



Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Intramuros, Manila

ACCREDITATION GUIDELINES FOR
DOMESTIC & INTERNATIONAL
ELECTION OBSERVERS IN
RELATION TO THE 12 MAY 2025
NATIONAL & LOCAL ELECTIONS,
AND THE 13 OCTOBER 2025
BANGSAMORO PARLIAMENTARY
ELECTIONS.

GARCIA, George Erwin M., *Chairman*
FEROLINO, Aimee P., *Commissioner*
BULAY, Rey E., *Commissioner*
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PIPO, Noli R., *Commissioner*

Promulgated: March 12, 2025

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RESOLUTION NO. 11121

WHEREAS, the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), as the primary National Government agency charged with the conduct of free, orderly, honest, peaceful, and credible electoral exercises, has a substantial interest in promoting transparency and maintaining the orderliness and credibility of the elections;

WHEREAS, election observation is globally recognized as an important mechanism to help ensure the integrity of elections and to build trust in the democratic process by allowing independent observers to provide feedback on the conduct of the elections;

WHEREAS, Philippine and foreign nationals, whether as individuals or in groups, whether representing governmental or civil society interests, have manifested their intent to observe the conduct of the 12 May 2025 National and Local Elections, and/or the 13 October 2025 Bangsamoro Parliamentary Election;

WHEREAS, to provide access for election observers to government facilities and polling centers in the Philippines, accreditation guidelines need to be promulgated in accordance with established standards on election observation;

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the powers vested in it by the 1987 Philippine Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, and other election laws, the COMELEC has RESOLVED, as it hereby RESOLVES, to promulgate the following guidelines:

SECTION 1. *Definition of Terms and Acronyms.* - As used in this Resolution:

- (a) ***2025 NLE and BPE*** refer to the 12 May 2025 National and Local Elections and the 13 October 2025 Bangsamoro Parliamentary Elections;
- (b) ***AFP*** refers to the Armed Forces of the Philippines;
- (c) ***Applicants or Observer-Applicants*** refer to persons who have filed their applications for accreditation as election observers as provided in this Resolution;
- (d) ***COMELEC or Commission*** as used in this Resolution refers to the Commission on Elections of the Philippines;
- (e) ***DFA*** refer to the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines;
- (f) ***Domestic Election Observer*** refers to any Philippine national, regardless of their status of residence in the Philippines, whose application for accreditation as an election observer has been duly approved by the COMELEC;
- (g) ***Domestic group, organization, committee or association*** refers to any group of individuals organized under the laws of the Philippines;
- (h) ***EID*** refers to the Education and Information Department of the COMELEC;
- (i) ***Foreigner or foreign national*** refers to any person whose nationality is other than Filipino, regardless of their status of residence in the Philippines;
- (j) ***Foreign group, organization, committee, or association*** refers to any group of individuals duly organized and existing under national laws other than that of the Philippines;
- (k) ***Guided International Election Observation Program*** refers to the short-term election observer/visitor program organized by the COMELEC;
- (l) ***Independent Election Observation Missions*** refer to election observation missions organized by entities other than COMELEC, wherein the costs of travel, transportation, and accommodation are borne by the said entities;
- (m) ***International Election Observers*** refer to foreign nationals whose applications for accreditation have been duly approved by the COMELEC, whether as visitors or delegates under the COMELEC's

guided international election observation program or as members of an independent election observation mission;

- (n) *Members of the Diplomatic Corps* refer to the diplomatic staff of a mission accredited to and posted in the Philippines;
- (o) *OEC* refers to the Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines, otherwise known as Batas Pambansa Bilang 881, as amended;
- (p) *OPAPRU* refers to the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation, and Unity;
- (q) *PNP* refers to the Philippine National Police.

SEC. 2. Scope of this Resolution. - This Resolution shall apply to all Philippine and foreign nationals who wish to observe 12 May 2025 National and Local Elections and the 13 October 2025 Bangsamoro Parliamentary Election, whether as a visitor or delegate under the COMELEC's guided International Election Observation Program or as a member of an independent election observation mission.

SEC. 3. Qualifications for Accreditation. - Applicants must have a *bona fide* or good faith intention to participate exclusively as observers in the 12 May 2025 National and Local Elections and/or the 13 October 2025 Bangsamoro Parliamentary Election. The observer-applicants must be free from any political, economic, or other conflicts of interests that would interfere with the conduct of election observations impartially and must comply with the provisions of this Resolution. Applicants are required to disclose their intention to take part the conduct of the elections as *election observers*.

