

Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation

Russian Elections Technology Education Center  
at the Central Election Commission  
of the Russian Federation

## **INSTRUCTION BOOKLET FOR OBSERVER**

**at Elections of Deputies  
of the State Duma  
of the Federal Assembly  
of the Russian Federation  
of the Eighth Convocation**

MOSCOW  
2021



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*The text in this booklet was translated from the Russian language*

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Abbreviations used in the text:

**CEC of Russia** — the Central Election Commission  
of the Russian Federation

**ECCERF** — Election Commission of a Constituent Entity  
of the Russian Federation

**TEC** — Territorial Election Commission

**PEC** — Precinct Election Commission



## 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

*The procedure of holding voting at the elections of deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation of the eighth convocation is determined by Federal Law No. 20-FZ of February 22, 2014 «On the Election of Deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation» (hereinafter, "Federal Law No. 20-FZ")*

An observer is a citizen of the Russian Federation authorized to conduct observation with regard to holding voting, counting of votes and other activities of an election commission in the period of holding voting, establishing its results, establishing elections results, including the activities of an election commission aimed at checking the correctness of establishing voting results and establishing elections results.

The following persons may not be appointed observers: elected officials, deputies, higher officials of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation (heads of the higher executive bodies of state authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation), heads of local administrations, persons directly reporting to such officials, judges, prosecutors, election officers with the right of casting vote, with the exception of election officers whose authority has been suspended pursuant to Paragraph 7, Article 29, Federal Law No. 67-FZ of June 12, 2002 "On Basic Guarantees of Electoral Rights and the Right to Participate in the Referendum of Citizens of the Russian Federation".

Observers shall be entitled to be present during any voting using all voting forms:

at voting premises (hereinafter, “voting at premises”) and outside voting premises (hereinafter, “voting at home”);

at holding voting using an additional opportunity for exercising electoral rights of citizens of the Russian Federation — voting of groups of voters who reside (stay) in communities and other places with no voting premises available and complicated transport communication (hereinafter, “the additional voting form”).

Observers shall be entitled to be present at holding early voting (if held).

Observers may be also present at repeated counting of votes. Observers shall have the right to conduct observation both constantly and at timespans freely chosen by them during the whole observation period, they are provided free access to the premises where voting and counting of votes is effected.

An observer sent to a respective PEC shall be entitled to be present at transfer of the PEC minutes on the voting results and of the documents attached thereto (separate opinions of PEC members with the right of casting vote, complaints (applications) and decisions taken thereon, acts, registers) to the higher election commission.

Each political party who has registered a federal list of candidates (hereinafter, a “political party”), each candidate registered for a respective single-seat voting district (hereinafter, a “candidate”) as well as each public control subject (the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation and the civic chambers of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation) may appoint to each PEC not more than two observers for each voting day (September 17, 18 and 19, 2021) that have the right, in turn, to conduct observation at voting premises. At the same time, a civic chamber of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation shall appoint observers to the election commissions located in the territory of a respective constituent entity of the Russian Federation.


Important! One and the same person may be only appointed as an observer to one election commission. Simultaneous exercising of pow-

ers of an observer at the premises of a PEC, at voting premises, outside voting premises by two and more observers appointed by one political party, one candidate, one public control subject.

The political party, candidate, public control subject, having appointed observers to PECs shall, not later than September 13, 2021, and in case of holding early voting — not later than three days until the early voting day, — provide a list of their appointed observers to a respective TEC. This list shall specify the surname, name and patronymic of each observer, his/her residence address, polling station number, the name of the election commission where he/she is sent, the date of conducting of observation. It is recommended to indicate the observer's contact telephone number. The list shall contain an entry confirming that the observers do not fall under the restrictions established by Part 2 of Article 33 of Federal Law No. 20-FZ. Further on, the TEC shall provide for informing the respective PECs about the observers not later than September 15, 2021 (not later than one day before the early voting day, if such early voting is conducted).

If, after submitting the list of the appointed observers to the TEC, there have occurred any circumstances by force of which, due to a valid reason (illness, business trip, etc.) an observer will not be able to be present at the polling station on the days of voting (early voting), the political party, candidate, public control subject shall be entitled, before the first day of voting (early voting), to appoint another observer, by informing the respective TEC thereof in writing and submitting the information about the observer so appointed.

The powers of an observer included in the appointed observers list shall be certified in writing in a referral issues by a political party, candidate or his/her authorized representative, public control subject who has appointed the observer. The referral shall specify the surname, name and patronymic of each observer, his/her residence address, polling station number, the name of the election commission where he/she is sent, as well as contain an entry about absence of the restrictions established by Part 2 of Article 33 of Federal Law No. 20-FZ. The referral shall be valid with providing a passport or a document substituting a passport of a citizen of the Russian Federation.



During observation of the progress of voting and counting of votes one should be guided by the requirements of the legislation of the Russian Federation in the sphere of ensuring sanitary and epidemiological welfare of the population as well as by requirements and recommendations of the authorized bodies.

