

GOVERNMENT DECREE NO. 21/2017

17 May

**REGULATING THE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONS OF POLLING CENTERS AND
THE VOTING, VOTE COUNTING AND TABULATION OF RESULTS PROCEDURES**

The realization of the principle of the democratic rights enshrined in Article 1 of the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste presupposes the holding of free and fair elections for organs of sovereignty, in particular for the President of the Republic and for the National Parliament.

The holding of the election for the National Parliament conforms to the legal norms approved by Law no. 6/2006, of December 28, as amended by Law No. 9/2017 of May 5.

The legal and regulatory framework in force in the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste has been recognized by the various electoral observation missions as being suitable for holding free and fair elections, so that, with due observance of the Law on Elections for the National Parliament, recently approved, the regulation approved by this Government Decree does not introduce fundamental changes to the organization and operation of the Polling Centers or to the procedures of voting, counting of votes and the determination of electoral results.

Thus, voters will continue to exercise their voting rights in the polling center that is closest to their area of residence, provided that it is located in the Geographic Unit for which the voter is registered in the voter register. The polling centers will be organized in polling stations, the number of which will vary according to the number of voters on the voter lists of the polling centers. In compliance with the Law on Elections for the National Parliament, it is mandatory to open at least one polling center in each Suco, which may be increased due to the distance between the villages that make up Suco.

Electoral operations are conducted by electoral officials recruited and trained by the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration and are responsible for maintaining discipline within polling stations and polling centers, ensuring the security, confidentiality and freedom to exercise the right to vote by citizens.

It will also be the duty of election officials to ensure that the election is carried out in prisons and hospital establishments by moving to the latter to collect the votes of citizens who are not legally prevented from voting if they are restricted in their freedom or mobility.

The municipal tabulation operations are carried out in the Municipal tabulation centers and, in Oe-Cusse Ambeno, in the tabulation center of the Special Administrative Region. These intermediate tabulation bodies shall begin their work as soon as the minutes of at least five polling centers are brought to their respective places of operation. The interim tabulation of results consists essentially of an operation to reconcile the minutes of the polling centers using the software available to that effect. The interim tabulation of results must be completed within a maximum of two days.

National tabulation of electoral results is ensured by the national tabulation center, composed of the members of the National Election Commission, which is responsible for reconciling the municipal tabulation records, the tabulation report from the Oe-Cusse Ambeno Special Administrative Region and the minutes of tabulations abroad to determine the final results of

the election to the National Parliament, for the referral of the same to the Supreme Court of Justice for this body to validate the election and proclaim the results.

Accordingly, the Government decrees, pursuant to Article 4 (5), Article 36 (3), Article 77 (c) and (d), the Government decrees all of Law No. 6/2006, of 28 December, in the version approved by Law n. 9/2017, of May 5, to validate as a regulation, the following:

CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1 Scope

This Government Decree approves the rules for the organization and operation of Polling Centers, and the procedures for voting, vote counting and tabulation of results for the election of the deputies to the National Parliament.

CHAPTER II POLLING CENTERS ORGANISATION

Section I Definition, location, organization and disclosure

Article 2 Definition

A polling center is the place where a voter casts his/her ballot and is comprised of one or more polling stations.

Article 3 Distribution of Polling Centers

1. Each suco has at least one polling center and STAE, taking into account the number of voters or the distance between villages that make up the suco, may establish more polling centers, always assuring the secrecy of voting.
2. For the establishment of a polling center, 50 to 2500 voters are required to be present.

Article 4 Places where Polling Centers can be established

1. Polling centers are set up in public premises, preferably schools, which offer security and accessibility to voters.
2. If there are no public premises offering the conditions mentioned in the preceding paragraph, the suco office or community centers shall be made available.
3. If the premises mentioned in this article are unavailable, STAE shall arrange for a structure in which to set up the polling center and its polling stations.

Article 5
Places where it is prohibited to establish Polling Centers

A polling center cannot be set up in any:

- a) Police unit;
- b) Military unit;
- c) Traditional leader's house;
- d) Private house;
- e) Political party property;
- f) Place of worship;
- g) Hospitals or any health-related facilities, subject to what is stated regarding voting rights in hospitals.

Article 6
Polling Stations

1. Polling Centers are organized in polling stations.
2. The specific number of polling stations in each Polling Center shall be determined by the STAE Director General who, for this purpose, takes into account the number of voters in the Suco and the number of Polling Centers that will be established.

Article 7 ¹
Notification of the list of polling centers

The number and location of polling centres and polling stations is disclosed by STAE at least thirty days before the Election Day, and may be amended until ten days before Election Day.²

Article 8
Polling center and polling station identification codes

1. Each polling center and polling station is assigned with a numerical code that identifies it.
2. The code provided by the previous number in assigned with a code consisting of five digits and each polling station corresponds to a code formed by nine digits, of which the first five represents the code of the polling center and the last four the number of the respective polling station, thus allowing the individual identification of each polling center and polling station that identifies it.
3. The codes referred to in the previous paragraphs must appear on the ballot boxes and voters lists as well as in the minutes of the operations, counting and tabulation of votes.

¹ Article 7 of regulation 6/2017 for the presidential election has been deleted, dealing with voters voting in the suco as shown on their voter card issued to them by STAE, and STAE notifying suco voter lists within 7 days of the date of publishing polling center locations. See Article 32

² Requirements for STAE to publish the locations of polling centres and polling stations in the Official Gazette, and to notify these to CNE, have been removed.

SECTION II
ELECTORAL OFFICIALS

Article 9

Definition

1. Electoral officials are national citizens who, having previously been selected by STAE, ensure the functioning of polling centers and polling stations during the electoral process.
2. On election day and while their activities last, electoral officials are exempt from attending their employment, without prejudice to their rights or benefits, including salary, provided that they provide evidence regarding the performance of their duties through a document issued by STAE.

Article 10

Identification

1. Each polling center and polling station is comprised of the following electoral officials:
 - a) A president, responsible for the polling center and relevant polling stations;
 - b) A secretary, responsible for the polling station, who coordinates the work performed by the electoral officials of such polling station and reports directly to the president of the polling center;
 - c) Four identification checking officials;
 - d) One ballot paper controlling official;
 - e) One ballot box controlling official;
 - f) One indelible ink application controlling official;
 - g) Two queue controlling officials.
2. The polling station can operate with the presence of at least six electoral officials.
3. In the absence of one of the electoral officers, the replacement shall be carried out in accordance with Article 15.³

Article 11

Selection of electoral officials

1. Electoral officials are selected by STAE from among voters registered in the geographic voter registration unit where the polling center or polling station at which they will perform their duties is located.
2. Only citizens who can read, write, and possess basic arithmetic skills can be electoral officers.
3. The applicants for the positions of electoral officials are pre-selected by the Municipal Director of STAE in the geographic voter registration unit where the polling center at which they will perform their duties is located
4. After conclusion of the pre-selection process, the STAE Municipal Director sends to the Director General of STAE, the complete list of the candidates considered suitable to perform duties as an electoral official, together with the respective Curriculum Vitae⁴.
5. Half of the selected candidates must be female.

