

# Maintaining Safety and Trust in Elections During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Paper on Election Management Based on the  
21st National Assembly Elections in the Republic of Korea





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NATIONAL ELECTION  
COMMISSION



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## Chairperson's Message



Across country borders, the Coronavirus Disease-19 (COVID-19) crisis has spread around the world, transforming the global structure itself as well. In this situation where it is difficult to foresee the end of COVID-19, the best we can do is to prepare for the post-COVID era. To do so, it is essential to build partnership and cooperation in the international community. It is impossible for any problem that transcends borders to be solved by the efforts of a single country acting alone.

The 21st National Assembly elections held in the Republic of Korea on April 15, 2020 amid the COVID-19 crisis were successfully managed, especially considering that there were no confirmed cases of COVID-19 linked to the elections and that the turnout reached a historic high of 66.2%. Alongside the efforts of the National Election Commission (NEC) in the belief that ‘disinfecting as much as possible is the best election management,’ the importance of the cooperation between the hundreds of thousands of election officials and tens of millions of voters who trusted and adhered to the codes of conduct and election management guidelines put in place by the NEC could not be emphasized more.

This paper covers what we need to prepare and how to respond in this post-COVID era with less face-to-face contact in order to secure the value of democracy through elections. We do not believe that this paper will be a one-size-fits-all panacea for all situations. Nevertheless, I hope this paper will be able to provide some help to our friends and colleagues struggling around the world to defend electoral democracy in the midst of a pandemic like COVID-19.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kwon Soon-il', written in a cursive style.

**Kwon Soon-il**  
**Chairperson of the National Election Commission**  
**Republic of Korea**

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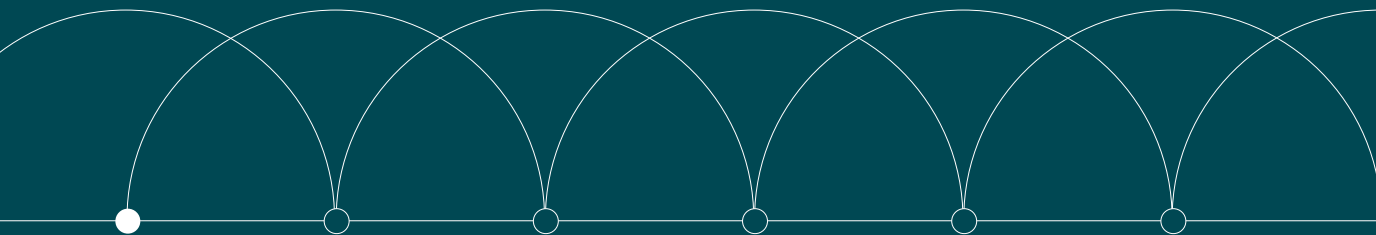
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This paper aims to include response measures to COVID-19, including the overall direction of the elections, voting and counting management and public relations policies for voters enacted in preparation for the National Assembly elections in 2020 in Korea. However, any documents necessary for election management are attached in the appendix because the details cannot be included due to page limits.

# Part 1 **Background**

- 1 **Crisis Level for COVID-19 Raised to ‘Severe’**
- 2 **Government Response**
- 3 **Establishment of a System of Cooperation with Related Organizations**
- 4 **High Sense of Civic Consciousness**





# Background



## 1 Crisis Level for COVID-19 Raised to ‘Severe’

*“The NEC developed COVID-19 response measures just two months ahead of these National Assembly elections.”*

The world's first confirmed case of COVID-19 occurred in late 2019, and one month later the first confirmed case domestically in Korea occurred on January 20, 2020. After that point the number of confirmed cases rapidly increased, and on February 23, 2020 the Korean health authorities raised the infectious disease crisis alert to the highest level of 'Severe.' Accordingly the NEC had to prepare election management measures in response to COVID-19 in a short period of time, within just two months before the 21st National Assembly elections were held on April 15.<sup>1)</sup>

## 2 Government Response

*“A pan-governmental response was implemented to block the spread of COVID-19”*

As the government upgraded the crisis level to ‘severe,’ and with the Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasures Headquarters (CDSCHQ) at the center and in cooperation with related bodies such as the Center for Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response, Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases Response and the Government Support Headquarters, response measures were prepared. The goal was to prevent the spread of COVID-19 including through the implementation of a system of ‘test, track and isolate’, rapid approval of the usage of tests and diagnosis kits developed by private companies, providing a stable supply of masks through a public mask ration system and the operation of drive-thru and walk-thru centers. The government's countermeasures led to the voluntary participation of ordinary citizens, including participating in the campaigns of “washing hands and wearing masks, social distancing” through transparent information disclosure, and the number of new COVID-19 cases per day peaked at 909 on February 29 and had fallen to around 20 by April 15.<sup>1)</sup>

