



Guidelines *for* **MEDIA**

Election of
President, Parliament
and Local Council

Sierra Leone
7 March 2018
7am - 5pm

For more information about
the National Electoral
Commission,
please visit:
www.necsl.org

Media may visit any polling centre in Sierra Leone. However, they must adhere strictly to National Electoral Commission (NEC) rules. These rules are intended to facilitate the work of journalists while preserving the rights of the Sierra Leonean people to vote in secrecy and without interference.

Media are expected to cooperate with NEC staff and follow the instructions given by the Presiding Officer. All decisions of the Polling Centre Manager or the Presiding Officer are final and binding.

Only one team from each media institution may be at a polling station at any given time; and every media person must ensure that his/her NEC accreditation and a valid press card are visible.

Media are advised to be as brief and unobtrusive as possible and must absolutely not interfere in the polling process. Attempts to influence or intimidate voters, or failure to obey orders of Polling Centre Managers or Presiding Officers are election offences.

Inside the polling centre, journalists must not interview any voter, observer or agent. Rather, they are only permitted to interview Polling Centre Managers and Presiding Officers.

Inside polling stations, there must be only one photographer or one camera person at a time (unless decided otherwise by the Presiding Officer, such as in the case of Special Guest visits). They may film or photograph the general situation in and around the polling centres and stations. However, film or photographs of individuals (such as of a voter placing her/his ballot in the ballot box) must be cleared with the Presiding Officer and require the consent of the individual being photographed. And no one may film or photograph a person marking her/his ballot paper or any marked ballot papers, at any time.

Media may observe the counting polling and counting processes, but must refrain from interference. They must not assist voters - including voters with disabilities - when they are marking ballot papers, and must not touch any polling material.

Upon completion of counting, results will be posted at each polling station for public viewing.

Failure to adhere to this or other relevant NEC guidelines may result in media persons being directed to leave the polling station.