³ Paragraphs 2 and 3 re-phrased, but the sense remains the same.

⁴ Requirement for STAE to display at its entrance a list of persons deemed qualified to be appointed as electoral officials has been deleted

6. On the basis of the information provided for in paragraph 4, the Director General of STAE, after consulting the CNE, appoints the electoral officials who will serve in polling centers.
7. No one can be obliged to perform the duties of an electoral official.
8. The selection of candidates for the performance of the functions of electoral officials is supervised by the CNE.

Article 12

Training of electoral officials

1. The candidates selected by STAE to be electoral officials shall, before commencing duty, attend training prepared and performed by STAE, under the supervision of the CNE.
2. Officials cannot start performing their duties without signing a declaration of confidentiality, in which they certify to keep secret facts, information and electoral procedures that they may become aware of through implementing their duties.
3. The declaration of confidentiality is drafted by STAE and binds the official until the conclusion of the electoral process for which he/she performs duties.
4. Representatives and agents of candidates, as well as accredited observers, may attend the training without the right to intervene.

Article 13

Duties of electoral officials

1. While performing their duties, electoral officials must:
 - a) Attend the training provided by STAE;
 - b) Be neutral and impartial towards all candidates;
 - c) Keep secret any information they become aware of through implementing their duties;
 - d) Enthusiastically and diligently perform their duties until the completion of the voting process and the tabulation of results.
 - e) Report to their superiors any irregularities detected during the voting process, counting and tabulation of results.
 - f) Strictly follow the guidelines issued from above.
2. Non-compliance by electoral officials with their obligations makes them liable under the laws in force.

Article 14

Incompatibilities

1. The President of the Republic, Members of Parliament, members of the Government, civil servants, F-FDTL and PNTL members, judges and public prosecutors, religious authorities, CNE members, candidates and candidates' agents cannot be electoral officials.⁵
2. The provisions presented in the preceding paragraph do not include diplomats.

⁵ The Ombudsman and his/her staff have been deleted from the list of persons in Presidential Election Regulation 6/2017 (but not 7/2017) who are ineligible to be an electoral official

Article 15
Replacement of electoral officials

1. On election day, if until 30 minutes before the scheduled time to open the polling station, the electoral officials appointed by the Director General of STAE are not present, the president of the polling center shall inform the STAE Municipal Director.
2. The Municipal Director of STAE appoints, in order to replace the missing electoral officials, any voter with a well-known reputation, as agreed by the majority of the electoral officials present.
3. If the president of the polling center is absent, he or she shall be replaced by the secretary of the first polling station of the relevant polling center, who shall be replaced accordingly by an identification checking official, to be selected by the majority of the electoral officials present in that polling station.
4. After replacement, the appointment of the absent electoral officials shall be considered void, and the president of the polling center shall advise their names to STAE.
5. All replacements shall be explicitly recorded in the minutes.

Article 16
President of the polling center

The President of the polling center must:⁶

- a) Declare the polling station open⁷ and verify the identity and credentials of polling station secretaries;
- b) Ensure the smooth functioning of the polling center in accordance with the laws and regulations in force;
- c) Order the display of the list of candidates at the entrance of the polling center;
- d) Provide information and the necessary working guidelines for the proper conduct of the electoral operations in the polling center over which he/she presides;
- e) Suspend electoral operations in case of disturbances, aggression or violence, either in the polling center or in the immediate vicinity of it;
- f) Manage the vote counting and the initial tabulation of results in the polling center;
- g) Use his/her casting vote whenever necessary;
- h) Sign the polling center's vote counting minutes;
- i) Organize the candidates' agents to sign the minutes of vote counting and tabulation of results;
- j) Announce the results of the counting and the initial tabulation and display a copy of them in a visible location inside the polling center premises;
- k) Ensure the packaging and delivery of all election materials at the municipal or regional tabulation center;
- l) Implement any other duties that may be assigned to him/her by law, regulation or superior order which are not the responsibility of another body.

⁶ Some duties contained in Regulation 6/2017 have been deleted: providing technical assistance to polling stations; requesting the assistance of security forces and directing their withdrawal when they are no longer needed. However the process for requesting police forces' support is included in Article 27 dealing with police responsibilities.

⁷ This appears to repeat the 'polling station' wording error from presidential election Regulation 7/2017. It likely should be 'polling center'. Article 17(a) gives the polling station secretary the responsibility of declaring the polling station open.

Article 17
Secretary of the polling station

The secretary of the polling station must:

- a) Declare the polling station open and verify the identity and accreditation of electoral officials, candidates' agents, observers and media professionals;
- b) Direct the verification procedure for the voting compartments and working documents of the polling station;
- c) Show the empty ballot boxes to the officials, candidates' agents, observers and voters, requesting immediately afterwards that one of the identification checking officials and the ballot paper controlling officer seal the ballot boxes, recording the relevant seal numbers;
- d) Order the display, in a visible place in the polling station, of a list of the members of the polling station staff;
- e) Ensure freedom and secrecy of voting for all voters;
- f) Ensure and maintain order in the polling station so as to ensure the smooth functioning of electoral operations;
- g) Inform the president of the polling center if requirements are met to resume electoral operations previously interrupted due to abnormal occurrence, natural disaster or civil disturbances;
- h) Order the departure from the polling station of citizens who cannot vote or who have already voted;
- i) Prevent access to the polling station by any voters who are clearly drunk or under the influence of drugs, who are acknowledged as mentally ill or who are carrying any type of weapon;
- j) Forbid any type of propaganda inside the polling station and up to twenty-five meters from it⁸, using police forces to enforce this;
- k) Authorize, as requested by the voter, the issue of a new ballot paper because he/she made a mistake while marking it, or unintentionally damaged the ballot paper, and record this in the minutes;
- l) Stamp the word "Cancelled" on the returned ballot paper, sign it and keep it in the relevant envelope⁹;
- m) Provide necessary clarification to a voter, at his/her request and in the presence of officials, candidates' agents and electoral observers, regarding the voting process, without influencing the voter's choice;
- n) Ask the candidates' agents if they have any claims to submit.
- o) Receive objections and complaints, and sign them together with all the officials of the polling station;
- p) Implement any other duties that may be assigned to him/her by law, regulation or superior order which are not the responsibility of another body.

