



Fijian Elections Office
My Election. My Fiji

LAVETIVITI

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EC Approves 55 Parliamentary Seats for Next General Election

The composition of Parliament for the 2022 General Election will be 55 seats, an increase of four (4) seats from the current 51-member Parliament.

The Electoral Commission ["EC"] in accordance with section 54 of the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji, 2013 ["Constitution"] approved the new seats following a virtual meeting in June of this year.

In announcing the decision, Chairperson, Mr. Suresh Chandra explained that the EC is required under the Constitution to determine the number of seats in a general election at least one (1) year before the **general election can be held.**

Mr. Chandra further explained that following this decision, the maximum number of seats that will be contested in the next general election will be 55.

One Year to Writ



26th May 2021 officially marked one (1) year from the first possible Writ Day for the 2022 General Election.

Chairperson of the EC Mr Suresh Chandra said the date was crucial for many stakeholders as the preparation for the next general election would intensify in the coming months.

“The EC has also decided to conduct a public draw to determine the first number on the Ballot Paper,” Mr Chandra said.

“Towards September this year, the Commission will publish the List of Provisional Polling Venues for the next general election so that all stakeholders are able to plan their operations,” he added.

In preparation for the next year’s general election, the EC has already begun its meetings with Political Parties.

Mr. Chandra said “we will continue our engagements with Political Parties and soon the Fijian Elections Office [“FEO”] will also be starting operational level engagements with the Parties so that all critical stakeholders are well informed and prepared for the next general election.”

FEO Launches VoterCard Number Verification Platform

As the Voter Services Centres [“VSC”] in Viti Levu were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, to assist Fijians in obtaining their VoterCard number, the FEO launched the online VoterCard Number Verification Platform in June of this year.

The platform required the voter to enter his or her name and date of birth details and it would be able to find the person's VoterCard number.

The VoterCard was an alternative ID that could be used by Fijians to apply for a government assistance program.

The platform recorded over 15,264 searches in its second day, the highest search for that month.

The screenshot shows the Fijian Elections Office logo at the top, with the tagline "My Election. My Fiji". Below the logo are three input fields: "First Names:" with a sub-label "First Name(s)", "Surname:" with a sub-label "Surname", and "Date of Birth:". A blue "Search" button is located at the bottom of the form.

▶▶ FEO Conducts FTU Elections

The FEO conducted the Fiji Teachers Union ["FTU"] National Elections in mid-April.

A total of 22 polling venues were opened around the country to cater for the 4,917 union members who were to cast their votes.

The FEO rolled out a massive logistics exercise to deliver the two-day election with 87 polling officials working in the elections of whom 42 were internal FEO staff and 45 were external.

In the Central Polling Venues, Touch Screen Voting ["TSV"] Machines were used to conduct the election. The FEO has been using TSV Machines in small scale elections since 2017.

Union members voted by Attendance Voting while those who were living in maritime areas were able to vote via Postal Voting.



FEO Launches e-Vuli



The FEO officially launched its online learning platform “e-Vuli” in April this year.

Supervisor of Elections Mr Mohammed Saneem said he had envisioned the idea of an integrated virtual platform through which the FEO could provide training opportunities for its staff.

“Workplaces are now transitioning into the work from home culture and it was imperative that as an organisation we are able to find new innovative ways to provide meaningful training opportunities for our staff,” Mr Saneem said.






“The e-Vuli platform is being used to provide comprehensive training packages that are self-paced and easily accessible,” he added.

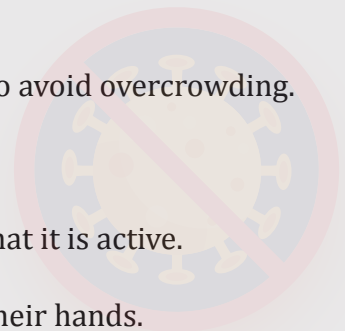
The Training and Development team has been able to successfully offer five (5) trainings through e-Vuli and are in the process of designing more online trainings for continuous professional development of FEO staff.

Labasa VSC Implements New COVID-19 Protocols

Due to the recent risks of community transmissions as announced by the Ministry of Health and Medical Services in light of COVID-19, as a precautionary measure, the FEO headquarters and the VSC's in Lautoka and Suva were closed. Since late April, only the Labasa VSC was open for voter services.

The following COVID-19 protocols are being followed at the Labasa VSC:

-  Everyone is required to wear a mask at all times.
-  Only three (3) to four (4) people are allowed to enter at a time to avoid overcrowding.
-  Staff and customers are seated at two (2) metres distance.
-  Customers are required to show their CareFiji App to confirm that it is active.
-  Staff practice good hygiene and ensure they sanitize and wash their hands.



Electoral Bills Passed

In early June of this year, Parliament debated on and passed three (3) Electoral amendment bills which will see various changes being brought about in the electoral processes.

In a nutshell the three (3) bills are:

1. **Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2020**

Some new provisions in this Bill:

- Allows the National Candidates List to contain either the party name or party symbol or any other information as approved by the SoE.
- Allows the SoE to publish the Provisional Voter List for each polling station on or before 30 September of each year except in an election year. This process would allow for stakeholders including political parties to carry out verification exercises and report inaccuracies in the voter list to the FEO for rectification.
- Clarifies the campaign period before a general election. The period is 30 days prior to the completion of 3 years and 6 months of the sitting of Parliament and ends 48 hours prior to the general election.
- Provides clarifications on the legal framework regarding the use of state resources during the campaign period.

2. **Political Parties (Registration, Conduct, Funding and Disclosures) (Amendment) Bill, 2020**

Some new provisions in this Bill:

- Allows the Registrar to assess the election spending and monitor the donations and income and expenditure of nominated candidates.
- Allows political parties to request the EC to mediate or arbitrate where there are disputes on any campaign issues between political parties.
- Ensures that political parties publish their audited accounts in any national daily newspaper within 3 months after the end of each financial year.

3. **Electoral (Registration of Voters) (Amendment) Bill, 2020**

Some new provisions in this Bill:

- Practically implements the close of the National Register of Voters. The registration is closed when the Writ is issued, the Writ will now specify the exact time when the National Register of Voters will close that day.
- Allows the SoE to upgrade the security features in design and printing of the voter card and it further allows the SoE to enforce these upgrades on voters by requiring the voters to replace their voter cards following the security feature upgrades.
- Protects the FEO's National Register of Voters' database.

COVID-19

Preventative Tips:

- Clean your hands often. Use soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Maintain a safe distance from anyone who is coughing or sneezing.
- Cover your nose and mouth with your bent elbow or a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention.

How To Wash Your Hands



WET HANDS



APPLY SOAP



RUB HANDS



LATHER BACKS



SCRUB BETWEEN FINGERS



RUB BACKS OF FINGERS ON OPPOSING PALMS



CLEAN THUMBS



WASH FINGERNAILS



RINSE HANDS



DRY WITH TOWEL



USE TOWEL TO TURN OFF FAUCET



YOUR HANDS ARE CLEAN

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