FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON THE BIOMETRIC SYSTEM OF VOTER REGISTRATION

What is Biometrics?
It is the method of registration that uses technologies that measure and analyse human body characteristics, such as fingerprints, eye retinas and irises, voice patterns, facial patterns and hand measurements, for authentication purposes.

For the purpose of the voter registration in Sierra Leone, we shall be capturing thumbprints and Photographs.

Why use Biometrics?
The main purpose of using biometrics in elections is to prevent identity theft and duplicate or multiple registrations during the voter registration process.

Where Can a Person Register?
Everyone wishing to be registered must go to the nearest Voter Registration Centre in their area within the ward where they are ordinarily resident.

Can a person register in absentia?
- ✓ No one is allowed to register in absentia; everyone is expected to register in person.
- ✓ No one is allowed to register for another person.
- ✓ A person can register only once.

Who qualifies to register?
Any Sierra Leonean can register if he or she is:
- ✓ 18 years old (by the end of October 2012) and above.
- ✓ Of sound mind
- ✓ Not serving a prison sentence
- ✓ Ordinarily resident in the ward where s/he wishes to register

Why do you register?
Voters will be required to register with the NEC in order to be able to vote on polling day.

I did not register for the 2007 Elections; can I register for 2012 elections?
Yes. As long as you are qualified.

Where will the registrations take place?
Registration will take place in registration centers in every ward in the country.

How do I register?

Go to the registration centre in your ward and the NEC staff will assist you to go through the process.

Where can I get more information about the registration?

Listen to the Radio, especially the community radio that covers your ward. Or contact the NEC office in your district, or NEC officials in your ward.

Who make up the Registration Centre Staff?

Registrar; Assistant Registrar 1(Data Entry Operator); and Assistant Registrar 2

Who else has access to the Registration Centre (RC)?

The following people will have access to the registration centre:
- ✓ Qualified citizens ordinarily resident in the ward where the RC is located
- ✓ EC officials, with ID Cards
- ✓ Political Party agents (PPAs) accredited by NEC
- ✓ Journalists who carry Press Cards
- ✓ Observers accredited by NEC
- ✓ Security Personnel attached to (or patrolling) the registration centre should be allowed only in the outer perimeter of the centre, unless otherwise requested by the Registrar.

What are Registration Offences?

- ✓ Giving false information during registration; this applies to
- ✓ both the applicant and /or any person giving information about an applicant's eligibility and identity;
- ✓ Impersonating another person when applying to register to Vote;
- ✓ Registering or attempt to register more than once;
- ✓ Hindering or obstructing a registration official in the execution of his/her duties;
- ✓ Hindering or obstructing the registration process;
- ✓ Printing, distributing or altering Voter's ID Card;
- ✓ Unlawful possession of Voter ID Card
- ✓ Committing any other fraudulent act relating to Voter Registration
- ✓ Documentary proof of identity and eligibility for Registration
- ✓ Ordinarily you will not be required to produce documentary evidence of identity and eligibility. However, if the Registrar is in doubt he/she may ask you to produce any of the following:-
  - Nationality: a National ID Card; a Sierra Leonean Passport; Birth Certificate; NASSIT ID Card; or Affidavit indicating Sierra Leonean Nationality.
  - Age: a National ID Card; a Sierra Leonean Passport; Driver's License; Birth Certificate; or affidavit indicating age.
  - Residence: Local Tax Receipt; Bills of Public Utilities; or affidavit indicating residence.
- ✓ Acceptable Non-documentary proof of identity and eligibility for Registration. When the applicant cannot produce documentary proof of identity and / or eligibility, the registrar may also accept the declaration of the following people:-
  - Paramount Chief

- Tribal Head
- Town Chief
- Section Chief
- Village Head
- Religious Leader
- Head of Educational Institution
- Chiefdom Tribal Authority

WILL ASSISTANCE BE GIVEN TO PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PERSONS (DISABILITIES)?
Yes, some persons with disabilities or physically challenged persons will require assistance, and it is the duty of the officials at the registration centres to be sensitive and to offer the appropriate assistance to those who need it.

When can Registration be suspended?
The Registrar: May suspend registration if the centre is threatened by riot, violence, storm, flood, or any other occurrence that will make the proper conduct of registration impossible.

If advised to do so by the relevant NEC authority or the police.

How long will Registration last?
15 days in each registration Centre from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily

What will be given at the end of the Registration?
You will be given a receipt which you will use to collect your voter ID card on exhibition day

Who is an Observer?
An observer is a person who carefully looks at electoral process (voter registration; boundary delimitation; nomination; campaigning; polling and counting of results), collects information and reports to the group or organization he/she belongs to.

Who is a Monitor?
A Monitor is a person who supervises the electoral process and has the mandate to make corrections along the way.

What should a Political Party Agent do at a centre?
- ✓ Observe the registration exercise on behalf of her/his party;
- ✓ Bring questionable or irregular activities to the attention of the Registrar and record their remarks in the VR Centre Journal;
- ✓ If present during the daily counting activities, copy registration figures from the Daily Accounting Form and may sign it.

What should a Media representative do at a centre?
Media representatives, accredited by NEC, can have access to the Registration Centre at all times during the registration exercise to perform their tasks.