Article 18
Identification checking official

The identification checking official must:

- a) Identify the voter by examining the updated voter card and verify that the voter's data are on the voter list of that geographic voter registration unit;

⁸ The regulation on out of country voting for the parliamentary election (19/2017) states 100 meters.

⁹ The requirements for the secretary contained in Regulation 6/2017 to stamp and envelope 'null and void', and 'discarded' ballots have been deleted

- b) In the absence of the voter card, identify the voter by examining his/her the identity card or Timorese passport and confirm that the voter's data are on the voter list for that geographic voter registration unit;
- c) Verify that the voter is, as required by law, 17 or more years old on election day;
- d) Inspect the voter's hands in order to ensure that he/she has not already voted in the relevant election;
- e) Inform the ballot paper controlling official if the voter is entitled to be issued a ballot paper;
- f) Implement any other duties that may be assigned to him/her by law, regulation or superior order which are not the responsibility of another body.

Article 19
Ballot paper controlling official

The ballot paper controlling official must:

- a) Stamp and sign the back of the ballot paper;
- b) Issue the ballot paper to the voter;
- c) Provide to a voter to whom a ballot paper has been issued, in the presence of agents and observers at the polling station, information and clarification that he/she requests on how to exercise his/her voting right, without indicating, however, any preference or sentiment in terms of voting for a candidate
- d) Direct and send the voter to the voting compartment;
- e) Issue a new ballot paper to the voter, at his/her request, if it has been damaged or if the voter made any mistake while marking it, after obtaining the authorization of the secretary of the polling station;
- f) Implement any other duties that may be assigned to him/her by law, regulation or superior order which are not the responsibility of another body.

Article 20
Ballot box controlling official

The ballot box controlling official must:

- a) Ensure the security of the ballot box;
- b) Ensure that each voter places only one ballot in the ballot box;
- c) Implement any other duties that may be assigned to him/her by law, regulation or superior order which are not the responsibility of another body.

Article 21
Indelible ink application controlling official

The indelible ink application controlling official must:

- a) After the voter has deposited the ballot in the ballot box and has exercised his/her right to vote, marks the index finger of the voter's right hand with indelible ink, until the cuticle, and makes sure that the ink has dried;
- b) If the voter does not have the right-hand index finger, mark with indelible ink, until the cuticle, any other finger of the same hand or, if the voter does not have a right hand, of the voter's left hand and ensure that the ink is dry;
- c) If the voter does not have either hand, mark with indelible ink the end of one of the voter's upper limbs;

- d) Ask the voter to leave the polling station after casting a ballot;
- e) Implement any other duties that may be assigned to him/her by law, regulation or superior order which are not the responsibility of another body.

Article 22
Queue controlling official

The queue controlling official must:

- a) Organize the voters waiting to vote in a queue, so that only authorized people may enter the polling station;
- b) Ask the voter to have ready his/her current voter card or, in its absence, Timorese ID card or passport, in order to show it to the identification checking official;
- c) Check at 3 pm on election day the last voter standing in the queue, preventing others after the last voter to vote, pursuant to law;
- d) Request political parties' and coalitions' agents and electoral observers to show their identification and accreditation issued by STAE, which authorizes them to monitor the on-going electoral process;
- e) Request media professionals to show their identification and accreditation issued by STAE, which authorizes them to cover the on-going electoral process;
- f) Implement any other duties that may be assigned to him/her by law, regulation or superior order which are not the responsibility of another body.

SECTION III
Order, discipline, prohibitions and police intervention

Article 23

The president of each polling center and the secretary of each polling station, with the support of the other electoral officials, shall take the necessary measures to maintain order and discipline during electoral operations in order to guarantee the freedom and normal implementation of voting.

Article 24
Prohibited in the polling center

1. Voters visibly drunk or under the influence of drugs, carrying any type of weapon or disturbing, by any means, order and discipline¹⁰ shall not be allowed inside polling centers and polling stations, without prejudice to potential criminal liability.
2. Alcohol cannot be sold or drunk within 100 meters of a polling center.
3. Voters who have already voted and are not candidate lists' agents, media professionals or accredited observers are not allowed inside polling centers or polling stations.¹¹

¹⁰ Deleted 'in the voting area and nearby'

¹¹ Paragraph 4 of Article 3 of Regulation 6/2017 has been deleted : 'The presence of members of PNTL, national and international observers, candidates' agents and media professionals in polling centers and polling stations is governed by a separate regulation.'

Article 25¹²
Prohibition of propaganda

1. On election day, it is forbidden to place any type of electoral propaganda inside a polling center or polling station, or within 100 meters¹³ from it.
2. Electoral propaganda includes stickers, shirts, leaflets, symbols, signs, pins, posters and banners, among others, as well as activities promoting the candidates.
3. The president of the polling center shall request PNTL to remove propaganda that breaches paragraph 1 of this article.
4. Candidates' agents cannot display any symbol or object that connects them with the candidate.
5. In the case described in the preceding paragraph, the secretary (*sic*) of the polling center orders the agent to remove the symbol or object.
6. If the agent does not comply with the order, the secretary takes back his/her accreditation and ejects the agent from the polling station, recording the incident in the minutes of electoral operations

Article 26
Prohibition of the presence of armed forces and police forces

1. The presence of members of the armed forces and police forces in the exercise of their functions within polling centers or polling stations shall be prohibited while the voting process is in progress.
2. While the voting process is in progress the presence of members of the National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL) is only permitted more than twenty-five meters from the Polling Center or Polling Station.

Article 27¹⁴
Presence and intervention of elements of the National Police of Timor-Leste

1. When it is necessary to terminate any disturbance or to prevent any aggression or violence within the polling center, polling stations or in the surrounding area, or in case of disobedience to the orders of the electoral officials, the president of the polling center or his/her substitute may request the presence of PNTL inside the polling center, after consulting the other electoral officials.
2. The request for presence of the PNTL is made through contact with the agents who remain in the vicinity of the polling center or, in their absence, by contact with the PNTL commander in the municipal area or the Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno, depending on the situation.
3. While PNTL agents are present in the polling center, voting activities are suspended.
4. The reasons for the request and the period of presence of the PNTL or its inability to be present are included in the minutes of the voting station.

¹² Article 25 of Regulation 6/2017 has been deleted. This article required members of tabulation committees, CNE delegates and IT system operators to sign a similar declaration of confidentiality as that required from electoral officials under Articles 12 (2) and (3) and 13 (c) of this current regulation.

¹³ Article 17(j) of this regulation states polling station secretaries forbid any propaganda materials to be displayed within 25 meters of the polling station.