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1) [www.coronaboard.kr](http://www.coronaboard.kr)

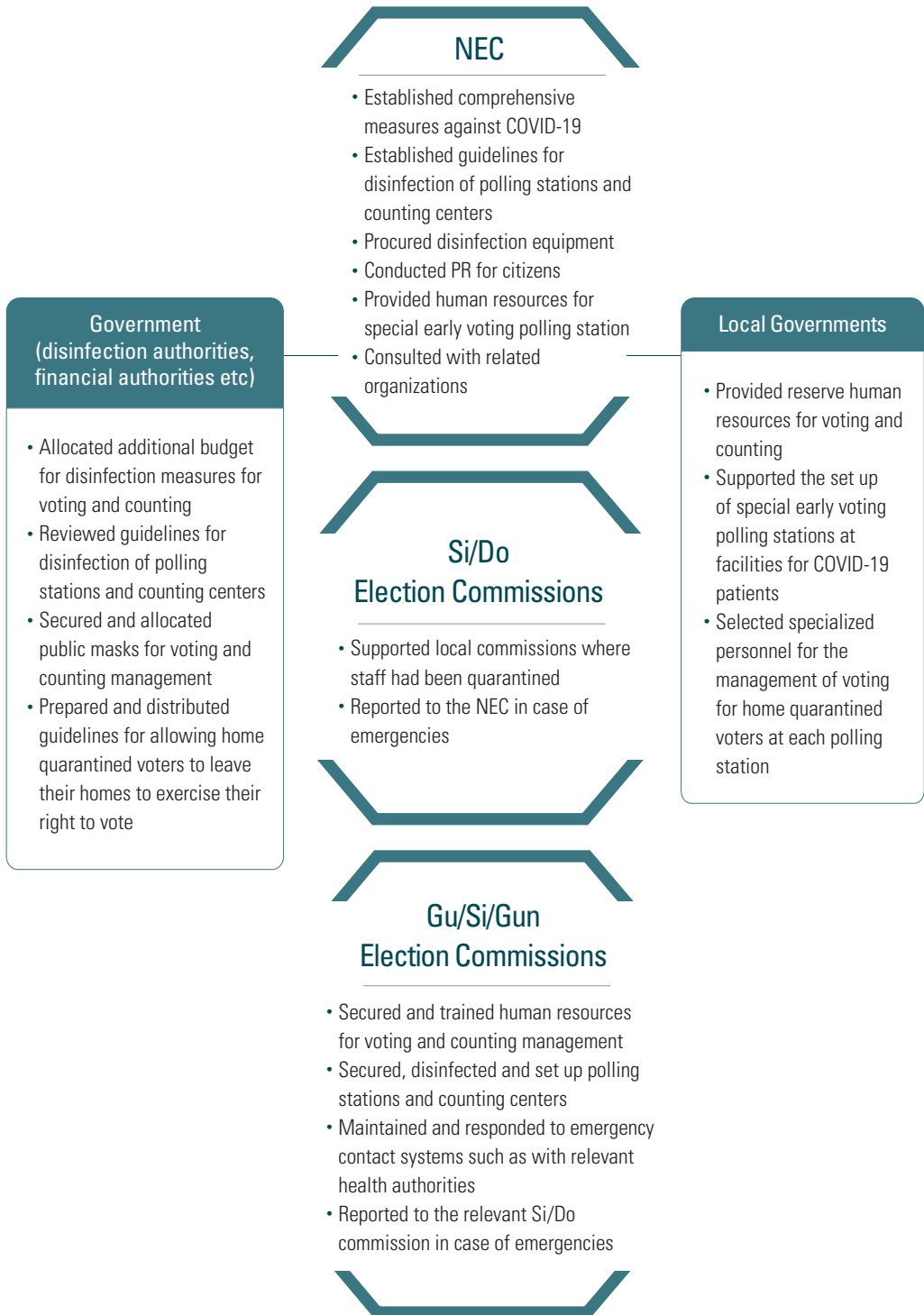
### **3 Establishment of a System of Cooperation with Related Disinfection Organizations**

*“Systematically divided the roles of the election commissions at each level and established a system of cooperation with the relevant government bodies.”*

The election process, including election campaigning, voting and counting, is characterized by meetings of a large group of people and induces a large amount of contact. Therefore, the NEC took comprehensive measures to prevent COVID-19 from spreading during these elections. To this end, there was a systematic division of roles between the election commissions at each level and cooperation and support with related organizations such as the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry of the Interior and Safety and the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The National Election Commission is an independent constitutional body and is structured of the National Election Commission itself, Si/Do Election Commissions and Gu/Si/Gun Election Commissions corresponding to the administrative structure of government. The division of the work that was done related to the prevention of COVID-19 among the commissions is shown in the ‘Comprehensive Election Management System Chart’ below. The NEC participated in a ‘Response Measures Summit with Related Organizations’ such as the Ministry of the Interior and Safety. In addition, through consultation with related organizations such as the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the NEC was able to create a stable election management environment through multilateral support and cooperation on issues such as the additional allocation of a budget and human resources for disinfection during voting and counting, securing equipment such as public masks and allowing home quarantined voters to temporarily leave their quarantine to exercise their right to vote.