SEC. 4. Application for Accreditation; Documentary Requirements for Domestic Election Observers. - All Philippine nationals, whether as individuals or in groups, whether representing governmental or civil society interests, who are interested to observe the conduct the 2025 NLE and/or BPE, shall file their applications by submitting the following documents:

- (a) Duly accomplished Domestic Election Observer Accreditation Application Form, attached to this Resolution as Annex A, or an online registration form which will be posted on the COMELEC's official website and Facebook page;
- (b) Recently taken photograph of the observer-applicant with white background, with the following specifications:
 - i. If submitting in physical/paper copy - 2 copies of the photograph measuring 1.5 inch x 1.5 inch or 3.8 cm x 3.8 cm in size

- ii. If submitting as an image file – photo must have at least 300 dpi resolution and in JPG or PNG file format.
- (c) A scanned image or photocopy of the observer-applicant's government-issued identification card or document; and
- (a) A detailed itinerary of the election observers or the EOM using the prescribed template attached as Annex C, which must contain the dates, activity description, places and persons that they intend to visit as part of the EOM activities;
- (d) A written endorsement from the observer-applicant's sponsoring organization attesting that he/she has been duly authorized to participate in the election observation mission with an explanation of the EOM's purpose and objectives; and
- (e) Any document or issuance from the sponsoring organization stating that it will bear all costs associated with the observer-applicant's participation in the EOM.

Applications with incomplete requirements shall not be processed.

SEC. 5. *Application for Accreditation; Documentary Requirements for International Election Observers.* – All foreign nationals, whether as individuals or in groups, whether representing governmental or civil society interests, including members of the diplomatic corps, who are interested to observe the conduct the 2025 NLE and/or BPE, shall file their applications with the following documents attached:

- (b) International Election Observer Accreditation Application Form, attached to this Resolution as Annex B, or an online registration form which will be posted on the COMELEC's official website and Facebook page;
- (c) Recently taken photograph of the observer-applicant with white background, with the following specifications:
 - i. If submitting in physical/paper form – two (2) copies of the photograph measuring 1.5 inch x 1.5 inch or 3.8 cm x 3.8 cm in size;
 - iii. If submitting as an image file – photo must have at least 300 dpi resolution and in JPG or PNG file format
- (d) Scanned image or photocopy of the observer-applicant's passport bio page;

- (e) A detailed itinerary of the election observers or the EOM using the prescribed template attached as Annex C, which must contain the dates, activity description, places and persons that they intend to visit as part of the EOM activities;
- (f) A written endorsement from the observer-applicant’s sponsoring organization attesting that he/she has been duly authorized to participate in an international election observation mission with an explanation of the EOM’s purpose and objectives; and
- (g) Any document or issuance from the sponsoring organization stating that it will bear all costs associated with the observer-applicant’s participation in the international election observation mission.

Applications with incomplete requirements shall not be considered.

SEC. 6. Where and How to File. – Observer-applicants may opt to file their applications for accreditation as election observers through any of the following means:

- (a) By email to election.observers@comelec.gov.ph, with the documentary requirements attached in PDF format and the photo in JPG or PNG file format;
- (b) For those based in the National Capital Region (NCR), paper-based submissions may be made in person or through an authorized representative to the Education and Information Department of the COMELEC; and
- (c) For observer-applicants who are based outside of the NCR, paper-based submissions may be made in person or through an authorized representative to the nearest Office of the Regional Director (ORED) from where they reside or hold office.

Those who opted to accomplish the Accreditation Application Forms via the online registration form must still submit the documentary requirements via email to election.observers@comelec.gov.ph.

SEC. 7. Period for Filing Application for Accreditation. – The deadlines for filing applications for accreditation shall be from the effectivity of this Resolution until:

ELECTION	DEADLINE
12 May 2025 NLE	15 April 2025 (Tuesday) 5:00 PM Manila time
13 October 2025 BPE	16 September 2025 (Tuesday) 5:00 PM Manila time

SEC. 8. Accreditation of invited observers for the 2025 NLE International Observation Program.– Individuals who are issued an invitation by the Commission to participate in the COMELEC’s Guided International Election Observation Program for the 12 May 2025 National and Local Elections shall be advised of the accreditation process.