¹⁴ The text of this article is drawn from Articles 2 and 3 of Regulation 11/2017 on 'exceptional intervention of elements of the Timor-Leste National Police', issued for the presidential election

5. If there is evidence that physical or psychological coercion prevents the president or his substitute to make this request, the commander of the police force may, on his/her own initiative, intervene, in order to ensure that the electoral process takes place and must withdraw as soon as the President or his/her replacement directs so, or when he/she finds that his/her presence is no longer justified.
6. When necessary, the commander of the police force, or his/her accredited delegate, may visit the polling center or polling stations, unarmed and for a strictly necessary period of no more than ten minutes, in order to establish contact with the respective president or with his/her substitute.
7. In the case provided for in paragraph 1 above, and whenever the presence of the PNTL is necessary, it must attend and give due support, and elements that unjustifiably do not do so shall be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

**CHAPTER III
VOTING PROCEDURES**

**Section I
Right to vote**

**Article 28
Right to vote**

1. Any citizen seventeen or more years old has the right to vote and to stand for election.
2. The exercise of the right to vote is personal and constitutes a civic duty.
3. The right to vote is exercised directly, personally and with the physical presence of the voter.
4. Each voter can vote only once.
5. The exercise of the right to vote depends on prior electoral registration by the voter.

**Article 29
Voters on duty**

1. State officials and agents, members of the National Police of Timor-Leste, members of F-FDTL, diplomatic mission and electoral observation mission officials working during election day for the electoral process, cast their ballots at the nearest polling center to the location where they are performing their duties.
2. Employers of the voters as described in the preceding paragraph send to STAE, at least twenty days prior to election day, a full list of the employees and agents of the Public Administration performing duties for the electoral process and identify the location where such duties are being performed.
3. At each polling center, a list in accordance with paragraph 2 is available of the voters registered in different geographic electoral registration units who can exercise their right to vote in that polling center.

**Article 30
Freedom and secrecy of vote**

1. Voting is done freely, and no-one can be required to reveal, inside or outside the polling center or the polling station, for whom he/she has voted.

2. The voting compartment must be located in order to ensure the secrecy of the voter's vote.

Article 31
Blind or other voters with a disability

1. A voter who is blind or has another disability and cannot vote on their own can exercise his/her right to vote assisted by another voter chosen by him/her.
2. The assistant is bound by secrecy regarding the vote of the voter who is blind or has another disability.
3. The secretary of the polling station must assess if the assistant was freely chosen by the voter to follow him/her during the exercise of his/her right to vote.
4. Should it be concluded that the choice of the assistant was not made freely, the secretary of the polling station facilitates the choice of another assistant by the voter to assist him/her to exercise the right to vote.
5. When the secretary of the polling station questions the true nature of the circumstances or facts referred to in paragraph 1, which enable the exercise of the right to vote with assistance, the secretary shall request the voter to provide a medical certificate stating the facts or circumstances that prevent the voter from exercising his/her right to vote on their own.

SECTION II
Place where the right to vote is exercised and voting period

Article 32
Polling center where the voter exercises his/her right to vote

1. Within the national territory each voter votes at the polling center of the Suco indicated in the respective voter card.
2. In sucos where more than one polling center is established, voters must vote¹⁵ at the one that is indicated to them by STAE which places a sticker on the card with that indication¹⁶.
3. For the purposes of the preceding paragraph, STAE indicates to the voter the polling center that is closest to the habitual residence of the voter.
4. The template of the sticker provided for in paragraph 2 shall be approved by order of the Director General of STAE.

Article 33
Operating hours

1. On election day, polling centers and polling stations open at 7 am and close at 3 pm, operating without interruption within this time period.
2. After the closing time of the polling centers, referred to in the preceding paragraph, only voters already standing and waiting in queue to cast a ballot may vote, as verified by two queue controlling officials and advised to the president of the polling center.

¹⁵ The requirement that in multi polling center sucos voters must vote at the polling center as directed by STAE is likely to be impossible to implement, and unlikely to be enforced by STAE. This will provide a challenge for voter education.

¹⁶ The election calendar allocates June 10-20 for voters to collect these stickers.

Article 34
Continuity of Electoral Operations

The voting process is carried out without interruption and according to the hours of operation described in the previous article.

Article 35
Interruption of electoral operations

1. Voting cannot take place in any polling center or polling station if:
 - a) The polling center or polling station cannot be set up, if any riot occurs requiring the interruption of electoral operations for more than two hours or if any natural disaster happens during election day;
 - b) Any natural disaster occurs during the three days before election day.
2. The local delegate of CNE is advised that it is not possible to conduct the elections, after obtaining information about the occurrence of any fact referred to in the preceding paragraph.
3. The polling station is closed if voting is interrupted for more than two hours and the sealed ballot boxes, containing the ballots cast so far, are despatched to the municipal or regional tabulation center.
4. In the cases described in sub-paragraph a) of paragraph 1, the voters are sent to the nearest polling center or polling station.
5. In the case described in sub-paragraph b) of paragraph 1, STAE, with the agreement of CNE's local delegate, transfers the polling center or polling station to a safer location.
6. In the cases described in the preceding paragraph, voting occurs on the seventh day after the initially scheduled election day that could not be implemented.

SECTION III
BALLOT PAPERS

Article 36
Definition

The ballot paper is rectangular, of a size sufficient to include all candidacies and is printed on white, plain and non-transparent paper.

Article 37
Ballot paper elements

1. The ballot paper includes the name, acronym, flag or symbol of the political parties or party coalitions, according to the template proposed by STAE and approved by CNE, and the flag or symbol must be in color, the same as those that appear in the registration of the political party or party coalition in the Supreme Court of Justice¹⁷.

¹⁷ Article 6 of Regulation 16/2017 on submission of nominations for the parliamentary election states that parties wishing to form a coalition for the election advise this to CNE, along with the title, flag, symbol of the coalition. CNE advises this to STAE. There is no mention of coalitions or their flags/symbols having to be registered with the Supreme Court.

2. The names of the political parties and party coalitions contesting the election are horizontally arranged in the ballot paper, according with the draw held by STJ, with each flag or symbol in front of it and in front of this a square where the voter may mark his/her vote.

Article 38
Transport of ballot papers

1. After being produced, the ballot papers are delivered by the Director General of STAE to the Municipal Directors of STAE and to the Director of STAE in the Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno, who are responsible for their transport to the municipalities.
2. The transport of the ballot papers must be by the most swift and safe means of transportation, and may be accompanied by the National Police of Timor-Leste.
3. The Municipal Directors of STAE and the Director of STAE in the Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno ensure the allocation of ballot papers by polling centers, according with the operational plan approved by the Director General of STAE.
4. The Municipal Directors of STAE and the Director of STAE in the Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno distribute ballot papers to polling centers corresponding to the number of voters registered in the relevant center to exercise their right to vote, plus 10%.
5. The transport and distribution of materials mentioned in the preceding paragraph is supervised by CNE.