It is important for an observer to be objective, polite and amiable and to conduct the observation in good faith and with a responsible approach. Effective interaction of observers with the PECs members is one of the conditions for protection of the electoral rights of the citizens of the Russian Federation.



## 2. MAIN STAGES OF OBSERVER'S WORK

*Voting on September 17, 18 and 19, 2021 shall be conducted from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (local time).*

*An observer may be present:*

*On September 17 and 18, 2021, during holding of voting at the premises from the start of the PEC's work (at least 1 hour before the beginning of the voting) and till the end of the PEC's work on that day;*

*On September 19, 2021, during holding of voting at the premises from the start of the PEC's work (at least 1 hour before the beginning of the voting) and until the end of counting of the votes and receiving a communication from a higher election commission as to acceptance of the minutes regarding the voting results;*

*On September 17, 18 and 19, 2021 if the voting is held at home;*

*On September 17 and 18, 2021 if the voting is held using the additional voting form;*

*At holding early voting (if held)*

### **2.1. Preparation of an observer for work**

It is advisable to conduct observation constantly. However, an observer is entitled to choose (a) timespan (timespans) when the observation will be conducted, including after the end of the voting time.

On the voting (early voting) day an observer is recommended to arrive at the PEC voting premises beforehand, to get acquainted with the PEC chairperson (a person replacing him/her) and submit to him/her the following documents:

- an observer's referral;
- a passport or a document substituting it.

Please assure yourself that your data has been included into the list of the persons present at the voting premises. Please leave your contact details in this list. They will be needed to inform you if a repeated counting of votes will be effected as well as in case of drawing up the minutes regarding the voting results, marked as "Repeated".

Please take your seat as determined in the PEC's decision for placing the observers. From this place, the following need to be well visible:

- places where voting ballots are handed over;
- secret ballot voting places;
- ballot boxes (technical means for counting votes, if used).

In the process of observation you may need the following: a pen, notepad, paper, photo and/or video appliances, calculator, mobile communication means.

You may wear a badge with indication of your observer status, however such badge should not contain any signs of pre-election campaigning. The form of the badge has been approved by the CEC (see Attachment No. 1 to this Instruction Booklet).

**If you plan to make photos and/or video**, please inform the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson or Secretary of the PEC thereof beforehand. They will define the place where the recording will not interfere with the secrecy of vote and from where, at the same time, a good view of the places of handing over voting ballots, places for secret ballot voting, ballot boxes, technical means for counting votes (if used) will be provided.



*Orders of the Chairperson of the PEC, given within his/her competence, shall be mandatory for all those present at the voting premises. In the absence of the Chairperson of the PEC his/her powers shall be exercised by Deputy Chairperson, and in the absence of the Deputy Chairperson of the PEC — the Secretary of the PEC or another authorized PEC member with the right of casting vote*

During photo and/or video recording the CEC of Russia recommends to comply with the following rules at the voting premises:

1. Photo and/or video recording at the voting premises should not interfere with the secrecy of vote. It shall not be allowed to make photos or video recording at places designed for filling in voting ballots, make photos and/or videos of the filled in voting ballots before counting votes.

2. Photo and video recording of citizens at the voting premises shall be effected taking into consideration the provisions of Article 152<sup>1</sup> of the Civil Code of the Russian Federation stipulating that publishing images of an individual is only possible with his/her consent if the image of such individual is the main element of exposure (footage). Photo and/or video materials which, in the observer's opinion, reflect violations of the Russian Federation elections legislation may be enclosed with the respective application (complaint).

3. Photo and video recording of members of the PEC with the electoral roll shall be effected in such a way as to maintain the confidentiality of the personal data contained therein.

4. During conducting observation of organization of voting at home one should obtain the voter's consent to photo and/or video recording in his/her house (apartment).

## **2.2. Observation of organization and holding voting at premises on September 17, 18 and 19, 2021**

Before the start of the voting, it is recommended to check the availability of:

- an information stand (information stands) with information about all federal lists of candidates included in the voting ballot, about the political parties who have nominated them, about each of the candidates, in the volume provided for by Article 78 of Federal Law No. 20-FZ, as well as containing samples of filled in voting ballots and information about criminal and administrative liability for violation of the electoral legislation of the Russian Federation;
- non-filled enlarged forms of minutes on the voting results;
- booths or other specially equipped places for secret ballot voting;
- empty immobile and portable ballot boxes (sealed). If early voting of group of voters has taken place at the polling station, there should also be portable ballot boxes, containing the ballots of those voters who have voted early, at the voting premises. The slots for voting ballots on the said boxes should be sealed. Votes placed in security bags, with the enclosed acts and statements, shall be kept in the PEC safe box. Slots of immobile boxes with ballots (if used based on the ECCERF's decision for ensuring safety of ballots) shall be sealed with indicator stickers.

