

## **NATIONAL EXTRAORDINARY PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION**

### **Decision No 24 of 12 August 2020**

Based on Article 58 of the Law No 10/2009 on the state supervision of public health (Official Gazette, 2009, No 67, Article 183), as amended, by Decision of the National Extraordinary Public Health Commission No 10 of 15 May 2020, at the proposal of the Director of the National Public Health Agency, a state of emergency was introduced on the entire territory of the Republic of Moldova starting with May 16.

Given that it is necessary to organize and carry out the new local elections which were planned for 6 September 2020 by decision of the Central Electoral Commission No 3972 of 9 June 2020, and the elections of the President of the Republic of Moldova which are planned for 1 November 2020 by decision of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova No 65 of 21 May 2020,

Following an analysis of the current epidemiologic situation and given the need for rigorous observance of public health rules, the National Extraordinary Public Health Commission,

### **DECIDES:**

1. For the protection of all participants of the electoral process (voters, electoral officials, candidates and other stakeholders, the following general mandatory rules of COVID-19 infection prevention and combating during the elections are established to be observed:
  - 1.1. at least 1.5m of social distance between persons;
  - 1.2. hand hygiene rules;
  - 1.3. respiratory hygiene rules;
  - 1.4. observance of rules imposed by the authorities on individuals and legal entities for territories or institutions in quarantine;
  - 1.5. wearing masks in public transport and enclosed public spaces. The mask should cover both the mouth and the nose;
  - 1.6. mandatory temperature checks in of every official and/or employee (operators, consultants, accountants, driver etc.) physically present at the electoral body premises and recording of these data in a register as per Annex;
  - 1.7. ensuring the electoral officials with protective equipment (masks, gloves, visors etc.);
  - 1.8. provision of hand sanitizers at the entrances to electoral body and polling stations premises;
  - 1.9. sanitization of surfaces and wet cleaning of premises at least 3 (three) times a day;
  - 1.10. frequent or, where possible, permanent airing of spaces.
2. The Instruction on the organization and carrying out, by the Central Electoral Commission, of elections (new local elections and elections of the President of the Republic of Moldova) in the context of COVID-19 pandemic shall be approved as per Annex.
3. People over 63 years old and high-risk population groups shall exercise their electoral right under the conditions of maximum prudence and vigilance, avoiding crowded places and staying in enclosed public spaces as little as possible.
4. Restrictive actions shall be revised depending on the course and trend of the

COVID-19 epidemiologic situation.

5. Decisions of the National Extraordinary Public Health Commission shall be binding upon central and local public authorities, individuals and legal entities, regardless of their scope of activity and type of business.

6. Territorial extraordinary public health commissions shall revise all decisions/instructions approved, aligning them with decisions of the National Extraordinary Public Health Commission of the Republic of Moldova.

7. Violation of the public health rules listed herein poses a threat to the public health and shall lead to administrative and/or criminal punishment of the guilty persons.

8. This Decision shall come into force when issued and shall be published on the Government's official web page.

Annex

to Decision No 24 of 12.08.2020

of the National Extraordinary Public Health Commission

### **Instruction on the organization and carrying out by the Central Electoral Commission of elections in the context of COVID-19 pandemic**

This Instruction presents a set of measures under which the Central Electoral Commission will manage the new local elections of 6 September 2020 and the elections of the President of the Republic of Moldova of 1 November 2020 in the context of COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this document is to ensure an optimal and uniform implementation of electoral procedures of arranging, equipping and supplying polling stations, electoral officials and voters with everything necessary for conducting voting as safely as possible for all the participants.

In this regard, to help prevent the spreading of COVID-19 infection in the process of elections management, actions will be taken for:

- Protecting the health and safety of voters;
- Protecting the health and safety of electoral officials;
- Protecting the health and safety of candidates, observers and other persons involved in the electoral process;
- Ensuring the observance of general rules set by the competent authorities to prevent and control the spreading of COVID-19 infection.