SECTION IV
Preliminary voting operations

Article 39
Working elements of the polling station

STAE ensures that each polling center and its polling stations are provided with the electoral materials needed to conduct the election, in accordance with Annex I to this regulation, which shall form an integral part thereof.

Article 40
Preliminary operations

1. At 6 am on election day, the president of the polling center confirms the identity of the secretaries of the polling stations and the agents selected by presidential election candidates to monitor electoral operations conducted in the polling center.
2. At 6.15 am, the secretaries of the polling stations proceed with the identification of the electoral officials of the relevant polling stations, as well as the candidates' agents performing duties at the station.
3. At 6.30 am, the secretary of the polling station informs the president of the polling center about absent electoral officials in order to identify them and commence procedures.

4. At 6.35 am, the president of the polling center informs the Municipal Director of STAE about any absent electoral officials and requests their replacement.
5. At 6.45 am, the secretary of the polling station and the electoral officials, in the presence of the candidacies' agents and electoral observers who are present, proceeds to:
 - a) Check the voting compartments;
 - b) Check and display the interior of the ballot boxes;
 - c) Seal the ballot boxes and read aloud the numbers of the security seals;
 - d) Record in the minutes of electoral operations the numbers of the security seals;
 - e) Count and check the stamps received;
 - f) Count the ballot papers received;
 - g) Record the number of ballot papers received in the electoral operations minutes;
 - h) Display the list of political parties and coalitions standing in the election at the entrance door of the polling center;
 - i) Display the list of electoral officials working at the polling station;
 - j) Record in the electoral operations minutes any irregular occurrences or incidents, as well as any claims or objections filed against the preliminary operations and the decisions made by the electoral officials in relation to them.

SECTION V

Voting operations

Article 41

Order of voting

1. Without prejudice to the situations foreseen in Article 35, the president of the polling center declares the polling center open at 7 am on election day and the secretaries of the polling stations proceed likewise regarding these.
2. After the declaration described in the preceding paragraph, the electoral officials exercise their right to vote in the station where they perform their duties, in accordance with this regulation.
3. After concluding the voting process for electoral officials, other voters exercise their right to vote on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to the order of precedence described in paragraph 5.
4. In order to access the polling station to exercise the right to vote, voters stand in line, in accordance with the instructions given by the queue controlling officials.
5. The following voters have priority, according to the order of precedence below:
 - a) Pregnant voters;
 - b) Voters over sixty-five years old;
 - c) Voters with any kind of infirmity or physical disability;
 - d) Voters carrying children;
 - e) Public administration officials, agents and workers performing duties within the organization and conduct of the electoral process.

Article 42

Voter identification procedure

1. When entering the polling station, the voter gives to the queue controlling official any image-capturing mobile devices in his/her possession.

2. After complying with the provision of the preceding paragraph, the voter goes to the identification checking official and shows his/her voter card or, or in its absence, his/her Timorese ID card or passport.
3. The identification checking official, after observing the formality foreseen in the preceding paragraph, verifies if the voter is already seventeen years old by election day, if he/she has the right-hand index finger marked with indelible ink and if his/her name is included in the voters list as registered in the geographic electoral registration unit corresponding to the polling center.
4. In the cases where the voter identifies himself/herself in accordance with paragraph 2, his/her name is included in the list pursuant to paragraph 3, is already seventeen years old and none of his upper limbs is marked with indelible ink, the identification checking official marks the name of the voter by drawing a line on such name in the list and directs the voter to the ballot paper controlling official.
5. If the voter identifies himself/herself with a voter card on which it is stated that he/she is registered in the geographic electoral registration unit corresponding to the polling center, the identification checking official includes the voter's name in the additional list of voters.
6. The additional list of voters, as described in the preceding paragraph, includes the following information in relation to each voter:
 - a) The voter's name;
 - b) The voter card number;
 - c) Full address;
 - d) Signature of the voter.
7. If the voter is unable to produce evidence regarding his/her identity or registration in the geographic electoral registration unit corresponding to the polling center where he/she intends to exercise the right to vote, the identification checking official directs him/her to leave the polling station.

Article 43

Issue of ballot paper and voting procedure

1. After concluding the voter identification procedures pursuant to the preceding article, and paragraph 7 of the preceding article is not applicable, the ballot paper controlling official issues the ballot paper to the voter.
2. The ballot paper is signed and stamped by the ballot paper controlling official prior to its issue to the voter.
3. After receiving the ballot paper, the voter shall go to an empty voting compartment and marks his/her ballot.
4. The voter marks his choice by putting a mark or punching the white square in the same line as the political party or party coalition for which he/she intends to vote.
5. Then the voter folds the ballot paper with the printed part turned inside, in order to insert it in the ballot box.
6. If the voter makes a mistake or damages the ballot paper:
 - a) The voter goes to the ballot paper controlling official and requests its replacement;
 - b) The ballot paper controlling official requests authorization from the secretary of the polling station prior to the replacement of the damaged ballot paper by a new ballot paper;
 - c) The secretary of the polling station authorizes the replacement of the damaged ballot paper by stamping it with the word "cancelled" and signing it;

- d) After authorizing the replacement of the damaged ballot paper, the ballot paper controlling official issues a new ballot paper to the voter requesting the replacement of the damaged ballot paper, who goes to an empty voting compartment to mark his/her ballot.
7. The ballot paper is inserted in the ballot box by the voter in the presence of the ballot box controlling official.
8. After the voter inserts the ballot paper in the ballot box, he/she goes to the indelible ink application controlling official, who applies in accordance with article 21.
9. After the application of the indelible ink, the voter leaves the polling station, and the queue controlling official returns any image-capturing mobile devices in his/her custody.

Article 44¹⁸

Voting procedure in hospitals and prisons

1. On election day, the officials from one polling station in the nearest polling center to a public hospital or prison, designated for this purpose by the polling center president, shall travel to the hospital or prison, depending on the case, to take the votes of voters who are in these institutions, according to the operational plan defined by STAE.
2. The officials referred to in the preceding paragraph carry with them sealed ballot boxes and ballot papers of a sufficient number to take the votes, the polling station book and other materials necessary for the voters referred to in the preceding paragraph to exercise their voting rights.
3. In the course of all operations inherent in the voting process, the ballot boxes must remain sealed.
4. For the collection of votes in the hospital, the ballot box is taken by the electoral officials, from bed to bed, in order to allow the hospitalized patients to vote, using the list of hospitalized voters, without prejudice to the compulsory presentation of the updated voter card and in the absence thereof, of the Timorese identity card or passport.
5. For the collection of votes in prison, the ballot boxes are set up in a place determined by the prison director and operates according to the respective regulation, with the list of voters who are serving a prison sentence, with the mandatory presentation of the updated voter card.
6. Voters who are on duty at the prison or hospital on voting day, and whose names are on the voters list, vote by presenting their updated voter card and, in the absence of this, vote by presenting their Timorese ID card or passport.
7. Once the operations of the team of electoral officials have been completed, they return to the polling station to immediately close these activities, in accordance with the provisions of the previous article.