However, the invited election observers under the Guided Program must still comply with existing policies on the entry of foreign nationals as visitors to the Philippines and secure the entry visas, if necessary, depending on their nationalities and passports.

SEC. 9. Action on Applications for Accreditation of Domestic Election Observers. – The individual application forms shall be reviewed and evaluated by the EID and OREDs.

Approval of applications for accreditation is hereby delegated by the COMELEC Chairperson to the:

- (a) Director IV of the COMELEC-EID - for domestic observers with official addresses in the National Capital Region; and to
- (b) The concerned Regional Election Director (RED) - for domestic observers residing within the provinces in the region.

Within seven (7) working days after the deadline, the REDs shall furnish the EID with the final list of applications for accreditation indicating the status of each individual application, whether approved or denied.

The EID shall furnish the Commission *En Banc* a list of the approved applications for accreditation.

SEC. 10. Creation of Inter-Agency Technical Working Group for International Elections Observer Accreditation. – For purposes of coordination between with respect to the conduct of the international election observer missions’ activities, an inter-agency technical working group is hereby created, which shall consist of the following agencies:

- (a) Commission on Elections;
- (b) Department of Foreign Affairs;
- (c) Armed Forces of the Philippines;
- (d) Philippine National Police;
- (e) Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation, and Unity;
and

- (f) Other relevant government agencies as may be determined by the agencies listed above.

SEC. 11. *Action on Applications for Accreditation of International Election Observers.* – The individual accreditation application forms submitted by foreign nationals shall be jointly reviewed, evaluated, and acted upon by the Inter-Agency Technical Working Group created in the previous Section of this Resolution.

SEC. 12. *Opposition to the Application for Accreditation.*– Any opposition to applications for election observer accreditation shall be filed within five (5) calendar days from filing of the application being contested. The opposition for accreditation shall be filed with the Office where the application being contested was filed.

SEC. 13. *Grounds for Opposition.*– The opposition shall be filed on any of the following grounds:

- (a) The observer-applicant has a previous derogatory record; or
- (b) any of the submitted documentary requirements is not authentic, falsified or contains any information which is false.

The Director IV of the EID or the Regional Election Director (RED) concerned shall resolve the opposition to domestic election observer accreditation within three (3) calendar days from the receipt thereof.

The Inter-Agency TWG shall resolve the oppositions to the accreditation of international election observers within three (3) working days from the receipt thereof.

For this purpose, the EID shall post an updated list of applicants on the COMELEC's official website and Facebook page.

SEC. 14. *Accredited Election Observer Passes.*– Upon approval of the applications for accreditation, the Education and Information Department (EID) shall issue the appropriate Observer Passes to the accredited election observers.

SEC. 15. *Access and privileges.* – Duly accredited observers shall be allowed access to all stages of the electoral process including preparatory activities subject to such conditions as may be necessary for the protection of COMELEC personnel, property, privileged information, and the integrity of the elections. *Provided further*, that the COMELEC Accreditation shall not be used to undermine any of the protections mandated existing election laws and by Republic Act No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

In addition, duly accredited observers shall also have access to all persons concerned with the electoral process, upon reasonable requests, including, but not limited to:

- (a) COMELEC officials, subject to request and availability of the official concerned;
- (b) Members of legislative bodies, security officials and government agencies with functions that are relevant and significant to organizing democratic elections, subject to their availability, policies, and other protocols;
- (c) All persons participating in the elections, in whatever capacity; and
- (d) News media personnel.

SEC. 16. *Code of Conduct.* – In addition to the Code of Conduct for International Election Observers, all duly accredited election observers shall observe the rules of conduct:

- (a) Respect the sovereignty of the Philippines, as well as the human rights and fundamental freedoms of its people;
- (b) Respect the Philippine laws and the authority of the COMELEC and their duly accredited deputies at all times;
- (c) Follow lawful instructions from the Philippines' governmental and security authorities;
- (d) Maintain impartiality and objectivity in carrying out the election observation mission;
- (e) Refrain from interfering with, obstructing, or otherwise hampering the conduct of any election related activity, including preparatory and post-election activities;
- (f) Maintain proper personal behavior and respect others, including exhibiting sensitivity to the country's cultures and customs, exercise sound judgment in personal interactions, and observe the highest level of professional conduct at all times, including leisure times; and
- (g) Prominently display the Accredited Observer Pass provided by the COMELEC, especially when visiting polling places, government offices, and other facilities as part of the observation mission.

