

FIJIAN ELECTIONS OFFICE
My Election, My Fiji

MEDIA HANDBOOK

2018 General Election

FIJIAN ELECTIONS OFFICE

My Election, My Fiji

VISION

Our vision is to be recognised as a leader in establishing best practices in the conduct of elections.

MISSION

Our mission is the professional and independent conduct of credible elections that enables every Fijian to participate in Fiji's democratic process.

CORE VALUES

The FEO believes in:

The Right to vote

Every citizen over the age of eighteen has the right to vote

One Person, One Vote, One Value

Every voter has one vote, with each vote being equal

Secrecy of the Ballot

Every voter has the right to vote by secret ballot

A single National Register of Voters

Every registered voter shall be listed on a single National Register of Voters

Honesty, Integrity, and Transparency

The Fijian Elections Office values honesty, integrity and transparency in all its transactions

Independence and Impartiality

The Fijian Elections Office is an independent body and shows no preference in either speech or action for any individual candidate or political party

Professionalism

The Fijian Elections Office is a professional body that adheres to the highest standards of conduct and practice

Innovation

The Fijian Elections Office aspires to introduce the most innovative solutions and practices in delivering its functions

MEDIA HANDBOOK

The background of the page is a light blue gradient. In the lower half, there are several broad, sweeping, wavy lines in various shades of blue, ranging from a pale sky blue to a deep, vibrant cerulean. These lines create a sense of motion and depth, flowing from the left side towards the right and bottom corners of the page.

This Handbook was developed by the Fijian Elections Office to raise awareness and give an overview to Accredited Media Observers on how they are to conduct themselves during the 2018 General Election. Although this Handbook substantially covers media rights and restrictions during the 2018 General Election, it is for information purposes only and it is subject to change and review by the Fijian Elections Office, if any amendments are made to any electoral laws, media laws or policies and procedures of the Fijian Elections Office.

The Fijian Elections Office will not be liable for any misinterpretation of this Handbook.

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ISBN: 978-982-9176-02-8

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1.0 MEDIA HANDBOOK INTERPRETATION

Ballot Paper	Also known as “ballot” means the paper in the form prescribed in the schedule contained in the Electoral Act 2014; which is used by a voter to cast his or her votes in an election
Broadcast	Includes any transmission, whether or not encrypted, by radio waves, satellite or other means of telecommunication for reception by the public.
Call Centre	A call facility established by the FEO to receive results from Presiding Officers [PO] at all polling stations before it is submitted to the National Results Centre.
Certificate of Registration	The certificate that MIDA registered media organizations and/or freelance journalists receive upon the successful receipt of their applications for registration for the Fijian General Election 2018.
Counting Process	The steps or process involved in the counting of votes.
Electoral Advertisement	Refers to a headline or heading to each article, advertisement, publication, broadcast or notice in the publication or broadcast that contains electoral matters.
Electoral Commission	The Electoral Commission continued or established under section 75 of the 2013 Constitution. It is the body that is responsible for the registration of voters and the conduct of free and fair elections in accordance with the written law governing election.
FEO Assigned Areas	Any area identified by the FEO that can be accessed by accredited media observers on Election Day.
FEO Offices	Any FEO office that is operational during the Election period.
Freelance Journalists	A self-employed reporter, broadcaster, editor or newspaper writer, who is not employed continuously but hired only for special assignments.

Handbill	A small printed advertisement or other notice distributed by hand. For example, flyer, leaflet, handout, brochure, pamphlet, fact sheet etc.
Media Industry Development Authority [MIDA]	Means the Media Industry Development Authority established under section 3 of the Media Industry Development Act, 2010.
National Count Centre	The building, structure, enclosure or part of a building, structure or enclosure, which is identified by the FEO as the place where Pre-Poll and Postal Ballot Papers are counted.
National Results Centre	An area designated by the Supervisor of Elections [SoE] for the conduct of the process for tabulation of results.
National Results Tally	The form prepared by the Supervisor of Elections [SoE], which shall record the total number of votes cast for each candidate at all the polling stations.
Observers	Any person, organization or entity appointed or invited by the Minister Responsible for Elections to observe for any election on such terms of reference as determined by the said Minister.
Pamphlets	A small booklet or leaflet containing information or arguments about elections.
Police Officers	The Police Officers on duty on Election Day, authorized by the SoE.
Polling Agent	A person appointed by an independent candidate or political party [EA s45] who may be present at a polling station at any one time.
Polling Station	A building, structure, vehicle, vessel or enclosure, or a part of a building, structure, vehicle, vessel or enclosure, which is identified for the purpose of taking votes during polling.
Polling Venue	A location that has one or more polling stations at that location.

Postal Voting	<p>Is one of three methods of voting in Fiji. This method of voting is only eligible for Fijians who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Living outside of Fiji or will be outside of Fiji on Election Day; (b) Seriously ill and therefore will not be able to travel from his or her place of living to his or her assigned polling station; (c) Under pre-trial detention or sentence of imprisonment; (d) Precluded from attending a polling station because of their religious beliefs; (e) Likely to be away from his or her usual place of residence and in a place not convenient to his or her assigned polling station due to work commitment on Election Day.
Postal Voting Verification Venue	The building, structure, vehicle, enclosure or vessel or part of a building, structure, vehicle, vessel or enclosure, which is assigned by the Fijian Elections Office [FEO] as a place to verify postal ballot papers against the record of each postal voter's signature and date of birth.
Presiding Officer [PO]	A person appointed by the SoE to preside at each polling station. They are responsible for the orderly conduct of the voting and counting process at the polling station.
Protocol of Results	The form which records the number of votes cast for each candidate at a polling station.
Publisher	Includes the editor-in-chief of a magazine or newspaper and like publications howsoever disseminated, and any person acting in that capacity, but does not include any document published in the course of duty by the Government Printer.
Spoiled Ballot Papers	A voter's ballot paper which the voter has inadvertently dealt with in such a way that it cannot be conveniently or validly used as a ballot paper.