Please familiarize yourself with the information announced by the Chairperson of the PEC before opening of the polling station on September 17, 2021, with regard to the number of voters included in the electoral roll at the particular polling station, including those who have filed applications for including in the electoral roll at the place of location at this polling station, about the number of voters excluded from the electoral roll in connection to filing the said application. Please assure yourself that this information is placed at the information stand at voting premises.

**During the voting, please check that:**

- the voting is effected secretly (in a voting booth or at another place specially equipped for secret ballot voting);
- voting ballots are handed over to voters personally on producing a passport or a document substituting a passport, and if a voter is registered at the place of staying in the territory of a single-seat voting district at least three months before the latest voting day — as well as on producing a certificate of registration at the place of stay.

**Importantly**, each voter shall personally fill in a voting ballot (voting ballots) in a voting booth or at another place specially equipped for secret ballot voting where other persons shall not be allowed.

An exception is possible where a voter may not sign for receipt of a voting ballot and fill it in himself/herself. In this case, he/she may use the assistance of another person who is not an election commission member, candidate or his authorized representative or an authorized representative of a political party, including that in charge of financial issues, an authorized representative of a candidate in charge of financial issues, an observer, a foreign (international) observer.

Such voter shall orally inform the PEC about his/her intention to use the assistance of another person. In this case, the surname, name and patronymic, series and number of passport (or a document substituting it) of the person assisting the voter shall be indicated in the respective column of the electoral roll.

If a voter believes that he/she has made an error filling in a voting ballot, he/she shall be entitled to apply to a PEC member who has handed over to him/her the voting ballot, in order to be given a new voting ballot instead of the spoiled one.

The PEC member shall hand over a new voting ballot and make an entry in the electoral roll in this respect and sign.

The PEC member with the right of casting vote shall make a respective inscription on the spoiled voting ballot and certify it with his/her signature. This entry shall be also certified by the signature

of the PEC Secretary, and thereafter the voting ballot shall be immediately cancelled.

Announcements made by the PEC Chairperson will help you understand the commission's actions. Please record such data as well as your observations and your assessment of what is taking place.

*The PEC Chairperson shall be responsible for the organization of the voting process and order at voting premises. It is advisable to discuss with him/her all questions and suggestions that you may have, and, if necessary, address him/her with your comments and obtain corresponding explanations*

If a violation has not been eliminated in your opinion, it is advisable to immediately inform thereof the political party, candidate, public control subject who has sent you.

Respecting the priority of the voter's interests, you should not interfere with the PEC members' activities when they hand over voting ballots to voters for voting, explain to voters the voting procedure, examine voters' complaints and applications, provide to a higher election commission information about opening of a polling station, about the general number of voters who have received voting ballots, as of the reporting time (3 p.m. and 8 p.m. local time on September 17 and 18, 2021), transfer of data on voters who have taken part in the voting for each established reporting time (10 a.m., 12 p.m., 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. local time on September 19, 2021), resolve operational issues related to organization of voting and draw up documents, e.g. prepare extracts from the register of statements (oral applications) with regard to voting outside voting premises, draw up various acts, make entries to the electoral roll as provided by the legislation of the Russian Federation.

*At handing over the voting ballots on September 17 and 18, 2021 the date of voting (September 17 or 18, 2021) shall be additionally indicated in the “Special Marks” column of the electoral roll*

**Please check** how the PEC provides for secure storage of voting ballots in the course of the three-days’ voting (see Section 2.5 of this Instruction Booklet).

### ***2.3. Observation of organization and holding voting at home on September 17, 18 and 19, 2021***

Voting at home shall be organized based on written statements (oral applications) submitted to the PEC starting from September 9 and not later than at 2 p.m. local time on September 19, 2021, as well as based on electronic applications submitted to the PEC using a personal account on the Unified Public and Municipal Services (Functions) Portal. Applications shall be registered on the day of receipt in a special register.

*Voting at home shall be possible at the place of residence or at the place of stay of a voter as well as in detention facilities for suspects and accused*

The Chairperson of a PEC shall announce departure (walking out) of the PEC members for organizing voting at home at least 30 minutes before such departure (walking out).

**Voting shall be organized by:**

at least two PEC members with the right of casting vote

or

one PEC member with the right of casting vote, subject to the presence of two and more PEC members with the right of deliberative vote and/or observers.

The PEC shall provide for at least two persons from among its members with the right of deliberative vote, observers appointed by various political parties, candidates, one of public control subjects, equal opportunities to arrive at the place of voting with those of the members of this commission with the right of casting vote.

Other observers may be present at holding the voting at home if they arrive to the addresses independently.

**The PEC members shall take with them:**

- the register (or a certified extract therefrom) containing the requisite data about the voter the statement (written application) received with regard to providing the opportunity to vote at home;
- voters' statements as well as statements forms;
- voting ballots (the total number of the voting ballots received for each electoral district may not exceed by more than 5 percent the number of the statements (oral applications) received by the PEC members by the moment of departure, however not less than two voting ballots for each electoral district);
- a numbered and sealed (tagged) portable ballot box;
- writing materials (except for pencils) for filling in voting ballots.

