



PRESS RELEASE

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YOUR VOTE IS YOUR DEMOCRATIC RIGHT

The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) has ahead of the 2018 Harmonised Elections launched a campaign to help eligible and registered voters be aware of their democratic rights in elections.

The campaign raises awareness on processes of polling, how to participate in polling and seek assistance. Ahead of the 2018 Harmonised Elections, ZEC wishes to empower the electorate to practise its democratic right and cast their vote in a peaceful and safe environment.

This campaign also works hand in hand with other election campaigns by the religious sector, civil society organisations and other commissions. Voter education of electoral processes is an on-going effort that ZEC seeks to strengthen in partnership with other electoral actors.

Chairperson of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission, said:

“.....direct quote.”

ZEC remains open to voters for any queries and assistance on toll free numbers:

..... and our website www.zec.org.zw

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Notes to the Editor:

What are Harmonised Elections?

Elections in Zimbabwe take place every five years. They are harmonized and this means citizens vote for the President, Members of Parliament and Local Councillors at the same time.

When are the 2018 Harmonised Elections taking place in Zimbabwe?

The 2018 Harmonised Elections will take place on 30 July 2018. Zimbabwe's Harmonised elections are now polling station based, meaning you must cast your vote at designated polling station indicated in your voter registration details..

What time are the Polling Stations opened and closed?

Polling time is 7am – 7pm on the day of polling. If the voter comes to the Polling Station after 7pm, they will be turned away, those standing in the que before 7pm will be allowed to vote.

When a voter arrives at their designated polling station what will happen?

Upon arriving at the Polling Station there will be separate queues for women and men. Special attention in both queues will be given to people with disabilities, elderly and pregnant and nursing mothers.

What are the steps to polling?

- i. Arrive with a national identification document in the forms of a metal or synthetic ID, a green Waiting Pass with an original photograph or a Valid Zimbabwe Passport. It is advised that identification documents be legible and in good condition.
- ii. When it is a voter's turn in the queue, a n Usher will check their fingers for indelible ink and confirms the national identification document.
- iii. The Voters Roll Officer will ask for the voter's ID to check it against the Voters Roll.
- iv. Once the voter's name has been confirmed on the Voters Roll, it will be crossed out to certify that he/she has come for voting.
- v. The voter will move to Ballot Paper Issuers, where you will be given ballots for President, National Assembly and Local Councillor. The ballot papers will be of three different colours. The officer will also explain how to fold the ballot papers.
- vi. An indelible Ink marker will be used on voter's small finger and in the case of any disability, the finger in chronological order will be marked.
- vii. Marking of the ballot: The voter will enter a voting booth where he/she will cast their votes in secrecy.
- viii. The voter then places the ballot papers in the ballot boxes labelled with the correspondent colour and exit the Polling Station.
- ix. For research purposes the age and sex statistics will be recorded.

How long should the polling process take?

Once inside the polling station the polling process should take two minutes to cast your vote. However, the length of the que will determine the time spent in the que before entering the polling station.

What happens if you are an assisted voter?

- Category of assisted voters include people with disabilities, illiterate and visually impaired
- If a voter is being assisted to mark the ballot papers and has brought a confidant, then both will enter the voting booth.
- If a voter does not have a confidant and requires assistance, then a Presiding Officer will assist the voter in the presence of two Polling Officers and a policeman as witnesses.
- In both circumstances, the assistance must be recorded by the Recording Officer.
- An assistant must be 18 years or above, not necessarily a registered voter and can only assist once.

What happens if a voters name does not appear at his/her designated polling station?

- If the name of the voter does not appear on the Voters Rolls at the designated Polling Station, the Presiding Officer will contact the Constituency Command Centre to verify the details.
- Should the name of the voter appear at a different Polling Station, other than the one of the Registration Certificate, the voter must proceed to the Polling Station where their name appear.

Who are the official people who will be present around the polling station?

At the Polling stations there will be several people with different roles. These people will be the Usher, Voters Roll Officer, ballot paper issuer, indelible ink marking officer, recording officer, Presiding Officer, the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), international and local observers, civil society observers and political party agents.

What are some of the general rules on polling day?

- Always remember that your vote is your secret.
- You may not wear any political party regalia or hold any political party posters within a 300 meter radius of a polling station
- No cameras or phones in the polling station are allowed to be used and any violation is an offence.

What happens after the polling is over?

After the closure of the polling, counting immediately commences and only designated officials are allowed to observe the process.

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