[Table 1] Comprehensive Election Management System Chart



# 4 High Sense of Civic Consciousness

*“Citizens voluntarily complied with the Code of Conduct and actively participated to overcome the COVID-19 crisis.”*

In addition, despite the measures to prevent the spread of infectious diseases which causes some inconveniences in peoples daily lives, citizens consciousness in trusting and observing the Code of Conduct set by the NEC was vital to the success of the management of these elections. Compliance with the prevention measures in peoples regular daily life such as ‘washing hands, wearing a mask and social distancing’ carried over into the elections, with citizens keeping a distance 1m or more from others inside and outside of polling stations, wearing a mask, and cooperation with temperature checks and ID verification.

Thanks to the active cooperation of related organizations and the high sense of civic consciousness among citizens, these elections were successfully completed without an infection related to the elections and with a high voter turnout of 66.2% despite the COVID-19 crisis.

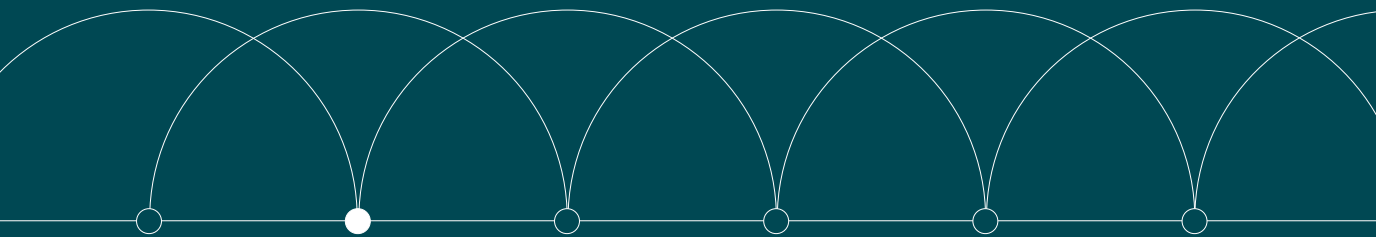


Outdoor voting participation PR material installed at a train station

Part 2

# Elections Overview

- 1 Legislation on Election Day
- 2 National Assembly Elections Overview
- 3 Electoral System



## Part 2

# Elections Overview



## 1 Legislation on Election Day

*“Legislation is in place to prevent election day from being determined by political interests.”*

On March 12, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 as a pandemic and many countries were forced to postpone or cancel their elections as COVID-19 spread worldwide. In Korea, in order to prevent the election day from being decided according to the political interests of each political party, an election day is set by the Public Official Election Act, and the only provision for the postponement of the National Assembly elections is stipulated in this act, stating that the President may postpone the National Assembly elections if they cannot be held for a specific reason such as a disaster or other unavoidable reason. However, the NEC prepared and strictly managed these elections according to the procedures stipulated by law after determining that there would be no difficulties as long as citizens complied with the special disinfection measures set by the NEC.

## 2 National Assembly Elections Overview

*“253 constituency members and 47 proportional representation members of the National Assembly were elected.”*

National Assembly elections in Korea are held every four years according to the Public Official Election Act. The election day for the 21st National Assembly elections was April 15, which was the first Wednesday after April 9, which was 50 days before May 29, the expiration date of the term of office for the 20th National Assembly members. The main election schedule was as follows.

[Table 2] Main Election Schedule

|                                    |                                     |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Preliminary Candidate Registration | From December 17, 2019              |
| Preparation of the Voters List     | March 24 - 28, 2020                 |
| Candidate Registration             | March 26 - 27 (9am – 6pm both days) |
| Campaign Period                    | April 2 - 14                        |
| Overseas Voting                    | April 1 - 6 (8am – 5pm every day)   |
| Shipboard Voting                   | April 7 - 10                        |
| Early Voting                       | April 10 - 11 (6am – 6pm both days) |
| Election Day                       | April 15 (6am – 6pm)                |

The National Assembly is a unicameral body and consists of constituency and proportional representation members. There are 300 seats in total, including 253 constituency member seats and 47 proportional representation member seats.