SEC. 17. *Summary Revocation of Accreditation.* – The accreditation of any observer may be summarily revoked by the Electoral or Canvassing Board by

confiscating the Accredited Observer Pass, and removing him/her or the group from the polling station or canvassing center due to any of the following grounds:

- (a) Any violation of the Code of Conduct.
- (b) Any disruptive behavior by anyone in the group.
- (c) Misconduct which may include but not limited to:
 - i. breaching or attempting to breach the secrecy of the ballot;
 - ii. knowingly obstructing electoral proceedings;
 - iii. asking voters about their voting preferences while observing at the polling place.

The accreditation of the organizations may also be revoked if it refuses to promptly remove an observer found to be in breach of this Code from their list of nominated individuals.

The power of the Electoral or Canvassing Board to remove observers for misconduct is in addition to their general power to keep order at the relevant electoral proceeding.

SEC. 18. *Period of Validity of Accreditation.* – The validity of accreditation granted to the election observers shall be aligned with the election period, set as follows:

ELECTION	FROM	UNTIL
12 May 2025 NLE	Approval date of the application for accreditation	11 June 2025
13 October 2025 BPE	start of the election period for the BPE	End of the election period for the BPE

The election period of the BPE shall be set by the COMELEC in a subsequent Resolution containing the Calendar of Activities of the 13 October 2025 BPE.

SEC. 19. *Prohibited Acts.* - It shall be unlawful for any domestic, foreigner, domestic or foreign group, organization, committee or association to:

- (a) Aid any person or group of persons in whatever manner, directly or indirectly, relative to the conduct of the elections [Sec. 81 & 89, OEC];
- (b) Take part or influence in any manner the conduct of the elections [Sec. 81 & 261 (j), OEC];

- (c) Engage in partisan political activities, which refer to acts designed to affect the results of the elections [Sec. 79 (b), OEC];
- (d) Contribute or make any expenditure in connection with any election campaign or partisan political activity [Sec. 81 & 261 (j), OEC];
- (e) Enter any polling place without consent of the chairman of the Electoral Board concerned [Sec. 192, OEC];
- (f) Mingle and talk with voters inside any polling place, or otherwise disrupt the proceedings in the polling place [Sec. 192, OEC];
- (g) Threaten, intimidate, or actually cause, inflict, or produce any violence, injury, punishment, damage, loss or disadvantage upon any person [Sec. 261 (e), OEC] and
- (h) Propagate false and alarming reports or information, transmit or circulate false orders, directives or messages relating to the conduct of the elections [Sec. 261 (z.11), OEC].

SEC. 20. *Penalty for Violation.* – Any violation of the immediately preceding Section shall be punishable as an election offense which, if found guilty, may be penalized by an imprisonment of not less than one (1) but not more than six (6) years and shall not be subject to probation. In addition, if the guilty party is a Filipino, the offender shall be sentenced to suffer disqualification to hold public office and deprivation of right of suffrage. On the other hand, if the guilty party is a foreigner, he shall be sentenced to deportation, which shall be enforced after the prison term has been served [Section 264, OEC].

SEC. 21. *Reportorial Requirements of Accredited Observers.* Accredited international election observers shall submit a report of their observation mission to the Commission *En Banc*, through the EID. A template of their reporting shall be provided as a guide for their written report of observations and a conference for this purpose may likewise be called should there be a necessity for one. The deadline of submission of reports shall be on the end of election period or until 11 June 2025 for the 12 May 2025 NLE and the end of the election period for the 13 October 2025 BPE.

SEC. 22. *Dissemination.* – The Education and Information Department shall implement this Resolution.

The Executive Director shall furnish copies of this Resolution to the Office of the President, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Philippine Information Agency, and all mass media organizations.

The Department of Foreign Affairs shall furnish copies of this Resolution to all foreign embassies and consulates in the Philippines.

The EID shall cause the publication of this Resolution in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation.

SEC. 23. *Effectivity.* - This resolution shall take effect immediately after its publication in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

SO ORDERED.

GEORGE ERWIN M. GARCIA
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 March 12, 2025.


CONSUELO B. DIOLA
Director IV
Office of the COMELEC Secretary

This Resolution can be verified at this number (02) 8527-2987 and email address at comsec@comelec.gov.ph.