Tendered Ballot Papers

Those ballot papers marked and cast by a voter who has represented himself or herself to be a particular voter named on a voter list; applied for a ballot instead of being put into a ballot box, the ballot paper (called “tendered ballot”) must be sealed by the voter in a special envelope and given to the presiding officer who must place the envelope in a separate marked “tendered ballot papers”.

Voting Process

The process involved when a voter casts his/her ballot paper.

The background is a solid blue color with a complex geometric pattern of overlapping triangles and polygons. A faint, large compass rose is visible in the background, with its center near the top center. Faint, semi-transparent text is also visible, including "and that my vote co" in the upper left and "electio" in the lower right.

MEDIA HANDBOOK ABBREVIATIONS

2.0

MEDIA HANDBOOK ABBREVIATIONS

EA	Electoral Act
EC	Electoral Commission
FEO	Fijian Elections Office
MIDA	Media Industry Development Authority
PDW	Polling Day Workers
PO	Presiding Officer
SoE	Supervisor of Elections

FIJIAN ELECTIONS OFFICE

My Election, My Fiji

ACCREDITED MEDIA Code of Conduct

Every person who participates in the General Election as an accredited media personnel must read and understand this Code of Conduct before signing the declaration on the PO's Record Book.

- 1 I understand that I have to comply with the Electoral Act, 2014 and any other existing electoral laws.
- 2 I will follow the instructions of the Presiding Officer.
- 3 I will maintain strict political impartiality at all times.
- 4 I will make my judgments based on high standards of accurate information and apply impartiality in analysis, and I will base all my reporting on factual and verifiable information or evidence.
- 5 I will **not** obstruct any of the electoral processes.
- 6 I will **not** take photographs, footage, audio or interviews without the approval of the Supervisor of Elections.



INTRODUCTION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Elections are an important part of the democratic process of any country. The 2013 Constitution of the Republic of Fiji requires the Fijian Elections Office [FEO] to carry out a free and fair election in line with international best practices in accordance with the legal framework in place.

The FEO acknowledges the presence of media during the electoral process. Media organisations play an important role in keeping everyone updated.

This handbook was written to help media organisations and freelance journalists, in upholding the highest level of accuracy, impartiality and professionalism and compliance with the laws of Fiji while reporting on the 2018 General Election.

ACCREDITATION PROCESS

5.0 ACCREDITATION PROCESS

All media organisations and freelance journalists, situated locally, regionally and internationally that wish to report on the 2018 General Election must be registered with the Media Industry Development Authority of Fiji [MIDA] prior to applying for accreditation with the FEO.

5.1 APPLICATION TO MIDA

MIDA does registration in two (2) categories:

- i. **Fijian Media Registered with MIDA:**
The CEO or Editor of the media organisation must submit the list of names of their representatives on their company letterhead and endorse it with his/her signature together with the company stamp.



Note: Application must be submitted to MIDA. For more information please refer to www.mida.org.fj.

- ii. **Overseas Media and Freelance Journalist:**
A supporting letter from the organisation must be submitted together with the list of names of representatives that will be covering the 2018 General Election with each of their respective biodata.

If the application is successful, MIDA will issue a Certificate of Registration to the applicant. A copy of the Certificate of Registration and list of approved representatives will be submitted to FEO by MIDA.

5.2 APPLICATION TO FEO

Once the media organisation or freelance journalist obtains the Certificate of Registration from MIDA, it must complete the 2018 General Election Media Accreditation Form which must be accompanied with the MIDA Certificate of Registration and one (1) passport sized photo (125mm x 125mm).



Note: Each representative in the media organisation must individually complete a form.

Upon receipt of each application, the FEO will make a determination within forty eight hours (48hrs) and advise the applicant accordingly.



ACCREDITED MEDIA OBSERVERS

6.0 ACCREDITED MEDIA OBSERVER

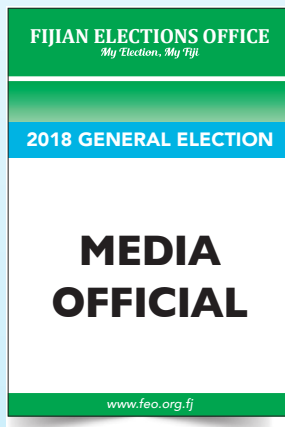
Once the application form is approved, the media organisation or freelance journalist will be accredited and will be able to report on the 2018 General Election from various FEO assigned areas.

As an accredited media observer, it will be the responsibility of the media organisation or freelance journalist to ensure its representatives report on the 2018 General Election accurately, impartially and professionally.

Each representative of the media organisation or freelance journalist will be individually provided with an accredited media badge. FEO will inform media organisations or freelance journalist of the collection time.

6.1 ACCREDITED MEDIA BADGE

An accredited media representative must wear the accredited media badge at all times when reporting on the 2018 General Election from the Postal Voting Verification Venue, Polling Venues, Polling Stations, FEO offices or warehouses, National Count Centre, National Results Centre and any other FEO assigned areas.



6.2 DESIGNATED AREA FOR ACCREDITED MEDIA OBSERVERS

There will be designated areas for accredited media observers at the Postal Voting Verification Venue, Polling Venues, Polling Stations, FEO offices or warehouses, National Count Centre, National Results Centre and any other FEO assigned areas.

Although media observers have been accredited, it is prohibited for them to take photos or videos inside the Polling Station, without the prior approval of the Supervisor of Election [SoE].

6.3 AUTHORIZED PERSONS

Only authorized personnel are allowed inside the Postal Voting Verification Venue, Polling Venues, Polling Stations, FEO offices or warehouses, National Count Centre, National Results Centre and any other FEO assigned areas.

This includes the Electoral Commissioners, SoE, one (1) Polling Agent from each party or independent candidates, International Observers, Police Officers on duty if requested by the Presiding Officer, and any other person authorized by the SoE.

All authorized persons are issued accredited official identity badges prior to observing electoral processes.

Following Accreditation, Accredited media observers will be permitted to enter these areas where practically possible.

The background is a solid blue color with a complex geometric pattern of overlapping triangles and polygons. A faint, large compass rose is visible in the background, with its center near the top center. Faint, semi-transparent text is also visible, including "and that my vote counts" in the upper left and "Review" in the lower right. A dark, horizontal, brush-stroke-like line is positioned near the bottom of the page.

ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND MEDIA

Restriction on Opinion Polls

It is **UNLAWFUL** to publish results of any election-related opinion on the polls, 1 week prior to polling day and on polling day until close of poll at all stations.



Note: Any person who fails to follow restrictions on opinion polls will be liable upon conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or both.

48 hours Media Blackout

Forty eight (48) hours before Election Day, on Election Day and until close of poll at polling stations, it is **PROHIBITED** for any media organisation to publish, print or broadcast any campaign advertisement, debate, opinion or interview on any election issue or on any political party or candidate.

The **ONLY** exception to the blackout is if the media organization has obtained prior approval from MIDA.



Note: If any media organisation fails to follow the 48-hour media blackout, the Editor, Publisher or the owner of the media organisation will be liable upon a conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 5 years.

Heading to Electoral Advertisements

It is the responsibility of any Editor, Publisher and Proprietor of a media organisation to ensure that the words “electoral advertisement” are published or broadcast as a headline or heading to each article, advertisement, publication, broadcast or notice in the publication, or broadcast that contains electoral matters and is paid for or for which any reward, compensation or promise of reward or compensation is or is to be made.



Note: The Editor, Publisher and Proprietor of a media organisation who fails to comply with the headings to electoral advertisements will be liable upon a conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or to both.

Printing and Publishing of Electoral Advertisements, Notices, etc.

Media organisations must ensure when printing, publishing, broadcasting or distributing or causing, permitting or authorizing to be printed, published, broadcast or distributed an electoral advertisement, handbill, pamphlets, notice or electoral audio or video recording that it has the following:

- i. Name and residential address of the person who authorized the electoral advertisement, handbill, pamphlet, notice or electoral audio or video recording must be apparent; and
- ii. In the case of an electoral advertisement, handbill, pamphlet or notice that is printed elsewhere than in a newspaper, the name and place of business of the printer must be apparent.



Note: Any media organisation who fails to follow this printing and publishing of electoral advertisements, notices and etc. will be liable upon a conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or both.

7.1 MEDIA RIGHTS AND RESTRICTIONS

Rights	Restrictions
Have the right to view that the Ballot Box is empty before the seals are placed at the start of the poll.	Must not interfere with or attempt to influence any voter within a Polling Station.
Can sit or stand or walk around the designated area.	Must not communicate with a voter inside the Polling Station.
Can bring into the Polling Station the Media Handbook, writing pad, writing pen or pencils and any other materials approved by the SoE.	Must not use any mobile phones or any other electronic devices while observing electoral processes.
Can lodge a complaint with the Presiding Officer or Officer in Charge (Refer to the Electoral Complaints Section).	Must not conduct any interview inside the Polling Station, National Count Centre or National Results Centre without the prior approval of the SoE.
Is entitled to observe the verification of Postal Ballots, voting process, counting process and tabulation of results.	Must not take videos or pictures inside the Polling Station, National Count Centre or National Results Centre without the prior approval of the SoE.
Is entitled to a copy of the Final National Results Tally and Candidate Allocation Form.	Must not interfere with the electoral processes or the authority of the Presiding Officer or Officer in Charge.
	Must not wear any badge or emblem of a political party or independent candidate at the Polling Venue, Polling Station, National Count Centre or National Results Centre.



Note: Breach of any restrictions would result in a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or both or to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 10 years or both.

ELECTION PROCESSES

8.0 FIJI'S ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The Constitution of the Republic of Fiji 2013 had introduced a new electoral system for Fiji known as the Open List Proportional Representation System. Below is a brief differentiation between the Electoral System pre- 2013 and now:

	2006	2014/2018 Onward
Type of Electoral System	Alternative Voting	Open List Proportional Representation
Constituencies	71	1
Constituency delineation	Ethnic/Race based	One person, one vote, one value
Members of Parliament	71	2014 [50] 2018 [51]
Period of voting	Seven [7] days	One [1] day
Where to vote?	Vote anywhere	Limited to Polling Station assigned to voter
How to vote?	Alternative voting – above the line or below the line	Either 'circle' or 'tick' or 'cross' the candidate number of your choice
Ballot papers	Constituency papers with names and party symbols	Single ballot paper with only numbers of candidates
Counting	Centralized counting	All votes counted at Polling Station except pre-poll and postal
Threshold for seat	Nil	At least 5% of the total valid votes

8.1 METHODS OF VOTING

Postal Voting

A registered voter who is living outside of Fiji or will be outside of Fiji on Election Day, is unable to travel to his/her Polling Station due to serious illness or infirmity, under pre-trial detention or sentence of imprisonment, precluded from attending the Polling Station due to religious belief or will be away from his/her usual place of residence and in a place not convenient due to work commitments will be able to apply for postal voting.

FEO will start receiving postal voting applications once the date of the Election is announced and will close twenty one (21) days prior to Election Day.

Once an application is approved, the FEO will send postal voting packages to postal voters. The deadline for receipt of Postal Ballots by the FEO is no later than 6:00pm on Election Day.



Note: Postal Voting Package

Before the Election Day, the SoE will prominently display within the FEO, a written notice of the day, time and place at which Postal Ballot Papers will be verified.

The process of verification is as follows:

- i. Declaration Form on the Transmission Envelope is checked to verify whether the voter indicated in the Declaration Form is a registered postal voter.
- ii. The signature or the thumbprint on the Declaration Form is then checked with the signature or thumbprint on the Postal Voting Application Form.
- iii. If there is consistency in the signature or thumbprint, the Transmission Envelope is opened and Secret Envelope removed and placed in the Ballot Box.

The Transmission Envelope will be rejected only if:

- i. There is inconsistency in the signature or thumbprint.
- ii. Unsigned or unmarked Declaration Form.
- iii. No Secret Envelope.

Postal Voting Declaration Form

FIJIAN ELECTIONS OFFICE

Postal Vote Declaration Form

Instructions

- Use a tick ☒ where appropriate.
- Use black or blue pen only.
- Use BLOCK LETTERS to complete form.