**It is important to be aware that at holding voting at home:**

- voting ballots shall be only handed over to those voters whose applications have been registered in the register;
- the secrecy of expression of a voter's will shall be ensured;
- the voter's passport series and number shall be included in the voter's written application, his/her signature with regard to receiving the voting ballot, signatures of the PEC members with the right of casting vote as well as the voting date shall be included;

- a voter who can not sign for receipt of a voting ballot and fill it in himself/herself shall be assisted in accordance with the procedure established by the electoral legislation of the Russian Federation (see Section 2.2. of this Instruction Booklet).

After returning to the voting premises the PEC members shall draw up an act with regard to holding voting at home, indicating:

- the number of voting ballots handed over to the PEC members with the right of casting vote, who had conducted the voting at home;
- the number of written applications from voters to provide them an opportunity to vote at home;
- the number of voting ballots handed over to voters and returned (non-used, spoiled by voters).

The act shall also specify data on the PEC members with the right of casting vote who have conducted voting at home, the number of the PEC members with the right of deliberative vote and/or observers who have been present during voting at home.

Data on the voters who have voted at home shall be included in the electoral roll.

**Please check** how the PEC provides for secure storage of voting ballots in the course of the three-days' voting (see Section 2.5 of this Instruction Booklet).

#### ***2.4. Observation of organization and holding voting using the additional voting form on September 17 and 18, 2021***

Voting using the additional voting form shall be conducted in compliance with the requirements provided for by Federal Law No. 20-FZ for holding voting at home, taking into consideration the Regulations on the Specifics of Voting, Establishing the Results of Voting at Holding Voting at the Elections, Referenda Scheduled for September 19, 2021 within several consecutive days, as approved by Resolution of the CEC of Russia No. 13/103-8 dated July 1, 2021.

*The polling stations and the addresses (description of the places) for holding such voting shall be determined by the TEC on agreement with a respective ECCERF not later than September 10, 2021 in cooperation with local self-government authorities*

Information on dates, time, polling stations and addresses (description of places) of holding the additional voting form shall be placed on the official website of the ECCERF in the Internet as well as communicated to voters of the polling station, including by placement of advertisements at places available to the public.

**The place for holding voting** shall be equipped in such a way so as the secrecy of vote is protected and maximum convenience is ensured for exercising the electoral rights, that means absolute presence of:

- a numbered and sealed (tagged) portable ballot box;
- places for secret ballot voting (including a table with a table screen or secret ballot voting booths);
- places for handing over voting ballots;
- information materials;
- the requisite writing materials (except for pencils);
- places for placement PEC members and observers.

Also, taking into consideration weather and climatic conditions, it is recommended to use constructions and other means providing for protection against atmosphere precipitation.

**It needs to be taken into consideration** that the voting shall be held by at least two PEC members with the right of casting vote who shall have:

- a preliminarily numbered and sealed (tagged) portable ballot box;
- the electoral roll book containing data on voters, whose voting is intended to be held using the additional voting form;
- a requisite number of voting ballots of the established form.

The PEC shall provide for equal opportunities for arrival to the voting place both for the PEC members with the right of casting vote,



who depart for holding the voting, and for at least two persons from among the PEC members with the right of deliberative vote, observers appointed by different candidates, political parties (such persons do not include persons appointed by a candidate and a political party that has nominated such candidate), the observer appointed by one of public control subjects (the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, the civic chamber of a respective constituent entity of the Russian Federation).

After completion of voting the PEC shall provide for an opportunity to take part in the voting for those voters who could not arrive at the voting place due to valid reasons (due to the state of their health, disability, in connection to the need to take care of persons in need of such care).

*If a voter has come to the place of voting, while an entry has been made in the electoral roll book that the PEC members have left to the respective voter for holding the voting at home, a respective PEC member shall not be entitled to hand over a voting ballot to such voter until the fact that the said voter had not voted at home is established*

**Please check** how the PEC provides for secure storage of voting ballots in the course of the three-days' voting (see Section 2.5 of this Instruction Booklet).

## **2.5. Observation over ensuring safety of voting ballots**

On September 17 and 18, 2021 the voting ballots from the portable box for voting that was used at holding any form of voting, shall be put to a security bag. A separate security bag, that shall be sealed, shall be used for each portable ballot box. Putting the voting ballots from a portable box for voting to a security bag shall be effected im-

mediately after return of the PEC members, who had conducted the voting with such box, to the voting premises.

**Please check that:**

putting voting ballots to the security bag is effected by the PEC members with the right of casting vote without counting the voting ballots, maintaining the secrecy of vote;

after putting the voting ballots, the security bag is immediately sealed using indicator tape. Signatures of at least two PEC members with the right of casting vote shall be put on the security bag, but not on the indicator tape. You may put your signature on the security bag.

an act shall be drawn up in respect of each security bag; it shall be stored together with the security bag. You are entitled to familiarize yourself with the said act and to receive a certified copy thereof.

