

Organization, Functions and Duties

The Election Department is a Non-plan Department and is responsible for the conduct of various elections. This department does not undertake/execute any Developmental/ welfare functions/activities. The following statutory functions/ activities are undertaken by the Election Department: -

- (1) Conduct of Presidential and Vice-Presidential Election.
- (2) Conduct of Biennial Elections to the Council of States.
- (3) Conduct of Elections to Parliament (Lok Sabha) and State Legislative Assembly (Vidhan Sabha) including bye-elections.
- (4) Preparation, Revision and computerization of Electoral Rolls and continuous updation thereof.
- (5) Setting up of Polling Stations and revision thereof.
- (6) Delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies.
- (7) Preparation of Electors Photo Identity Cards (EPICs).
- (8) National Voters Awareness Campaign.

All these statutory functions are performed in the State by the Chief Electoral Officer under the superintendence, directions and control of Election Commission of India as envisaged under Article 324 of the Constitution of India. Besides other routine work pertaining to Establishment/Budget, Accounts, Store procurement etc. are also performed by the department.

The Division of work of the Department:

(i) At State Hqs:

(a) The Secretary (Elections) functions as "Administrative Department" and is appointing authority in respect of Class-I and II posts of the department.

(b) The Chief Electoral Officer is the "Head of the Department" and appointing authority in respect of Class- III posts of the Department. As regards Appointing Authorities in respect of Class-IV staff, the additional Chief Electoral Officer exercise the powers at the State Hqs. and Deputy Commissioners in the respective Districts.

(c) To assist the Chief Electoral Officer, in the implementation of statutory functions, a post of Additional Chief Electoral Officer-cum-Additional Secretary (Election) exists. He is the "Head of Office" and "Controlling Officer" under the H.P. Financial Rules for the purpose of Controlling Budget & contingency.

(d) A departmental cadre post of Assistant Chief Electoral Officer (Class-I) (Equivalent to that of Under Secretary of the State Government) exist in the department. He is also functioning as "D.D.O" as well as "Controlling Officer" for TA and Medical Reimbursement. One Section Officer with Seven Senior Assistants is assisting the said officer in Section-I of the department.

(e) Another departmental cadre post of Electoral Officer (Class-I) also exists in the department. To assist this officer one Section Officer with 4 Assistants has been provided in Section-II. He is looking the entire technical work relating to conduct of elections, preparation, updation, computerization and Revision of Electoral Rolls, issuance of Photo Identity Cards to electors, provision of Polling Stations, delimitation of Parliamentary/Assembly Constituencies etc. The Electoral Officer functions as D.D.O, looks after administrative branch including Budget, Accounts and Stores in the absence of Assistant Chief Electoral Officer.

(f) There is one Technical Class-I post of Computer Programmer. To assist this officer one Computer Operator and one Junior Assistant, who is also a computer professional, have been provided in Computer Cell. He is looking after the entire computerization activities of the department viz. development of computer software, installation of software, maintenance of computer hardware, imparting of trainings to the officers and staff posted at Hqs. as well as District/Sub-Divisional Election Offices.

(ii) At District Headquarters:

The Deputy Commissioners of the districts are the "District Election Officers" and they are functioning as "Head of Office" in the district. The Deputy Commissioner, Shimla, Mandi, Hamirpur and Kangra are also functioning as "Returning Officer for Parliamentary Constituency". To assist the District Election Officers one Tehsildar (Elections), one Naib-Tehsildar (Elections) (except Kinnaur and Lahaul Spiti),

(iii) At Sub Divisional Headquarters:

Since 1996 onwards the respective Sub Divisional Officers(c) have been designated/appointed as "Returning Officers-cum-Electoral Registration Officers" for respective Assembly Constituencies by the Election Commission of India. Two Deputy Commissioners (Lahaul & Spiti and Kinnaur) and two Additional District Magistrates (Una and Hamirpur) are also functioning as Returning officer-cum-Electoral Registration Officers for Assembly Constituencies. The Revenue and Election Tehsildars and Naib-Tehsildars Revenue have been appointed as "Assistant Returning Officers and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers". One Additional District Magistrate (Kullu), Two Additional Deputy Commissioners (Pooh & Kaza) and 4 Sub Divisional Officers (C) (Kalpa, Dodra-Kawar, Pangi & Udaipur) are also appointed as Asstt. Returning Officers and Asstt. Electoral Registration Officers.

To assist the Returning Officers, 1 Election Kanungo for each Assembly Constituency with one clerk and one peon for each Sub-Divisional Election Office have been provided.