Article 45

Questions, claims and objections

1. Any voter or agent of a candidacy, during the operating hours of the polling station, can raise questions and file objections and claims regarding electoral operations.
2. The questions, claims and objections submitted during or after voting are immediately reviewed by the electoral officials, who may consult with STAE if needed.

¹⁸ The content of this article mirrors that of Article 2 of Regulation 12/2017 issued for the presidential election.

3. The claims filed in accordance with the preceding paragraph are subject to a vote by the electoral officials and are considered as accepted if at least six officials vote in favour.
4. The decisions are advised to the claimants, who can file a claim to CNE's representative at the same polling center or polling station where the question was raised, accompanied by all documentation in relation to this polling center.
5. For the purposes of the preceding paragraph, CNE makes its decision in seventy-two hours.
6. CNE's decisions can be subject to an appeal filed with the Supreme Court within forty-eight hours.
7. The Supreme Court makes a decision within forty-eight hours on an appeal filed.

Article 46
Closing voting

1. Voters in the queue to vote are admitted to the polling station until 3 pm on election day.
2. After 3 pm, only voters verified by the queue controlling official and reported to the secretary of the polling station as having been already standing in line and waiting to vote at the polling station can vote.
3. The secretary of the polling station closes the voting after every registered voter has voted or, after 3 pm, when every voter standing in line at this time has voted.

Article 47
Closing of operations at a polling station

1. After voting is closed and questions, claims or objections are resolved, the secretary of the polling station proceeds with:
 - a) Counting the unused ballot papers, entering their number in the polling station minutes and rendering them useless by stamping them with the words "not used", inserting them afterwards in the envelope for unused ballot papers;
 - b) Counting the cancelled ballot papers, entering their number in the polling station minutes and rendering them useless by stamping them with the word "cancelled", inserting them afterwards in the envelope for cancelled ballot papers;
 - c) Counting the abandoned ballot papers, entering their number in the polling station minutes and rendering them useless by stamping them with the word "abandoned", inserting them afterwards in the envelope for abandoned ballot papers;
 - d) Counting the number of voters marked off in the voters list and the additional list of voters that voted in that polling station, entering such numbers in the polling station minutes.
2. The secretary of the polling station, assisted by the other electoral officials, takes the ballot boxes, the polling station operations minutes and the material referred to in paragraph 2 (*sic*) of this article to the location chosen by the president of the polling center to proceed with the vote counting and the initial tabulation of results.
3. For the purposes described in the preceding paragraph, the president of the polling center chooses the most appropriate and spacious location within the polling center in order to ensure that the agents of the candidacies', electoral observers and media

professionals can follow the vote counting and the initial tabulation of electoral results.

4. The template for the operational minutes of the polling station is set out in Annex II to this Regulation, and forms an integral part of it for all legal purposes.

CHAPTER IV

Procedure for counting and initial tabulation of results

Article 48

Vote classification

In terms of vote counting and tabulation of results, the votes are considered as:

- a) Valid, those ballot papers taken out of the ballot box, duly stamped and signed by the ballot paper controlling official, which clearly and unequivocally express the choice of the voter without, however, revealing the identity of the voter;
- b) Blank, those ballot papers taken out of the ballot box, duly stamped and signed by the ballot paper controlling official, which do not display any type of mark;
- c) Null and void, those ballot papers taken out of the ballot box, duly stamped and signed by the ballot paper controlling official, which are marked or punched without being able however, to understand the choice made by the voter, or that allow the identification of the voter, or that indicate the choice of a candidate who has withdrawn from the election, or on which any cut, drawing or erasure has been made or any word written;
- d) Rejected, those ballot papers taken out from the ballot box that are not stamped and signed by the ballot paper controlling official;
- e) Cancelled, those ballot papers returned by the voter to the electoral officials to be replaced by another ballot papers, based on an error in marking the voter's choice or that have been unintentionally damaged by the voter;
- f) Abandoned, those ballot papers that have been found lost in the polling station.

Article 49

Collection and opening of ballot boxes

1. The ballot boxes are delivered by the secretary of the polling station, together with the remaining electoral officials, and collected by the president of the polling center at the previously selected location designated for the reception and opening of the ballot boxes.
2. The president of the polling center, after collecting the ballot boxes, reads aloud the numbers of the security seals and asks the political party's or coalitions of political parties' agents to confirm such numbers.
3. After confirming the numbers on the security seals, the president of the polling center, in the presence of electoral officials, political party's or coalitions of political parties' agents, electoral observers, media professionals and other attending citizens, opens the ballot box.

Article 50

Vote counting

1. After opening the ballot box, the president of the polling center takes out the ballot papers, unfolds them and places them on the counting table, with the back side facing

- up and verifies if they are duly stamped and signed by the ballot paper controlling official.
2. The president of the polling center enters in the polling center results minutes the number of ballot papers inside the ballot box duly stamped and signed by the ballot paper controlling official.
 3. The ballot papers inside the ballot box that are not stamped or signed by the ballot paper controlling official are separated from the remaining ballot papers, stamped as “rejected”, read and counted aloud by the president of the polling center and the number of them is entered in the polling center results minutes.
 4. The ballot papers inside the ballot box that are not stamped as “rejected” are mixed with other ballot papers with the same characteristics coming from the other polling stations, being subsequently grouped in batches of fifty each.
 5. After concluding the action described in the preceding paragraph, the president of the polling center reads aloud the vote marked on each ballot paper and shows its front side to the people present, then grouping them in batches corresponding to each candidate.
 6. The ballot papers classified as blank or null and void are grouped in separate batches.
 7. The ballot papers subject to claims are grouped in a separate batch.
 8. The questions, objections, claims and appeals submitted during the counting and tabulation of results operations are governed by the provisions of article 45, as far as it applies.
 9. The original claims are inserted together with the ballot papers subject to claims inside the envelope marked “ballot papers subject to claims”.
 10. The results of the vote counts and tabulations are immediately transmitted, by electronic means, to STAE, which advises them to CNE.