**Please assure yourself that:**

putting voting ballots from a portable box to a security bag shall be effected in the video surveillance zone. If video surveillance appliances are not used, video recorders (immobile or mobile appliances designed for recording, storage and retrieval of information) are used;

the place of security bags storage (a separate safe box) is under round-the-clock video surveillance (video recording).

The following persons shall be entitled to be present when the ballots are placed into the security bag:

the PEC members and observers who have been present at (departed for) holding voting using the portable ballot box;

the PEC members and observers who are at voting premises at this moment;

other persons entitled to be present at voting premises.

Voting ballots from an immobile ballot box (immobile ballot boxes) shall be placed into the security bag (security bags) on September 17 and 18, 2021 immediately after the end of the voting at voting premises. Placing voting ballots from an immobile ballot box (immobile ballot boxes) into the security bag (security bags) and their storage shall be effected in the same order as for portable ballot boxes.

*If, by the moment of placing of voting ballots from the ballot box to the security bag, the observers are absent, such absence shall not serve as an obstacle for placing of voting ballots from the ballot box to the security bag*

In exceptional cases, when, due to unforeseen circumstances, it is impossible to use security bags, based on the ECCERF's decision an immobile ballot box (immobile ballot boxes) may be used for safe storage of ballots.

When voting ballots are placed into a security bag you shall be entitled, using photo and/or video recording appliances, to record the fact of sealing of the security bag and drawing up an act in respect of such security bag.

## **2.6. Observation of counting of votes**

*Counting votes shall begin immediately after the end of the voting time on September 19, 2021, and shall continue without a break until establishing the voting results which must be informed to all the PEC members as well as to the observers*

The main stages of the votes counting procedure:

- cancellation of non-used voting ballots;
- work with electoral roll;
- opening of security bags used for putting voting ballots from portable ballot boxes used at voting on September 17 and 18, 2021 for any voting form;
- opening of portable ballot boxes used for holding early voting (in case of its holding) and holding voting at home on September 19, 2021;

- opening security bag (security bags) containing the ballots moved from an immobile ballot box (immobile ballot boxes) and immobile ballot boxes used on September 19, 2021;
- sorting of voting ballots and actual counting of votes;
- the final PEC meeting.

In case of combination of elections of different levels, counting of votes for elections of deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation of the eighth convocation shall be effected first for a respective single-seat voting district, than for a federal voting district and after that — to state authorities of a constituent entities of the Russian Federation and local self-government authorities.

Actions taken at each stage are reflected on the poster “Counting of votes by the precinct election commission using the technology of producing PEC minutes on voting results with machine readable code”, placed in the premises where counting of votes is effected (see Attachment No. 2 to this Instruction Booklet).

After the respective action, data shall be included into the minutes on the voting results and into its enlarged form.

The PEC is recommended to place observers at a distance of no more than 2–2.5 meters from the place of voting ballots sorting, so that all persons present could well see the marks on the voting ballots.

After completion of counting of votes, the voting ballots shall be packed into separate packs as per voters’ votes for candidates, federal lists of candidates, invalid and cancelled ballots shall be packed into separate packs. The said packs and the electoral roll shall be placed into bags or boxes on which an observer shall be entitled to put his/her signature.

At the elections of deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation of the eighth convocation, most of the PECs will be equipped with the technical means allowing to apply the technology of making a PEC minutes on the voting results with machine readable code. Using this technology will allow to effect automated checking of the control correlation of the data included in the minutes, avoid errors at counting data to be included in such minutes.

## **2.7. Obtaining certified copies of PEC minutes on voting results**

*After signing the PEC minutes on voting results, as per your request, the election commission shall be obliged to hand over to you certified copies of the minutes on voting results*

Copies of PEC minutes on voting results shall be certified by the Chairperson or by Deputy Chairperson or by PEC secretary. A person certifying a copy of the document shall make a note on the said copy: "True" or "True copy", sign, indicate his/her surname and initials, date and time of certifying and put the election commission's seal.

If the PEC minutes on voting results is made in electronic form, its copy shall be made by way of printing the minutes in a hard copy and certified in accordance with the procedure established by the electoral legislation of the Russian Federation.

Certified copies of PEC minutes on voting results shall be numbered manually.

Do not forget to put your signature for receiving a certified copy of PEC minutes on voting results in the respective register where the copy number, date and time of its issue shall be indicated.

It is not necessary to indicate the surnames, first names and patronymics of PEC members in the copy of the PEC minutes on voting results and affix their signatures if a copy of the minutes was made without the use of copying equipment.



