observe sessions of the election commission on the voting day;
- to become familiar with voters' lists;
- to observe activities to be implemented by the Precinct Election Commission before announcing the election precinct open;
- to address suggestions and comments on the organization of voting to the chairman of the Precinct Election Commission or to a substitute person;
- to observe spraying of invisible ink on the thumbs of voters and issuance of ballot papers to them;

- to observe voters entering and leaving the voting booth and casting ballot papers in the ballot box;
- to observe voting outside the polling station, including accompanying the mobile ballot box;
- to count the persons who have voted;
- to observe counting of the ballot papers found inside the ballot box;
- to observe vote counting and completing the protocol on the voting results;
- to require an opinion on the results of the observation to be attached to the protocol of the election commission;
- to make or obtain copies of the election commission's documents in compliance with law;
- to observe the re-count of votes;
- to observe transfer of the election documents to superior election commissions.

### **A T T E N T I O N !**

*Local and international observers shall have equal rights and duties.*

### **R E M E M B E R !**

- ✓ *Observers shall not be required to inform the Precinct Election Commissions in advance of their visit to the polling station.*
- ✓ *A list of persons present at the polling station and observing the election activities during the voting day shall be maintained by the secretary of the Precinct Election Commission.*

### **Observers shall be prohibited to act as follows:**

- to issue ballot papers to voters;
- to mark voters' thumbs with invisible ink or to check their thumbs for ink stains with an ultraviolet lamp;

- to ask a voter how they will vote or have voted;
- to sign on receiving a ballot paper on behalf of a voter upon his/her request;
- to mark the ballot paper upon the request of a voter;
- to participate directly in the calculation of ballot papers together with the members of election commission having decisive voting rights;
- to implement actions obstructing the work of election commissions;
- to influence the voter's choice or to violate the secrecy of the voting;
- to campaign among the voters;
- to make actions or calls directed to or that can be appraised as supporting or opposing any candidate or political party, bloc of political parties;
- to interfere in the decision-making process of the relevant election commission;
- to reply to voters' questions (except the questions relating to his/her status);
- to implement other actions (inactions) prohibited by law.

Term of office of the observer shall commence since the day of his/her accreditation and expire on the day of the publication of the CEC decision on the declaration of results of the Municipal Elections.

Authorities of the observer can be terminated in other cases and manner implied by legislation.

**REMEMBER!**

*Local observers who try to influence a voter to express his/her will and violate the rules regarding the secret voting shall be expelled from the polling station by the decision of the Precinct Election Commission. The accreditation of that observer can be cancelled by the relevant court upon the appeal of the election commission which has registered him/her.*