1. Your Name Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Ms. ☐

Family Name	
First Name(s)	

2. Date Of Birth:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Date / Month / Year

3. Voter Number:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

4. Residential Address:

--

5. I solemnly declare that the information provided herein is true to the best of my knowledge and that the enclosed Ballot Paper is cast on my own free will and in secret and I make an undertaking that I will not vote or attempt to vote on 17 September 2014 at the polling station to mislead the Fiji Elections Office.

Signature/ Mark of Voter: _____ Date: _____

For Official Use Only:

Date Rec	Name of Staff	Admit/ Reject	Signature	Date



Note: Postal Ballot Papers will be counted at the National Count Centre.

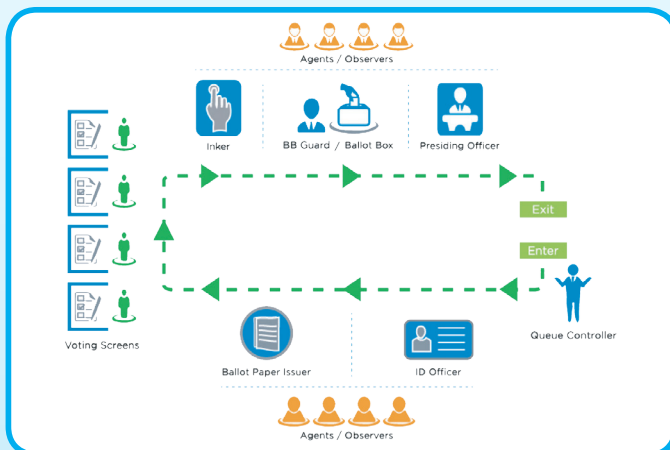
Pre-Poll Voting

A registered voter may apply to vote in advance if he/she resides in a remote place, is a resident of a nursing home or health care facility, is a member of the disciplined forces or is under pre-trial detention or sentence of imprisonment.







The FEO will also conduct pre-poll voting in places where it is not sufficient to establish a polling station or in another place approved by the EC.

Within seven (7) days after the close of nominations, the EC will give the “Notice of Pre-Poll” schedule which contains the venue(s) where pre-poll voting will take place and the date and hours between which the Presiding Officer [PO] will conduct pre-poll voting.

Pre-Poll Venue Setup



Pre-Poll Polling Day Workers [PDWS]

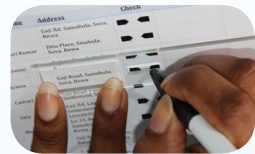
Presiding Officer	In charge of the Polling Venue.	
Inside Queue Controller	Stands at the entrance of the Polling Venue and is responsible for checking the voter's finger for ink prior to giving out the Voter Instructions Booklet.	
ID Officer	Identification Officer confirms the voters ID and draws a line joining the (2) arrowheads in the check - off column before allowing the voter to sign or place a mark beside his/her name in the Voter List.	
Ballot Paper Issuer	Issues Ballot Paper and Secret Envelope to the voter.	
Inker	Ensures the voter's index finger or little finger of the left hand is marked with indelible ink prior to the voter placing the Secret Envelope inside the Ballot Box.	
Ballot Box Guard	Responsible for guarding the Ballot Box inside the Polling Station and for taping the opening of the Secret Envelope before it is placed in the the Ballot Box.	

Pre-Poll Voting Steps

Inside Queue Controller checks the voter's fingers for ink before giving the Voter Instruction Booklet to the voter.



Voter shows VoterCard or photo ID to ID Officer. The ID Officer will confirm the voters ID before drawing a line to join the two (2) arrowheads in the check off column of the Voter List.



Voter signs the Voter List in the 'Signature' column of the Voter List.



Ballot Paper Issuer explains to the voter the method of marking the Ballot Paper and advises the voter to place the Ballot Paper in the Secret Envelope before it is placed in the Ballot Box. The Ballot Paper Issuer issues the voter with a Ballot Paper and a Secret Envelope.



Voter goes to the voting screen and looks through the Voter Instruction Booklet to identify the number of the candidate he or she would like to vote for. The voter will have to either **Circle** or **Tick** or **Cross** the number on the Ballot Paper. The voter then folds the Ballot Paper and puts it inside the Secret Envelope.



Ink Officer Issuer ensures that the voter's index finger or little finger on the left hand is dipped in the ink bottle.



The Ballot Box Guard tapes the opening of the Secret Envelope using a special tape. The voter puts the Secret Envelope in the Ballot Box.



Voter leaves the Polling Venue.





Note: Pre-Poll Ballot Papers will be counted at the National Count Centre.

Media observers can observe and report on the pre-poll voting and counting processes.

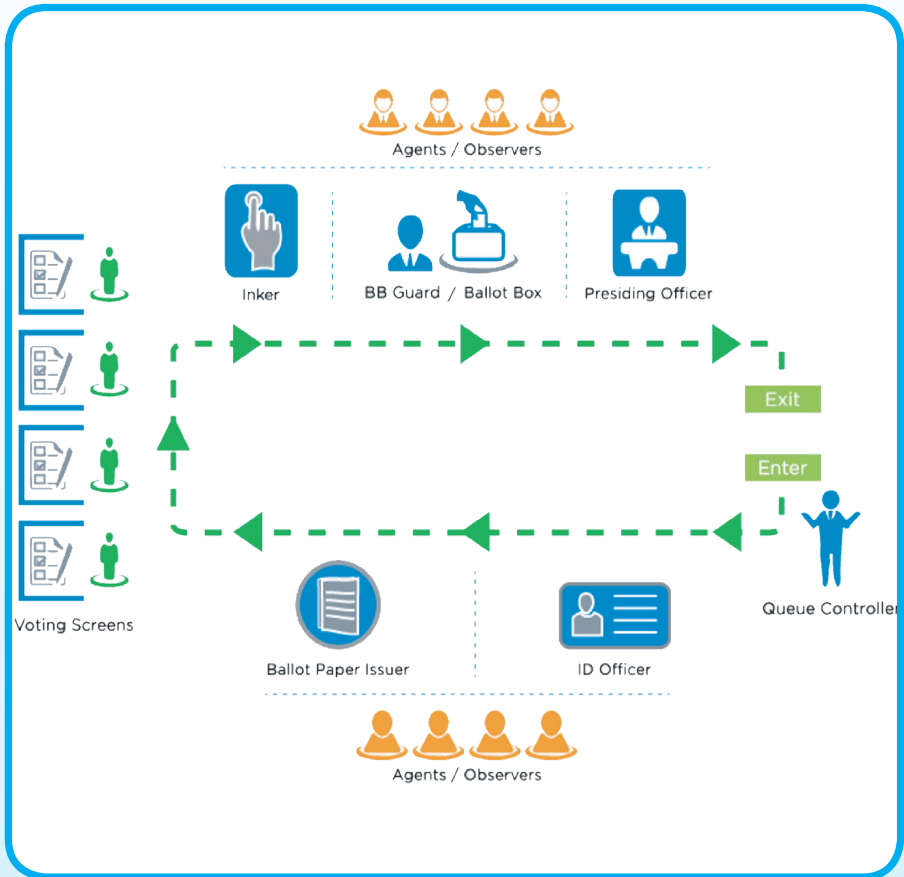
The background is a solid blue color with a complex, low-poly geometric pattern of various shades of blue. A thick, dark purple brushstroke is visible, sweeping across the lower third of the image from left to right.