### 3. AN OBSERVER HAS THE RIGHT

**At a polling station an observer may:**

- get familiarized with the electoral roll, information on the voters who have applied for including in the electoral roll at the place of their stay. It is advisable to get familiarized with the electoral roll before the start of the voting time;
- watch placement of voting ballots in security bags, put his/her signature on the security bag. Get familiarized with acts on holding voting using portable and immobile ballot boxes and security bags and receive certified copies thereof. At establishing the voting results by the PEC, before opening, visually inspect the security bags sealed on the previous voting days and the acts drawn up in their respect;
- watch counting of votes of the voters included in the electoral roll, voting ballots handed over to voters, cancelled voting ballots. In connection to this, the observer shall be entitled to get familiarized with the counting data included into any sheet (sheets) of the electoral roll, with data on the last sheet of the electoral roll, get visually familiarized with sorted voting ballots;
- get familiarized with PEC minutes on voting results and documents attached thereto (separate opinions of PEC members with the right of casting vote, complaints and decisions taken thereon, acts, registers);
- get familiarized with the register of statements (oral applications) on voting outside voting premises. An observer may get familiarized with the number of filed statements (oral applications), with the reasons for requesting the commission's home visit, other information included in the register.

In order to get visually familiarized with the documents listed above, you are entitled to approach the place where the desks of the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary, the PEC members handing over voting ballots and working with the electoral roll and other electoral documents are located. A PEC member who provides for an observer's right to get familiarized with the electoral documents shall control the safety of such documents in the course of such familiarization.



## 4. AN OBSERVER DOES NOT HAVE THE RIGHT

**At a polling station an observer may not:**

- hand over voting ballots to voters;
- sign for a voter, including at the latter's request, for receipt of a ballot;
- fill in a ballot for a voter, including at the latter's request;
- take any actions in breach of the secrecy of vote;
- actually take part in counting the voting ballots effected by the PEC members with the right of casting vote;
- take any actions impeding with the PEC's work;
- carry out campaigning among voters;
- participate in taking decisions by the PEC.





## 5. MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY

Article 5.6 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Russian Federation (hereinafter, “the CAO”) provides for liability in the form of a fine:

- in the amount from 500 to 1,000 rubles for an individual and from 1,000 to 2,000 rubles for an official for violation of an observer’s rights to effect observation and for timely obtaining information and copies of electoral documents, obtaining of which is provided for by the electoral legislation of the Russian Federation;
- in the amount from 1,500 to 2,000 rubles for Issuance by the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary or other member of the PEC with the right of casting vote of a certified copy of the PEC minutes on voting results containing data that does not correspond to the data contained in the first copy of the corresponding minutes, or certification by the Chairperson, Secretary or other member of the PEC with the right of casting vote of a copy of the minutes on voting results in violation of the requirements provided for by the electoral legislation of the Russian Federation.

Administrative offense cases provided for by Article 5.6 of the CAO shall be initiated by the prosecutor.

Article 5.69 of the CAO provides for administrative liability in the form of a fine for interference with exercising of the PEC powers established by the electoral legislation of the Russian Federation, that has resulted in disrupting the established operation procedure of the commission or for creating obstacles for participation in voting, if such actions do not contain elements of a criminal offence:

- for individuals — in the amount from 2,000 to 5,000 rubles;
- for officials — in the amount of 20,000 to 50,000 rubles.

Administrative offense reports provided for by Article 5.69 of the CAO shall be drawn up by police officers.

PEC Powers	PEC operation procedure
<p>In accordance with the provisions of the electoral legislation of the Russian Federation, the powers of the PEC when organizing voting and vote counting include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organization of voting at a polling station;</li> <li>• organization of voting at home and using the additional voting form;</li> <li>• consideration of reports about errors and inaccuracies in the electoral roll and making decisions on entering appropriate changes in the list;</li> <li>• ensuring proper condition of the prepared voting premises (including in terms of availability of information on the information stand), availability of places for media representatives and observers;</li> <li>• ensuring proper condition of ballot boxes, voting booths, including availability of writing materials (except for pencils), lighting system;</li> <li>• control over observance of the prohibition on holding pre-elec-</li> </ul>	<p>The fundamentals of the PEC operation procedure in the exercise of its powers are established directly by the electoral legislation of the Russian Federation and provide for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• priority of ensuring the procedure for issuing ballots to voters upon presentation of documents confirming their voting rights; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• immediate and collegial consideration of the voter's report about an error or inaccuracy in the electoral roll; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring work with the electoral roll, which excludes the possibility of inclusion of persons that do not have effective electoral rights, inclusion of a citizen in the electoral roll more than once, and guaranteeing confidentiality of personal data of citizens contained in the roll, accuracy of counting the number of voters included in the electoral roll, the number of voters that received ballots and other data required for drawing up the PEC minutes on the voting results;</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

PEC Powers	PEC operation procedure
<p>tion campaigning on voting days in the territory of the polling station;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• counting of votes, determining the results of voting at the polling station, preparation of minutes on voting results and their referral to the TEC;</li> <li>• announcement of voting results at the polling station and issuance of certified copies of minutes on voting results to persons present at the polling station during counting of votes and drawing up the minutes on voting results;</li> <li>• consideration of complaints (applications) and delivery of reasoned decisions within its powers;</li> <li>• ensuring storage and transfer of documents related to preparation for and holding of elections to higher-ranking election commissions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• public preparation for visiting voters for organizing voting at home, using an additional form of voting, and ensuring public observation of such voting;</li> <li>• continuous and transparent process of counting votes and drawing up minutes on voting results;</li> <li>• keeping records of strictly accountable documents: ballots, special signs (stamps);</li> <li>• the obligation to collectively consider complaints (statements) received on the voting day before signing the PEC minutes on voting results;</li> <li>• proper certification of copies of the minutes of voting results and their issuance against signature, indicating the date and time of issue</li> </ul>