The rules set out herein shall also apply to polling stations outside the country, unless the epidemiologic situation in a given country requires otherwise.

#### 1. Protection measures

##### **1.1. Voter protection measures:**

- Display information materials promoting the observance of hand and respiratory hygiene rules;
- Warn voters about the mandatory observance of COVID-19 infection control and combating rules set by the National Extraordinary Public Health Commission;
- Warn voters about the mandatory observance, within the perimeter of the polling station, of the rules of social distance and do not permit gatherings of 50 people or more;
- Organize flow access of voters to the polling station to avoid crowding both inside and outside the station;
- Allow only a limited number of voters inside the polling station; allow voters to enter polling stations and electoral body premises only while wearing protective equipment (masks and gloves);
- Install alcohol-based sanitizer dispensers at the entrances to polling stations in visible and accessible places for voters;
- Take the temperature of every voter at the entrance to the polling station;
- Voters shall show up at polling stations with their own pens.

##### **1.2. Electoral official protection measures:**

- Inform electoral officials about hand and respiratory hygiene rules; warn electoral officials about the mandatory observance of COVID-19 infection control and combating rules set by the National Extraordinary Public Health Commission;
- Provide electoral officials with the necessary protective equipment (masks, gloves, visors, protective wear, etc.) and sanitizers;
- Arrange for and carry out, on a daily basis, general health check of electoral officials present on electoral body premises (temperature, general state of health);
- Make sure the equipment and spaces used in the electoral process comply with health rules

by ensuring the electoral premises are cleaned up and treated with sanitizers; ensure frequent/permanent airing of spaces;

- Allow access to electoral body premises and polling stations only to persons wearing protective equipment (masks and gloves);
- Make sure that social distancing is maintained during regular meetings of electoral bodies; wear protective equipment in enclosed spaces and sanitize spaces at least every 3 (three) hours.

### **1.3. Electoral competitor protection measures:**

- Display information materials promoting the observance of hand and respiratory hygiene rules;
- Warn electoral competitors about the mandatory observance of COVID-19 infection control and combating rules set by the National Extraordinary Public Health Commission;
- Warn electoral competitors about the mandatory use of protective equipment (masks and gloves);
- Install alcohol-based sanitizer dispensers at the entrances to polling stations in visible and accessible places for voters and persons authorized to assist to electoral operations;
- Organize spaces intended for receiving documents filed by potential electoral competitors and spaces for monitoring the electoral process in line with the guidelines of the National Extraordinary Public Health Commission.

## **2. Electoral period**

2.1. During the electoral body's activity its chairperson shall ensure and/or monitor the health of the electoral body's members and supporting staff (operators, consultants, accountants, driver etc.) by:

- taking the temperature of every official and/or employee (operators, consultants, accountants, driver etc.) physically present on the premises of the electoral body and record the results in a register in the form of register template No 1 herein;
- replacing the electoral official or employee who has signs of an acute respiratory infection and warn them about the need to stay home and inform their family physician;
- monitoring the health of electoral officials and supporting staff who are not physically present on the electoral body premises or are working remotely;
- if an official or employee has signs of an acute respiratory infection, they shall inform the chairperson of the electoral body, stay home and inform their family physician.

2.2. Visitors with signs of an acute respiratory infection (fever, cough, difficult breathing, etc.) shall be denied the access to the electoral body premises.

2.3. Each visitor shall have their temperature taken at the entrance to the electoral body premises.

2.4. People not employed at the electoral body shall be allowed into the electoral body premises only while wearing protective equipment (masks, gloves, etc.). The protection mask should cover both the mouth and the nose.

2.5. Alcohol-based sanitizer dispensers shall be installed at the entrance to the electoral body premises where they can be seen and used by visitors for hand hygiene.

