



Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Intramuros, Manila
EN BANC

**GUIDELINES FOR THE
CONDUCT OF
INDEPENDENTLY
ORGANIZED DEBATES,
FORA AND INTERVIEW
SERIES IN CONNECTION
WITH THE MAY 12, 2025
NATIONAL AND LOCAL
ELECTIONS AND BARMM
PARLIAMENTARY
ELECTIONS.**

GARCIA, George Erwin M.	Chairman
FEROLINO, Aimee P.	Commissioner
BULAY, Rey E.	Commissioner
MACEDA, Jr., Ernesto Ferdinand P.	Commissioner
CELIS, Nelson, J.	Commissioner
TANGARO-CASINGAL, Maria Norina S.	Commissioner
PIPO, Noli R.	Commissioner

X-----X Promulgated: February 17, 2025

RESOLUTION NO. 11115

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 9006, otherwise known as the “Fair Elections Act” provides for the holding of free, orderly, honest and credible elections through fair elections practices;

WHEREAS, Section 7.3 of the said Act provides, in part, that COMELEC may require national television and radio networks to sponsor at least three (3) national debates among presidential candidates and at least one (1) national debate among vice-presidential candidates. Furthermore, the sponsoring television or radio network may sell airtime for commercials and advertisements to interested advertisers and sponsors;

WHEREAS, organized political debates are necessary tools in fostering the emergence of a fully-informed electorate in which the public interest is served whenever political debates are effectuated. Candidates are given the opportunity to present their case to the public in an orderly and structured manner, avoiding much of the rancor and chaos that characterizes most modern public political discourse;

WHEREAS, for the above reason, it is desirable for COMELEC to ensure that these debates shall be conducted by these entities with the same standards of fairness, neutrality, and impartiality;

WHEREAS, the COMELEC, under Republic Act No. 9006 has the authority to promulgate rules and regulations for holding such debates by issuing general guidelines for the conduct thereof, thus guaranteeing fair, impartial and safe debates for both the candidates and audiences;

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Act No. 9006 and other election laws, the COMELEC has **RESOLVED**, as it hereby **RESOLVES**, to promulgate the following guidelines:

SECTION 1. Definition of Terms. – As used in this Resolution.

1. **Debate** – refers to formal, moderated discussion, typically covering a broad range of topics, between and among candidates, employing various format.
2. **Forum** – refers to a formal discussion, typically covering a broad range of topics, between candidates and an individual or panel.
3. **Interview Series** – refers to a series of formal conversations between an individual candidate and an individual interviewer or panel of interviewers.
4. **Independently Organized Debate, Forum, or Interview Series** – refers to a debate, forum, or interview series whether national or local, organized and staged by an individual, organization, or association other than the COMELEC.
5. **Local Debate, Forum or Interview Series** – refers to a debate, forum, or interview series, of a candidate or candidates for local office.
6. **National Debate, Forum or Interview** – refers to a debate, forum, or interview, of a candidate or candidates for national office.

SECTION 2. Coverage – The guidelines shall cover National/Local Independently Organized Debates, Fora or Interview Series except individual interviews with individual candidates.

SECTION 3. Guidelines. – The activities mentioned in Section 1 of these rules shall adhere to the following conditions:

1. The organizer shall ensure that all *bona fide* candidates are invited, accommodated, well-represented, treated equally, fairly and impartially;
2. The organizer shall ensure that the number of family members and supporters brought by each candidate be equal;

3. The organizer shall ensure that the setting of the venue and attire of moderators/hosts are neutral, to eliminate the idea of bias, favoritism or suggest any political association/affiliation;
4. The debate, forum or interview series must be conducted/filmed in a safe and controlled environment, to instill a sense of professionalism and the observance proper decorum for both the participant-candidate and audience. Furthermore, implementation of protocols regarding security shall be strictly followed, hence, there shall be no heckling or violence during the event;
5. All questions/topics to be tackled should not be trivial;
6. If applicable, the organizer must ensure the acquisition of the necessary permits, clearances, and venue, in coordination with the local government unit, and with the information to the Election Officer concerned.
7. The organizer shall inform the concerned COMELEC office, in writing, of the conduct of said debate, forum or interview series at least one (1) week prior to the conduct of said activity.

For National Elective Positions - at the COMELEC Education and Information Department

For Local Elective Positions - at the COMELEC office where certificate of candidacy of the elective position has been filed

8. The Commission's participation, if invited, is akin to an observer/guest only, thus it shall not be held responsible for any damages, injuries or losses that may occur during the event. Likewise, there should be a disclaimer that the views and opinions expressed by the candidate and the hosts/moderators do not state or reflect those of the Commission; and
9. The conduct of the debate, forum or interview series should be at no cost to the Commission.

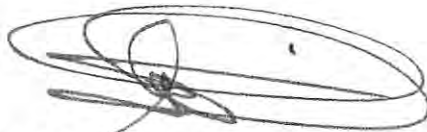
SECTION 4. Waiver of Airtime – The appearance by the candidate to these debates, forums or interview series shall not be computed against their airtime stated under COMELEC Resolution No. 11086.

SECTION 5. Separability Clause – If, for any reason/s, any part or provision of these Guidelines shall be held to be unconstitutional or invalid or contrary to existing laws, other parts or provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 6. Effectivity. – This Resolution shall take effect immediately after its publication in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation.

SECTION 7. Dissemination. – The EID shall cause the publication of this Resolution in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation and shall furnish copies to the Regional Election Directors, Provincial Election Supervisors and the Election Officers nationwide.

SO ORDERED.




GEORGE ERWIN M. GARCIA
COO0048962
Chairman



AIMEE P. FEROLINO
Commissioner




REY E. BULAY
Commissioner



ERNESTO FERDINAND P. MACEDA, JR.
Commissioner



NELSON J. CELIS
Commissioner



MARIA NORINA S. TANGARO-CASINGAL
Commissioner



NOLI R. PIPO
Commissioner

CERTIFICATION

APPROVED for publication on 17 February 2025.



CONSUELO B. DIOLA
Director IV
Office of the Commission Secretary

This Resolution can be verified at this number (02)85272987; email address comsec@comelec.gov.ph.