

The Electoral Code of Conduct

What is the Electoral Code of Conduct?

The Code is a set of rules. The parties and candidates must:

- speak out against political violence and threats against other parties, the Electoral Commission (IEC), members of the public and the media;
- let the authorities know about planned marches or rallies;
- communicate with other political parties about planned political events;
- recognise the authority of the IEC;
- work with the IEC structures and allow them to perform their duties;
- work with the police in their investigation of election crime and violence; and
- accept the results of the election or challenge the result in court.



Why do we need an Electoral Code of Conduct?

The Code makes it easier to have free and fair elections

What are free and fair elections?

Elections are free and fair when:

- There are regular elections.
- There are many different political parties.
- All parties and candidates can carry out their campaigns without fear.
- There is a voters' roll with every registered voter's name on it.
- Voters can take part in elections without fear.
- All citizens can belong to any political party of their choice.
- Anyone can form a party or be a candidate.
- There is respect for other people's views and there is open public debate.
- Every registered voter, including persons with disabilities, can vote.
- Elections are open and not influenced by any person or group.
- There is no electoral fraud.
- All parties accept the results of the election.



Ensuring free and fair elections



How does the Code of Conduct work?

- The Electoral Code of Conduct must be agreed to by:
 - Every registered party before the party takes part in an election; and - every candidate before he/she is placed on the list of candidates.
- Parties and candidates must stick to the code and must:
 - Let the public know about the Code;
 - Promote the purpose of the Code; and
 - Support efforts to educate voters.
- Parties and candidates must also inform the public that all people (including women, persons with disabilities, and different language and cultural groups) have the right:
 - To be free to express their political beliefs and to be part of any political party; and
 - To join in any political campaigns, marches or public meetings.



What happens when you break the Code of Conduct?

Any person who breaks the Code is guilty of a crime and can be fined or sent to prison for up to 10 years.

How does the Code of Conduct affect political parties?

Political parties that break the Code can:

- be fined;
- be stopped from working in an area; or
- have their votes in an area cancelled.



About the Electoral Commission (IEC)

The Electoral Commission is an independent, impartial institution established by Chapter 9 of the Constitution. It manages national, provincial and municipal elections. It makes sure these elections are credible, free and fair.

National Office

Tel: 012 622 5700
info@elections.org.za
www.elections.org.za
Contact centre: 0800 11 8000 (during elections)

Contact Provincial Offices

Eastern Cape: 043 709 4200
Free State: 051 401 5000
Gauteng: 011 644 7400
KwaZulu-Natal: 031 279 2200
Limpopo: 015 283 9100
Mpumalanga: 013 754 0200
North West: 018 391 0800/5
Northern Cape: 053 838 5000
Western Cape: 021 910 5700

SMS your ID number to 32810 to check if and where you are registered (R1 per SMS).

Follow us:  
IECSouthAfrica