***Removal of an observer from voting premises for violation of the electoral legislation of the Russian Federation shall be only possible based on a court decision finding the facts of such violation***

A PEC member shall be immediately suspended from taking part in its work, and an observer and other persons shall be removed from voting premises if they violate the electoral legislation of the Russian Federation and the fact of such violation has been established by court. A decision shall be taken by the court at the PEC location.

An administrative statement of claim as regards immediate removal of an observer from voting premises may be lodged with the court by the PEC or its Chairperson, a higher election commission or its Chairperson, the prosecutor. The statement of claim must indicate which norms of the laws of the Russian Federation on elections were violated by the administrative respondent.

The administrative respondent must be notified about lodging a claim and about the place and time of its consideration by the court. Consideration of an administrative case shall be effected in compliance with the Code of Administrative Procedure of the Russian Federation.

A court decision to remove an observer from the polling station must be enforced by a police officer or bailiff.

*Pursuant to the federal legislation, for the purposes of ensuring security of citizens and public order, a police officer shall be present at voting premises*

The police must promptly respond to any facts of actions committed by those present in the voting premises bearing signs of an administrative or criminal offense.

**Forms\* of badges for observers present at voting and counting of votes at precinct election commissions at holding the elections of deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation of the eighth convocation**

An observer's badge is a rectangular card with dimensions not exceeding 100 x 65 mm, generally made of thick paper of white color

<p><b>Elections of deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation of the eighth convocation</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>(surname)</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>(first name, patronymic)</i></p> <p><b>OBSERVER</b></p> <p>sent by a political party</p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>(political party name)</i></p> <p>_____</p>
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<p><b>Elections of deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation of the eighth convocation</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>(surname)</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>(first name, patronymic)</i></p> <p><b>OBSERVER</b></p> <p>sent by candidates to deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation for single-seat voting district No. ____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>(surname)</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>(first name, patronymic of the candidate)</i></p>
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<p><b>Elections of deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation of the eighth convocation</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>(surname)</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>(first name, patronymic)</i></p> <p><b>OBSERVER</b></p> <p>sent by</p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>(name of the public control subject)</i></p> <p>_____</p>
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\* Approved by Resolution of the CEC of Russia No. 2/14-8 dated April 14, 2021.

Elections of deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation of the eighth convocation

## COUNTING OF VOTES BY THE PRECINCT ELECTION COMMISSION USING THE TECHNOLOGY OF PRODUCING PEC MINUTES ON VOTING RESULTS WITH MACHINE READABLE CODE



CONTINUOUSLY

Counting of votes begins immediately after completion of voting and is performed without interruption until the results of voting are established



CONSECUTIVELY

Votes are counted in stages, and the below actions cannot be performed simultaneously



PUBLICLY

 The counting results are announced by the PEC Chairperson and entered into PEC Minutes on the Voting Results No. 1 and No. 2 and in their enlarged forms at each stage in the presence of PEC members having deliberative voting rights and other persons specified in Article 32 § 5 of the Federal Law "On the Election of Deputies State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation"<sup>1</sup>
**1**

Line number in the PEC minutes on voting results and in the enlarged form of minutes (EFM), which is filled in after completion of the corresponding action.

PEC minutes	1	2	3	4
on	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### CANCELLATION OF VOTING BALLOTS

- Count and cancel unused ballots, the number of cancelled ballots, including damaged ballots (returned by voters), announce and enter into line **6**.
- Allow persons present at the counting of votes to visually familiarize themselves with cancelled ballots under the control of PEC members with the right of casting vote
- Announce the number of ballots received by their PEC, and enter it into line **7**.
- Pack and seal cancelled ballots

### WORK WITH ELECTORAL ROLL

- Count and announce the data for each page of the electoral roll
- Count and announce the final data for the entire electoral roll, enter the relevant data into line **1**, **3**, **4**, **5**.
- Allow persons present at the counting of votes the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the electoral roll, and allow PEC members with the deliberative voting right to make sure that the count is correct
- Stick up the electoral roll boards in one volume, put the list in a safe (metal cabinet)

### WORKING WITH SECURITY BAGS AND PORTABLE BOXES

- Check the integrity (absence of traces of unauthorized access to the contents) of each security bag containing ballots moved from the portable box on 17 and 18 September 2021, and that the number of the security bag is identical to the number in the corresponding act
- Announce the number of ballots issued to voters (according to the relevant act) for each security bag, open them, count and announce the number of extracted ballots of the established form, separating the ballots of an unidentified form, enter the indicated number into the corresponding act\*
- Check the integrity of seals of portable boxes containing ballots of voters who voted at home on September 19, 2021. Announce the number of applications (issued ballots) for each portable box, open them, count and announce the number of actually discovered ballots, separating ballots of an unidentified form\*
- Announce the total number of ballots in portable boxes and security bags and enter into line **7**.
- Perform actions similar to the actions specified in Paragraphs 9 and 10, in respect of each security bag containing ballots moved from the stationary box on September 17 and 18, 2021 \*\*\*