Article 51

Filling in the minutes

1. After counting and agreeing on the valid votes by candidate, the results are entered in the polling center results minutes and the ballot papers inserted in the envelopes identified as “valid votes”, separated by each political party or coalition of political parties standing for election.
2. After stamping, counting and agreeing on the blank votes, the results are entered in the polling center results minutes and the ballot papers inserted in the envelope marked “blank votes”.
3. After stamping, counting and agreeing on the null and void votes, if any, the results are entered in the polling center results minutes and the ballot papers inserted in the envelope marked “null and void votes”.
4. After counting and agreeing on the votes subject to claim, if any, the results are entered in the polling center results minutes and the ballot papers, together with the claims and objections, inserted in the envelope marked “votes subject to claims”.
5. After stamping, counting and agreeing on the rejected votes, if any, the results are entered in the polling center results minutes and the ballot papers inserted in the envelope marked “rejected votes”.
6. After stamping, counting and agreeing on the cancelled ballot papers, if any, the results are entered in the polling center results minutes and the ballot papers inserted in the envelope marked “cancelled ballot papers”.
7. After stamping, counting and agreeing on the abandoned ballot papers, if any, the results are entered in the polling center results minutes and the ballot papers inserted in the envelope marked “abandoned ballot papers”.

8. After stamping, counting and agreeing on the unused ballot papers, the count results and serial numbers are entered in the polling center results minutes and the ballot papers inserted in the envelope marked “unused ballot papers”.
9. The envelopes are closed and in them are split up the number of ballot papers they contain, the relevant polling center and polling stations and their corresponding codes and their geographic unit.
10. The minutes should also state the numbers of the security seals for each ballot box, the venue and code of each polling station, the opening and closing time of voting, the name of the electoral officials and agents of candidacies present, as well as objections and claims filed and the decisions taken.
11. After counting the filed claims, if any, the total number is entered in the polling center results minutes.
12. ¹⁹The template for the polling centre results minutes is in Annex III to this electoral regulation.

Article 52
Closing of polling center operations

1. After the results of the count have been written in the electoral operations minutes, it must be signed by the president and the secretaries of the relevant stations.
2. For each polling center, only one agent representing each of the candidacies, shall sign the electoral operations minutes.
3. For the purposes of the preceding paragraph, the absence of a signature by one or more agents of a candidacy not invalidate the minutes or electoral operations.
4. The number of votes contained in the following envelopes are read aloud, and the following are inserted in the ballot box:
 - a) The envelopes with “Valid votes”, “Null and void votes”, “Blank votes”, “Votes subject to claims”, “Rejected votes”, “Unused ballot papers”, “Cancelled ballot papers” and “Abandoned ballot papers”;
 - b) The envelope with electoral operations minutes, the declarations of confidentiality, the electoral officials attendance list, remarks, the voters list, the additional list of voters and the list of voters on duty;
 - c) The unused seals and stamps.
5. After inserting these materials, the ballot box is sealed and is under the control of the president of the polling center, who is responsible for ensuring that it is sent to STAE headquarters.
6. ²⁰The minutes of the tabulation of the results²¹ in the polling center are signed by the president of the polling center and displayed in a visible place in the building where the polling center has operated.

¹⁹ Text relating to out of country voting in the corresponding paragraph in regulation 7/2017 for the presidential election has been deleted, and included in regulation 19/2017 on out of country voting

²⁰ Text relating to out of country voting in the corresponding paragraph in regulation 7/2017 for the presidential election has been deleted, and included in regulation 19/2017 on out of country voting

²¹ Regulation 7/2017 for the presidential election required only that an extract of the minutes showing the initial tabulation had to be displayed.

7. ²²The president of the polling center shall ensure that each accredited candidate agent performing duties in the polling center has access to a copy of the polling center results minutes²³.

CHAPTER V
OPERATIONS OF MUNICIPAL TABULATION OF THE RESULTS AND TABULATION IN THE
SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION OF OE-CUSSE AMBENO

Article 53
Municipal Tabulation Center

1. The members of the municipal tabulation center and the tabulation center in the Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno, whose composition is defined by paragraph 1 of article 47 of the Electoral Law for the National Parliament, start working after receiving the minutes from at least five polling centers.
2. The reception of the ballot boxes from polling centers takes place in the area for this purpose designated as "reception area".
3. In the reception area, the president reads aloud the numbers of the seals and opens the ballot boxes, one by one, then the duly organized members of the municipal tabulation center and the tabulation center in the Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno shall confirm their contents by using the Ballot box delivery form.
4. After confirming that all the materials are inside the ballot box, the president of the relevant polling center and the Municipal Director of STAE or the STAE Director for the Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno sign the "Ballot box delivery form" and issue a copy of the form to the president of the polling center who signed it.
5. If the ballot box does not contain all the material inside, the president of the relevant polling center provides written reasons for the omissions, in the remarks section of the Ballot box delivery form and signs the form.
6. In the case referred to in the preceding paragraph, Municipal Director of STAE or the STAE Director for the Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno minutes in the "Ballot box delivery form" that he/she is aware of these omissions and signs it, issuing a copy to the president of the polling center, and records this occurrence in the municipal or Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno tabulation center operations minutes, to provide information to the national tabulation center.
7. Thereafter, the original electoral operations minutes, the envelopes with ballot papers subject to claims and null and void votes, if any, are taken out of the ballot box.
8. Then a photocopy of the results sheet included in the electoral operations minutes is made and inserted in the polling station ballot box.
9. After performing the tasks mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, all stamps are taken out and placed in a separate ballot box for subsequent delivery to STAE.
10. The envelope with valid votes, the envelope with unused ballot papers, the envelope with cancelled ballot papers, the envelope with blank ballot papers and the envelope with the photocopy of the minutes of the polling centre remain inside the polling center ballot box.

²² Text relating to out of country voting in the corresponding paragraph in regulation 7/2017 for the presidential election has been deleted, and included in regulation 19/2017 on out of country voting

²³ Regulation 7/2017 for the presidential election specified that agents had access to an indication of the results of the initial tabulation.

11. Then, the municipal or Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno tabulation center reconciles all minutes of the polling centers by adding the totals stated in the electoral operations minutes of such polling centers.
12. The reconciliation of the minutes sent by the polling centers to the municipal or Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno tabulation center shall be implemented without interruption until the entire process of municipal or Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno tabulation, as the case may be, is completed.
13. The data from each electoral operations minutes is entered into the electronic tabulation system prepared by STAE, using the template in Annex IV of this regulation.
14. After finalising the reconciliation of all minutes from the municipalities or from the Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno, the minutes of the municipal or Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno tabulation center are printed, and are signed by the members of the tabulation center and by the political party or party coalition agents present²⁴.
15. Signing of the minutes by an agent of a candidacy pursuant to the preceding paragraph is only mandatory if he/she files a claim.
16. A copy of the minutes mentioned in this article is displayed at the municipal or Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno tabulation center premises, with a copy delivered to the candidacies' agents who signed it and a copy to the STAE headquarters.
17. After concluding all municipal and Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno tabulation operations, the polling centers' results minutes, the municipal or Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno tabulation minutes, the envelopes with ballot papers subject to claims and null and void votes, if any, and the claims are collected and placed inside the ballot box, to be delivered to CNE.
18. The operations of municipal and Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno tabulation takes place within a maximum of two days.
19. Political parties and party coalition' agent, observers and media professionals duly accredited by STAE, can witness all phases of the process of municipal tabulation and tabulation in the Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno.
20. The police force ensures the safety of the municipal and Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno tabulation centers according to the laws in force and this regulation.