2.6. Access rules and information materials promoting hand and respiratory hygiene and other COVID-19 infection control and combating rules set by the National Extraordinary Public Health Commission shall be put up at the entrance to the electoral body premises;

2.7. Spaces intended for receiving documents filed by potential electoral competitors shall be organized in compliance with the rules of 1.5m social distance, wearing of protective equipment in enclosed spaces and sanitization of spaces at least every 3 (three) hours.

2.8. No more than two people shall show up for the registration of any initiative group, and each electoral candidate shall show up for their own registration accompanied by 1 (one) person.

2.9. Meetings of the electoral body shall take place in compliance with the rules of 1.5m social distance, wearing of protective equipment in enclosed spaces and sanitization of spaces at least every 3 (three) hours.

2.10. Spaces inside electoral body premises shall be cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis, including wet cleaning and sanitization of the surfaces and equipment used.

### **3. Elections Day**

3.1. COVID-19 infection control and combating rules set by the National Extraordinary Public Health Commission shall mandatorily be observed.

3.2. The entire premises of the polling station shall be cleaned and sanitized prior to its opening, including the sanitization of the surfaces and used equipment.

3.3. The polling station premises shall be equipped so that a 1 (one) m social distance can be kept between electoral officials, according to the Polling station layout, showed in the Instruction.

3.4. Before opening the polling station, the chairperson of the electoral bureau shall check the temperature and general state of health of attending electoral officials, operators, supporting staff, observers and other persons involved in the electoral process and record the results in a register, according to the template No 2 herein.

3.5. Electoral officials or other persons involved in the electoral process who show signs of an acute respiratory infection shall be banned from participating in electoral procedures.

3.6. If an electoral official, operator and/or member of the supporting staff has signs of an acute respiratory infection, such person shall be replaced by the appointing person and warned about the need to stay home and inform their family physician.

3.7. Electoral officials, operators and other persons involved in the electoral process shall mandatorily be provided with protective equipment (masks, gloves, visors, etc.).

3.8. Alcohol-based sanitizer dispensers shall be installed at the entrance to the electoral body premises where they can be seen and used by visitors for hand hygiene.

3.9. Voters with signs of an acute respiratory infection (temperature over 37 Celsius, cough, difficult breathing, etc.) shall be denied access to the polling station. Such voters shall be recommended to return and stay home, observing protection rules and inform their family physician by phone.

3.10. Voters who show signs of an acute respiratory infection can exercise their voting right at their place of staying by filing an application with the precinct electoral bureau that correspond to their official domicile/ residence. Applications may be filed in writing or verbally starting 2 weeks prior to Elections Day until 18:00 of the day before the election. On election day, applications may be filed until 15:00.

3.11. During the day the polling stations shall be aired often or permanently, if possible; polling stations spaces and working surfaces shall be sanitized and protective equipment (masks, gloves, visors, etc.) shall be replaced at least every 3 hours.

3.12. Used protective equipment shall, after its replacement, be sanitized and packed in plastic bags to be stored outside the polling station premises and later destroyed.

3.13. Information materials shall be placed at the entrance to the polling station premises to inform voters about hygiene rules, maximum number of voters that can be present inside the polling station at the same time, social/physical distance of at least 1.5m, and no gatherings of 30 people or more. The polling station shall be marked with space delimiting inscriptions to ensure physical distance of at least 1.5m between voters.

3.14. Each voter shall have their temperature taken at the entrance to the polling station.

3.15. A limited number of voters shall be allowed inside the polling station at the same time, which shall be equal to the number of voting booths (e.g. 2 voting booths – 2 voters present inside the polling station at the same time).

3.16. Where possible, voters shall show up at polling stations with their own pens for

signing in the Voters' List. Voters shall show their ID to the precinct electoral bureau member to avoid the electoral official's physical contact with the ID. The same procedure shall be used with SAISE operators at the entrance to the polling station.

3.17. Precinct electoral bureau members appointed to carry the mobile ballot box and people who will accompany them shall mandatorily wear protective equipment (masks, gloves, visors, protective wear, etc.) and strictly comply with the rules of its use.