13 Perform actions similar to the actions specified in Paragraphs 9 and 10, in respect of each security bag containing ballots moved from the stationary box on September 17 and 18, 2021 \*\*\*

**DIRECT VOTE COUNTING**

- 14 Check the integrity of seals on immobile boxes
- 15 Open immobile boxes, mix ballots from them with ballots extracted from security bags and portable boxes
- 16 Sort ballots by type (single-mandate and federal electoral districts)
- 17 Sort the ballots by votes for each candidate/each federal list (with the demonstration and announcement of each mark, simultaneous announcement is not allowed), at the same time separate invalid ballots and ballots of an unspecified form
- 18 Count the number of invalid ballots, add the number of invalid ballots from portable boxes and security bags (if any), enter the resulting data into line **9**
- 19 Count the ballots consecutively for each candidate/federal list by handling them one by one and demonstrating to the persons present during the counting of votes the voters' marks in each ballot, enter the resulting data into line **13** and **subsequent lines**
- 20 Calculate the total number of valid ballots by summing the data contained in line **13** and **subsequent lines**, enter the resulting data into line **10**
- 21 Calculate the total number of ballots in immobile boxes using the data from the following lines using the formula: **9 + 10 + 2**, enter the resulting data into line **8**
- 22 Provide observers with the opportunity to visually familiarize themselves with the sorted ballots under the control of PEC members with the right of casting vote, and allow the PEC members with a deliberative role to count it correct
- 23 Check control ratios\*\*\*
- 24 If they are not 0 into lines **11**, **12**
- 25 If the control ratios are not met, carry out an additional calculation
- 26 If the discrepancy is not eliminated, enter the data into lines **11**, **12**
- 27 Pack ballots and other documents

**FINAL PEC MEETING**

- 25 Consider all complaints (reports) about violations during voting and counting of votes and resolve them, enter the information about the number of complaints (reports) into the appropriate line of the minutes
- 26 Print out PEC Minutes on the Voting Results No. 1 and No. 2, with a machine-readable code on paper in A4 format in two copies, compare the data of the PEC minutes with the EIM, put the numbers of the copies
- 27 The PEC members with the right of casting vote should sign the PEC Minutes on the Voting Results No. 1 and No. 2 with a machine-readable code in two copies and certify them with the PEC seal
- 28 At the request of the persons present at vote counting provide them, against signature, duly certified copies of the first counterparts of the minutes, and enter the information about provision of the copies into the register

**! Immediately send the first copies of the PEC minutes with the attached documents to the TEC**

\* If the number of ballots of the established form for the respective electoral district found in the safe-package exceeds the number of voters that received ballots specified in the corresponding act, conduct a check against the electoral roll and written applications if this fact is confirmed, all ballots for the corresponding electoral district that were in this portable box are invalidated by the PEC decision. Draw up a corresponding act, make an entry into the ballots about pack them separately and seal.

\*\* If the number of ballots of the established form for the respective electoral district found in a portable box exceeds the number of ballots issued to voters, conduct a check against the electoral roll and written applications. This fact is confirmed, all ballots for the corresponding electoral district that were in this portable box are invalidated by the PEC decision. Draw up a corresponding act, make an entry into the ballots about the reason for their invalidity, into the signatures of two PEC members with a decisive vote, certify them with the PEC seal pack them separately and seal.

\*\*\* If the inspection reveals that the number of ballots of the established form for the respective electoral district, found in the security bag, exceeds the number indicated in the relevant act as to the number of voters who have received the voting ballots, the inspection provided for by Paragraph 4.5 of Regulations on the Specifics of Voting, Establishing the Results of Voting at Holding Voting (September 17 and 18, 2021), shall be carried out for both voting days

\*\*\*\* Checked using 55.

Values in the corresponding lines of PEC Minutes on Voting Results No. 1 and No. 2:

9 = 10 + 2 + 5 = 17

21 = 10 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 11 = 42

7 + 8 is equal to 9 + 10.

10 is equal to 13 + all subsequent lines of the minutes.



Information and Reference Center of the CEC of Russia

**8 800 200 00 20**

cikrf.ru



Methodological materials on the website  
of the Russian Elections Technology Education Center  
at the Central Election Commission  
of the Russian Federation

**The CEC of Russia wishes you successful work!**

You can ask any questions you may have  
over the telephone of the CEC of Russia hot line:  
8-800-200-00-20

## **INSTRUCTION BOOKLET FOR OBSERVER**

### **at Elections of Deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation of the Eighth Convocation**

Signed (approved) for printing August 12, 2021.

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