ELECTION DAY









9.0 Election Day

Polling starts at 7:30am and must immediately close after the last voter in the queue has voted at 6:00pm.

Polling Station Setup



Election Day – Polling Day Workers [PDW]

Venue Queue Controller	Stands at the entrance of the Polling Venue and is responsible for directing voters to the correct Polling Station.	
Presiding Officer	In charge of the Polling Station.	
Assistant Presiding Officer	Provides assistance when required to the Presiding Officer and the Election Officials.	
Inside Queue Controller	Stands at the entrance of the Polling Station and is responsible for checking the voter's finger for ink prior to giving out the Voter Instruction Booklet	
ID Officer	Identification Officer confirms the person's ID and draws a line joining the two (2) arrowheads in the check-off column before allowing the voter to sign or place a mark beside his/her name in the Voter List.	
Ballot Paper Issuer	Issues Ballot Paper to the voter.	
Inker	Ensures the voter's index finger or the little finger of the left hand is marked with indelible ink prior to the voter placing the Ballot Paper inside the Ballot Box.	
Ballot Box Guard	Responsible for guarding the Ballot Box inside the Polling Station.	

Election Day Voting Steps

Voter is directed to correct Polling Station by Venue Queue Controller.



Inside Queue Controller checks the voter's finger for ink before giving the Voter Instruction Booklet to the voter.



Voter shows VoterCard or photo ID to ID Officer. The ID Officer will confirm the voter's ID before drawing a line to join the two (2) arrowheads in the check - off column of the Voter List.



Voter signs the Voter List in the 'Signature' column of the Voter List .



Ballot Paper Issuer explains to the voter the method of marking the Ballot Paper and gives one (1) Ballot Paper to the voter.



Voter goes to the voting screen and looks through the Voter Instruction Booklet to identify the number of the candidate he or she would like to vote for. The voter will have to either **Circle** or **Tick** or **Cross** the number on the Ballot Paper.



Ink Officer Issuer marks voter's index finger or little finger on the left hand.



Voter puts Ballot Paper in the Ballot Box.



Voter leaves the Polling Station.



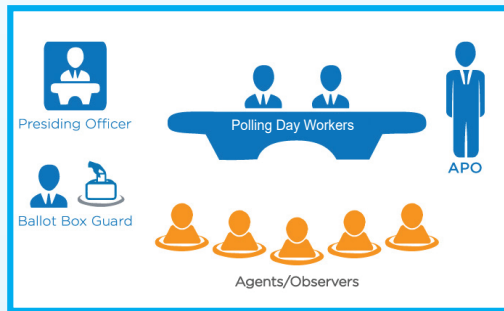
9.1 COUNTING OF BALLOT PAPERS

On Election Day, all Ballot Papers for each Polling Station will be counted immediately after the close of poll.

However, the Postal Ballot Papers and Pre-Poll Ballot Papers will be counted at the National Count Centre at the date and time prescribed by the SoE.

Media observers will be notified when counting will start at the National Count Centre.

Counting Station Setup



Step 1:

Reconciliation of all Ballot Papers received by the Polling Station.

Number of voters' signatures on Voter List + Unused Ballot Papers + Spoiled Ballot Papers + Tendered Ballot Papers = Total number of Ballot Papers received by the Polling Station.

Ballot papers received from FEO's inventory provided by FEO		50
after your check count papers must be checked prior to polling day		0
papers RECEIVED from (if applicable)		0
+ B + C		50
of Ballot Papers (complete this table after the close of Poll)		
voter signatures on Voter List	30	TOTAL 50
unused ballot papers	19	
polling ballot papers	1	
tendered ballot papers	0	
+ F + G + H		50

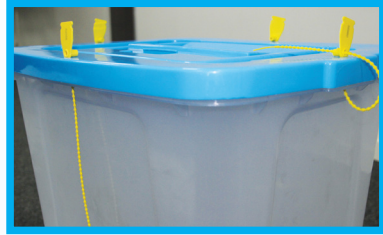


Note: If there is any discrepancy in the reconciliation of Ballot Papers, a recount will be conducted.

Step 2:

Five (5) seals on the Ballot Box are checked and verified. If it reconciles, it is opened.

If there is any discrepancy in the Ballot Box seals, the Ballot Box is not opened and is declared to be quarantined.



Note: ONLY the SoE can authorize quarantined Ballot Boxes to be opened.

Step 3:

Reconciliation of the number of Ballot Papers in the Ballot Box with the total number of signatures on the Voter List.



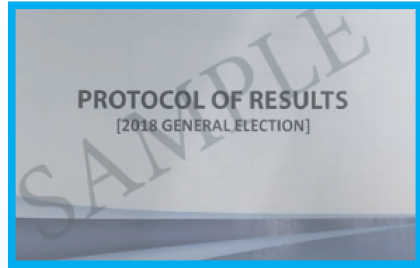
Step 4:

Ballot Papers will be unfolded and then sorted into column number ranges as marked on the Ballot Paper before counting Ballot Papers for each candidate. Counting of all the Ballot Papers in each column range including the invalid Ballot Papers. Totaling each column to reconcile the total number of signatures on the Voter List.