3.18. If applications have been filed with the polling station from people in quarantine due to COVID-19 contamination, wishing to vote at their place of stay, the mobile ballot box team shall first visit elderly people, people with locomotor disabilities, people who cannot show up at the polling station in person for health or other sound reasons, and then (last of all) people in quarantine.

3.19. Two mobile ballot box teams may be formed, as the case may be: one team will visit people in quarantine due to COVID-19 contamination, and the other will visit other voters.

3.20. Stationary ballot boxes of 45 l and 80 l may be used as mobile ballot boxes, as the case may be.

3.21. Mobile ballot box team members shall mandatorily treat electoral and protective equipment with alcohol-based sanitizers before and after contact with the voter.

3.22. Transport used by mobile ballot box teams shall be sanitized after each voter. For this purpose, electoral bureaus that will form such teams shall ensure the necessary conditions for disinfection of transport and equipment and storage of disinfected equipment.

3.23. In case of hospitals, penitentiary institutions, health resorts and homes for the elderly the following rules shall apply: 1.5m social/physical distance, use of protective equipment in enclosed spaces, space and equipment sanitization at least every 2 (two) hours, and frequent or, where possible, permanent airing of spaces.

3.24. Electoral equipment shall be treated with alcohol-based sanitizer before being brought back to the polling station.

3.25. Vote counting shall be done in compliance with the rules of 1.5m social/physical distance, use of protective equipment (masks, gloves, visors, etc.) in enclosed spaces, sanitization of spaces and equipment at least every 3 (three) hours, and frequent or, where possible, permanent airing of spaces.

#### **4. Post-election day period**

4.1. COVID-19 infection control and combating rules set by the National Extraordinary Public Health Commission shall mandatorily be observed.

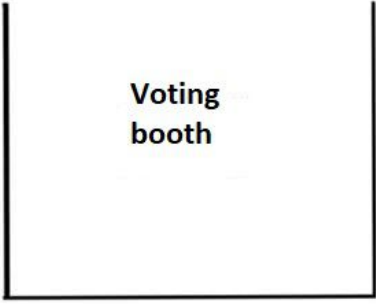
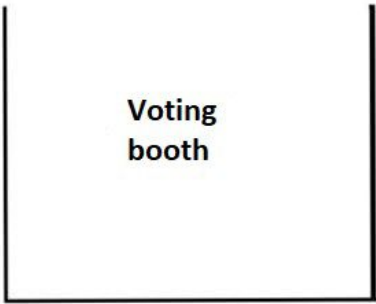
4.2. Electoral documents and materials shall be submitted by chairperson of the electoral body accompanied by not more than one member.

4.3. Electoral documents and materials shall be received in compliance with the rules of 1.5m social/physical distance, use of protective equipment (masks, gloves, visors, etc.) in enclosed spaces, sanitization of spaces and equipment at least every 3 (three) hours, and frequent or, where possible, permanent airing of spaces.

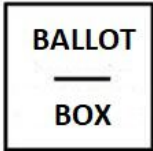
4.4. Alcohol-based sanitizer dispensers shall be installed at the entrance to the place where electoral documents and materials will be received, where they can be seen and used by visitors for hand hygiene.

4.5. Each person shall have their temperature taken at the entrance to the place where electoral documents and materials will be received.





VOTER



VOTER



OBSERVER



OBSERVER



OBSERVER



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Member



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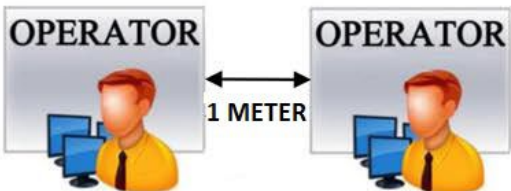
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PEB  
Chairperson

PEB  
Deputy Chair

PEB  
Secretary