CHAPTER V NATIONAL TABULATION OPERATIONS

Article 54 National tabulation assembly

1. Within a maximum period of seventy-two hours after receiving the tabulation minutes in the Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno, the municipal tabulation and out of country tabulation minutes, CNE proceeds with the national tabulation, checking the minutes and taking a final decision on ballot papers subject to claims have been made, if any, and other claims filed.
2. The verification of tabulation minutes in accordance with the preceding paragraph may include assessment and decisions on reasonable grounds regarding any inconsistency or mathematical error.

²⁴ For the March 20 2017 presidential election, only the Municipal Director of STAE and the CNE delegate supervising the tabulation had to sign the minutes.

3. If, in accordance with the grounds and terms mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, the municipal, Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno or out of country tabulation minutes are amended, in accordance with the previous articles a new copy of the relevant operations minutes is printed, with the amendments included and the grounds for justification attached to the amended minutes.
4. After concluding operations and within the period stated in paragraph 1 above, CNE drafts and displays at its headquarters a provisional tabulation of national results.
5. Copies of the provisional tabulation of national results are sent to STAE and the national media.

Article 55 **Appeal**

1. The provisional tabulation of national results published by CNE can be subject to appeal, filed within forty-eight hours²⁵ from its publication referred to in paragraph 4 of the previous article, to the bench of the Supreme Court, which immediately notifies the interested parties and gives its judgement within an equivalent time period.
2. If no appeal has been filed by the deadline, CNE sends to STJ the minutes of the tabulation of national results, together with the Special Administrative Region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno, municipal and out of country tabulation minutes, and any other documents deemed as important, making express reference to the absence of any appeal.

Article 56 **Announcement of results and validation of election**

1. The Supreme Court, after deciding any appeal in accordance with paragraph 1 of the preceding article or after the deadline to file an appeal where no appeal has been lodged, reviews the documentation sent by CNE, makes a ruling validating the election of the National Parliament, and through its president, announces the final results within a maximum period of seventy-two hours, with the mandatory announcement of the total number of registered voters and voters who voted, the number of votes obtained by each list, blank and null and void votes, the distribution of the mandates to the competing lists and the determination of the candidates elected from each list.
2. The Supreme Court ruling is published in the Official Gazette, with a copy sent to CNE and to STAE.

CHAPTER VI **Transitional and final provisions**

Article 57 **Claims and objections**

1. An objection is an act in relation to an irregularity detected but not yet decided by the relevant electoral administration body.
2. A claim is an act that contests the decision on an irregularity that has been raised and that aims for the repeal or replacement of the decision against which the claim has been made.

²⁵ This period was 24 hours for the March 20 2017 presidential election

Article 58
Support to electoral process

Within the framework of the electoral process, Public Administration services and organizations shall provide due assistance to electoral management.

Article 59
Confidentiality

1. Anyone who, directly or indirectly, performs duties or follows the electoral process in polling centers and polling stations is required to maintain the confidentiality of any data, information and documents they become aware of or have access to in the performance of their duties.
2. Anyone covered by the provisions of the preceding paragraph shall sign a binding declaration of confidentiality before commencing his/her duties.

Article 60
Destination of ballot papers and electoral operations minutes

1. The ballot papers and electoral operations minutes, in hard and soft copy, are maintained by STAE and available to the Supreme Court for a year after the announcement of the final election results.
2. After the expiry of the period mentioned in the preceding paragraph and in the absence of a judicial ruling determining otherwise, STAE destroys the ballot papers, except for one example to be delivered with the electoral operations minutes to the National Archives of Timor-Leste for historic archiving purposes.

Article 61
Court of Appeal

Before the establishment of the Supreme Court of Justice, the powers conferred on it by this decree are exercised by the Court of Appeal.

Article 62
Entry into force

This Government Decree enters into force on the day following its publication in the *Official Gazette*.

Approved by the Council of Ministers on 11 May 2017
To be published.

The Prime Minister,

Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo

The Minister of State Administration,

Dr. Dionisio Babo Soares, PhD

ANNEX I

List of electoral materials needed for the operations of polling centers and polling stations:

1. Ballot boxes with the corresponding numbered security seals;
2. Ballot papers;
3. Indelible ink;
4. Sufficient voting compartments;
5. Electoral operations minutes form, with the following documents:
6. Electoral results sheet;
7. Electoral officials attendance list;
8. Confidentiality declaration to be signed by electoral officials;
9. Remarks book;
10. Voters list;
11. Additional list of voters;
12. List of voters on duty;
13. Itinerant list;
14. Tabulation of results form for public display;
15. Materials delivery form;
16. Polling station signs;
17. Advice sheet for the names of the electoral officials;
18. Large format ballot paper sample;
19. Claim and objection forms;
20. Labels for electoral officials, candidacies' agents and observers;
21. Stamp with the word "CANCELLED";
22. Stamp with the word "CLAIMED";
23. Stamp with the word "BLANK";
24. Stamp with the word "NULL AND VOID";
25. Stamp with the word "UNUSED";
26. Stamp with the word "REJECTED";
27. Stamp with the word "ABANDONED";
28. Stamp with the phrase "Parliamentary Election 2017";
29. Envelope for valid ballot papers;
30. Envelope for blank ballot papers;
31. Envelope for null and void ballot papers;
32. Envelope for ballot papers subject to claims;
33. Envelope for cancelled ballot papers;
34. Envelope for unused ballot papers;
35. Envelope for rejected ballot papers;
36. Envelope for abandoned ballot papers;
37. Complete candidate lists for all political parties and coalitions of political parties contesting the election, including the name of actual and substitute candidates;
38. Calculator;
39. Sufficient staplers, pens and nails;
40. Adhesive tape;
41. Polling station minutes form;
42. Polling center results minutes form;
43. Form for minuting the reconciliation of the tabulation minutes;
44. Ballot box delivery form from the polling center to the national tabulation center;
45. Claim and objection form;
46. Numbered security seals;
47. Ballots boxes to transport minutes and votes subject to claims;
48. Envelopes;
49. Clocks;
50. Other stationery.