Step 5:

Sorting of Ballot Papers by candidate number, proceeding column by column. Counting the Ballot Papers for each candidates number that has received votes. The results are entered in the Protocol of Results worksheet in the PO's Record Book.

**Step 6:**

Once the Presiding Officer [PO] is satisfied that all the numbers on the Protocol of Results worksheet in the PO's Record Book are correct, the results are transferred in to the Protocol of Results.

9.2 DECLARATION OF RESULTS

After the results of the Polling Station are recorded in the Protocol of Results, the Presiding Officer [PO] will sign off, witnessed by any three (3) of the Election Observers or Polling Agents.

[illegible]

Once the Protocol of Results is witnessed, the Presiding Officer [PO] will call the Call Centre to transmit the results recorded in the Protocol of Results.

From the Call Centre, the results are submitted to the National Results Centre where results from all Polling Stations and the National Count Centre are received and released as provisional results, until counting concludes for the General Election and the last result is submitted to the National Results Centre.

Subsequently, the Presiding Officer [PO] will place the original copy of the Protocol of Results inside the Tamper Evident Envelope and this will be transported to the National Count Centre after the Polling Day Workers pack-up from the Polling Station.

The second (2nd) copy, which is pink in color, is detached and placed in a publicly accessible area outside the Polling Station.

The third (3rd) copy, which is green in color, is placed inside the Ballot Box for safe keeping.

9.3 FINAL NATIONAL RESULTS TALLY

Once all results from the Polling Stations and the National Count Centre are received, the National Results Centre will prepare the Final National Results Tally and this is signed off by the SoE.

The SoE will then provide the Final National Results Tally to the EC who will allocate seats to the candidates who have been elected as Members of Parliament.

The Final National Results Tally will also be publicly displayed and made available to the Media observers upon request.

9.4 ALLOCATION OF SEATS

The EC will receive the Final National Results Tally from the SoE which contains:

- i. the total number of votes received by each candidate;
- ii. the total number of votes received by each political party; and
- iii. Party Lists (arranged in descending order with the party candidate receiving the most votes on the top of the list and the one receiving least votes at the bottom).

The Electoral Commission will then calculate the total number of votes received for each candidate and each political party before applying the 5% threshold.

A political party or an independent candidate who does not receive 5% of the total number of votes cast will not qualify for any seats in Parliament.

Of those that have qualified, the EC will determine the number of seats to be allocated to the remaining parties and independent candidates by applying the “d’Hondt Rule”.

The total number of votes gained by each party is divided by one (1), then by two (2), then by three (3) and so forth. For an independent candidate, the number of votes is divided only by one (1).

The EC will then determine which candidates of each party or independent candidate are to be allocated one of the fifty one (51) seats in parliament.

9.5 ELECTORAL COMPLAINTS

In conducting observations, disagreements may arise between the media observers and Election Officials.

To lodge any complaint, the media observers must complete the Complaints Form, which can be collected from Presiding Officers [PO] on Election Day or downloaded from the FEO website, www.feo.org.fj. A copy of the Complaints Form can also be found in this handbook.

The completed Complaint Form is to be submitted directly to the SoE or to the Presiding Officer [PO] on Election Day.

Any complaints submitted to the SoE must be directed to the following addresses:

Hand Delivered

Supervisor of Elections, Fijian Elections Office,
59-63 High Street, Toorak, Suva.

Post Mail

Supervisor of Elections,
Fijian Elections Office,
PO Box 2528, Government Buildings, Suva.

Email

info@feo.org.fj

FIJIAN ELECTIONS OFFICE

59 - 63 High Street, Toorak
P. O. Box 2528, Government Buildings, Suva

Phone : 3316 225
Fax : 3316 026

www.feo.org.fj

2018 General Elections – Media Registration Form

Sample

For official use only:

Date of application: _____

Application number: _____

Part A: Details of Applicant

First name		Last name	
Title (Mr./Ms./Mrs.)		Date of birth	
Passport No		Citizenship	
Date of issue		Expiring date	
Valid ID (if applicable)		Registered in the country?	
Residential address:			
Work phone		E-mail	
Mobile phone		Position title	

My Election, My Fiji

(Tear Along The Perforated Line)

Part B: Details of Employer

Name of media

Type of media

Web address

Office address:

Head of organization's name:

Head of organization's email and contact

(Tear Along The Perforated Line)

Terms and Conditions for Media Accreditation

Only those members of the media or press who represent genuine media organizations in print, photo, radio, TV, film, news agencies and online media and have passed the accreditation process in Fiji, will be granted access to Fiji's General Election upon presentation of valid press credentials including:-

1. Completed accreditation form
2. Photocopy of passport/national ID card (compulsory)
3. Police clearance [may be applicable]

Undertaking

Media representatives/personnel who have been accredited to cover the 2018 General Election must read and understand the attached Code of Conduct for the Media and must sign an undertaking to follow the code.

1. I have read and understood the Code of Conduct for Media that was provided to me. I agree that I will follow the Code of Conduct and all of my activities as a media representative will be conducted completely in accordance with it.

- 1. I have no conflicts of interest either politically, economically or any other that will interfere with my ability to report and be an impartial observer of the election.
- 2. I will maintain strict political impartiality at all times. I will make my judgments based on high standards of accurate information and apply impartiality in analysis, and I will base all my reporting on factual and verifiable information or evidence.
- 3. I will not obstruct the election process. I will respect and uphold the laws of Fiji and the authority of the Election Officials and will maintain a respectful attitude toward the electoral and other State authorities. I will maintain proper personal behavior and respect for others, exercise sound judgment in personal interactions and observe the highest level of professional conduct at all times.

Signed: _____

Full name: _____ **[Insert passport photo here]**

Date: _____

Checklist of documents to be submitted:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Official use only
Certificate of registration from MIDA	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Passport size photo	

Official use only

Approved/Declined

Reasons if declined: _____

General Information:

1. Costs and Funding

All costs associated for Media representatives and organizations to observe and report on the Fijian Election are to be met by the body that nominates or employs the Media representative or organisation. This includes any internal travel within Fiji. The Fijian Government accepts no responsibility for any costs incurred by any Media representative or organisation.

2. Visas and Immigration

Media representatives and organizations are to ensure that they have the correct visas and or immigration clearance to enter Fiji.

3. Accreditation Documents

All media representatives and organizations, having obtained registration from the Media Industry Development Authority, will need to visit the Fijian Elections Office in Suva to be registered and receive their accreditation documents and an identity tag.

4. Observance of Code of Conduct

To remain accredited observers must conduct themselves within the attached code of conduct.

5. Loss of Accreditation

Media representatives and organizations will lose their accreditation should they, in the opinion of the Fijian Elections Office or the Electoral Commission or any State Authority, breach the code of conduct.

(Tear Along The Perforated Line)

COMPLAINT FORM

Fill in ALL information below. Do not leave blanks. See instructions to fill out form (on back).

Type of Complaint: (Tick one)

☐ Voter Registration ☐ Registration of Political Parties ☐ Campaign
☐ Postal Voting ☐ Pre-Polling ☐ Counting ☐ Polling Day

Where did you submit this complaint?

Date submitted:

Are you submitting this complaint on behalf of a Candidate? (Circle one)

YES NO

IF YES, provide candidate's name:

Are you a Polling Agent? (Circle One)

YES NO

Complainant: Who is submitting Complaint?

Name:

Address:

Telephone No:

Are you? (Circle One):

Female Male

Voter Registration No.:

Details of Complaint:

Date and time of incident:

Location of Incident or Allegation:

(Tear Along The Perforated Line)

Describe Incident or Allegations in Detail (attach additional page if more space is required):

Are there witnesses to the incident? (Circle One) **YES NO**

If, YES, what is their name and contact number?

Do you have any information or evidence to provide? (Circle One) **YES NO**

If, YES, please attach description with this form.

Affirmation: By submitting this form, you agree that the information and allegations you wrote on this form to be accurate and you reasonably believe that a violation of any of these Acts: Electoral Act 2014, Political Parties Act 2013 and Electoral (Voter Registration) Act 2012 has occurred.

_____	_____	_____
Print Name of Complainant	Print Name of Witness	Witness's Signature

_____ **Complainant's Signature & Date**

(Tear Along The Perforated Line)

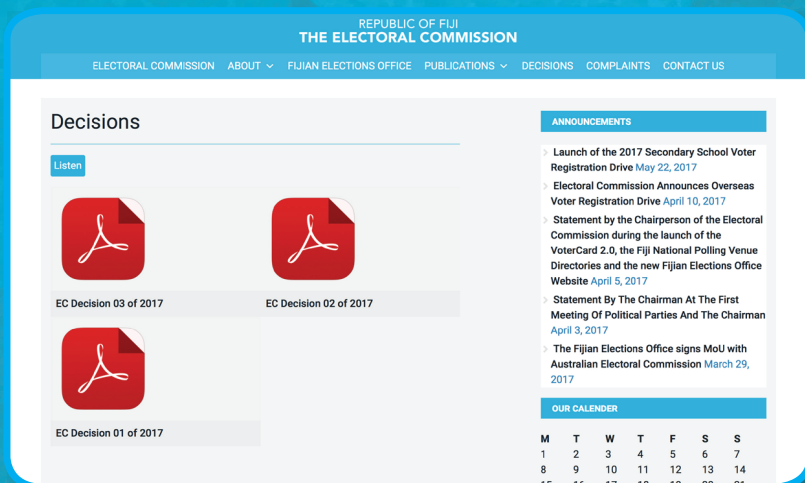
FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

 www.feo.org.fj



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ELECTORAL COMMISSION VISIT:

 www.electoralcommission.org.fj



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Postal Voting

1. What is the 'Register of Postal Voters'?

It is a register which consists of the names and voter number of all people that are registered as a postal voter.

2. When can the verification of the Postal Ballot Papers begin?

The verification of the returned Postal Ballot Papers can begin seven [7] days prior to the Election Day.

3. When does FEO start sending the Postal Packages of Postal Voters?

Once the SoE has approved the Postal Voting Applications of applicants, their Postal Packages are sent thereafter.

It is, therefore, imperative for applicants who are applying for Postal Voters to adhere to the Postal Voting time lines given to avoid late submission and, ultimately, invalidation of their postal votes.

Pre-Poll Voting

1. Is there a standard Polling Venue setup for pre-poll voting?

The layout of the Polling Venue will depend on the shape and size of the room. However, it is prudent that all Polling Venues for pre-poll voting are set up as per the approved layout in this Handbook.

2. What is the difference between pre-poll voting process and Election Day voting process?

The voting process for voters of pre-poll voting is the same as the voting process on Election Day. However, the only change to the voting process would be the placing of Secret Envelopes in the Ballot Box. For pre-poll voting, after the voters have marked the Ballot Papers they must:

- i. Fold the Ballot Paper;
- ii. Insert it into the Secret Envelope;
- iii. Seal it; and
- iiii. Put the Sealed Envelope in the Ballot Box.

3. How will the Sensitive and Non Sensitive materials be transported to the National Count Centre?

The sensitive and non-sensitive materials will be transported in the mode of transport approved by the SoE. For security purposes the Fiji Police Force will accompany the transport of the Sensitive and Non-Sensitive Materials.

Election Day

1. What if a voter's finger is already marked with indelible ink?

If the voter's finger is already marked with indelible ink he or she has voted and therefore will not be issued with a Ballot Paper.

2. What if a voter has revealed or announced the content of his or her Ballot Paper inside the Polling Station?

Any voter, who does so, will have his or her Ballot Paper confiscated and invalidated by the Presiding Officer, provided it has not yet been inserted in the Ballot Box.

3. What if a voter who has not voted has had his or her name marked off on the Voter List?

The applicant is, upon being substantiated with proof of identification that he or she is on the Voter List and showing that he or she is not marked on any finger with the indelible substance, entitled to mark a Ballot Paper in the same manner as any other voter, but instead of being put into a Ballot Box, the Ballot Paper (called 'Tendered Ballot') will be sealed by the voter in a special envelope and given to the Presiding Officer who will place the envelope in a separate packet marked 'Tendered Ballot Papers'. The Ballot Paper will not be counted unless

ordered by the Court.

4. Can the Presiding Officer assist any voter?

If any voter at a Polling Station is illiterate or is incapacitated by blindness or any physical reason and cannot cast a vote on his or her own, the voter can request the Presiding Officer to assist him or her to cast a vote. The Presiding Officer will ensure that one other Polling Day Worker is present to witness the voting process.

5. Can a voter get another Ballot Paper if he or she has spoiled the first Ballot Paper which was issued to him or her?

A voter who has inadvertently dealt with a Ballot Paper in such a way that it cannot be conveniently or validly used as a Ballot Paper may, on giving it to the Presiding Officer, get another Ballot Paper to replace it. The Spoiled Ballot Paper, in the presence of the voter will be cancelled by the Presiding Officer by writing or stamping the word 'Cancelled' across its face, marking his or her initials on it and placing it in an envelope marked 'Spoiled Ballot Paper' and sealing it. A voter will then receive only one (1) replacement Ballot paper. If the voter spoils the Ballot Paper again he or she will not be issued with another replacement Ballot Paper.

6. Can amendments be made to the Protocol of Results?

Changes to errors can be made to the Protocol of Results, but they must be made in the presence of witnesses including Polling Agents or Observers.

GENERAL QUERIES

1. What is a '*Writ*'?

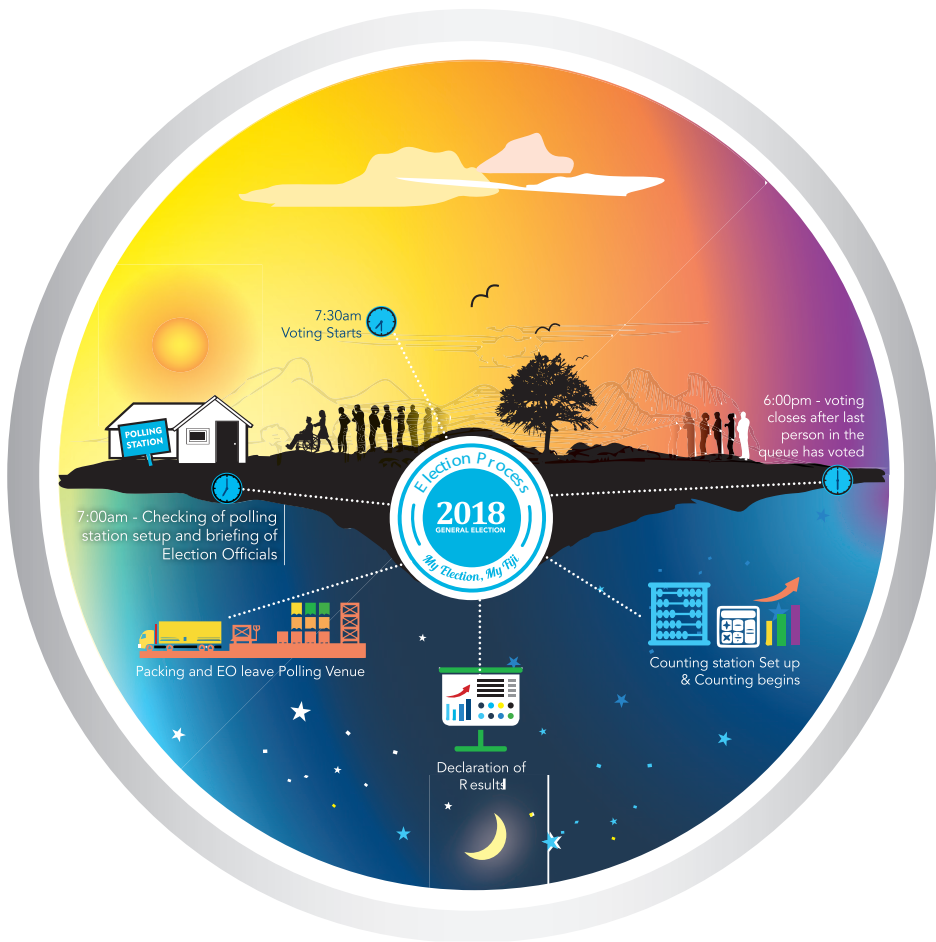
'Writ' means the *writ* for the election of members of Parliament, issued by the President under section 59 of the Constitution. The *Writ* will include the number of members of Parliament to be returned at election, date on or before which the *Writ* is returnable to the President, date, time and place at which nomination of candidates for the election are to be received and the Election date.

2. On Election Day, is it Compulsory for media observers to adorn clothing to indicate the media organization they represent?

It is advisable for media observers to wear clothing that indicates which media organisation they represent but it is not compulsory. Media Observer may wear any comfortable and decent clothing provided the clothing, apparel or accessory does not display or show support for any candidate or political party. However, it is compulsory that the Accredited Media badge is worn at all times when within the vicinity of a Polling Venue.

NOTES:

This image shows a full page of blank, lined paper. It features approximately 20 horizontal blue lines spaced evenly across the page, typical of notebook or primary school paper. The lines are light blue and extend from the left margin to the right edge. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.





Contact us

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Email: info@feo.org.fj | **Web:** www.feo.org.fj

Facebook: @Fijianelectionoffice | **Twitter:** @OfficialFEO

HEADQUARTERS

59-63 High Street, Toorak, Suva.
P. O. Box 2528, Government Buildings, Suva.

VOTER SERVICES CENTRE

Shop 10, GPO Building, 10 Thomson Street, Suva.
P. O. Box 2528, Government Buildings, Suva.

LAUTOKA OFFICE

36 Vitogo Parade, Lautoka.
P. O. Box 2528, Government Buildings, Suva.

LABASA OFFICE

5 Park Street, Labasa.
P. O. Box 2528, Government Buildings, Suva.

ISBN 978-982-9176-02-8



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