Constituency members are elected in single member constituencies under the first-past-the-post system. The National Assembly Elections Boundary Delimitation Commission, which has independent status, delimits constituencies before every election considering the population and other related factors. Proportional representation members are elected in one single nationwide constituency, with voters choosing a political party. The number of seats are allocated in a method determined in accordance with the seats allocation method in the Public Official Election Act.

Korean citizens over the age of 18 have the right to vote and the number of voters in these elections totalled around 43.99 million. The right to run as a candidate in these elections is granted to Korean citizens over 25.



Meeting of the National Assembly Election Boundary Delimitation Commission for the 21st National Assembly Elections

### 3 Electoral System

*“In National Assembly elections, voters can cast their ballot through election day voting, early voting, home voting, shipboard voting and overseas voting, and counting is done intensively by each Gu/Si/Gun.”*

In order to have a better understanding of Korea’s election management experience, it is important to briefly explain the voting systems in Korea.<sup>2)</sup>

Firstly, the ways to vote in National Assembly elections in Korea include election day voting, early voting, home voting, shipboard voting and overseas voting. Voters automatically registered on the voters list can vote on election day and during early voting without any prior registration, but home and shipboard voting is only available for those who make a prior registration. Overseas voting is a system that allows those who register as overseas voters or overseas absentees to vote.

Election day voting is the standard form of voting in Korea, and on election day it is only possible for voters to cast their ballot at the polling station set up in the polling district of their registered address.

Early voting is a system for voters who cannot cast their ballot on election day and is held for two days starting from five days before election day. What makes early voting in Korea different from early voting systems in most other countries is that you can vote from anywhere in the country without any separate registration, using your ID card to verify your identity. This early



Voter casting their ballot in accordance with the disinfection rules

2) To find a more detailed explanation about the Korean election system, refer to the 'Introduction to the Electoral and Political Systems of the Republic of Korea' which is downloadable on the NEC English homepage (<https://www.nec.go.kr/engvote/>)



voting system is possible because we use the nationwide integrated voters list prepared through a computerized system and ballot paper printers in polling stations.

Home voting is a system that allows voters who are unable to visit a polling station for specific reasons such as if they are residing in a hospital or care center or have a serious physical disability to vote by mail from their place of residence. Registration is required and must be done during a five day period starting from 22 days before election day, which is the voters list preparation period.

Overseas voting refers to both overseas voters living outside of Korea and those who applied for overseas absentees voting casting their ballots at overseas polling stations set up in diplomatic missions. Overseas voters should register in order to cast their ballot if not already registered.

Shipboard voting is a system for sailors who cannot cast their ballot during early voting or on election day because they will be aboard a ship, and voters should register during the voters list preparation period in writing.

Meanwhile, in Korea ballots are counted by a so-called intensive counting method, with ballots boxes moved after the close of voting at 6pm on election day to be counted at the 251 counting centers from 14,330 polling stations<sup>3)</sup> nationwide. In these elections, an average of 250 people counted an average of 250,000 ballots per counting center.



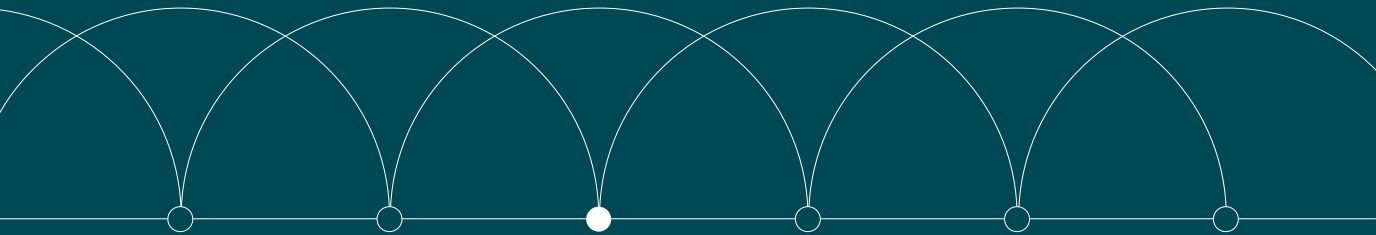
A polling station manager accompanied by a police officer moved a ballot box to a counting center

3) The number of polling stations and counting centers are according to the 21 National Assembly elections

Part 3

# **Election Management System Responding to COVID-19**

- 1 Basic Principles Regarding COVID-19**
- 2 Cooperation with Disinfection Related Organizations**
- 3 Disinfection Measures Enacted**
- 4 Human Resources and Necessary Equipment Secured**
- 5 PR Activities and Information for Voters**



# Election Management System Responding to COVID-19



## 1 Basic Principles Regarding COVID-19

*“Created a safe voting environment, protected peoples right to vote and established a system for cooperating with related organizations.”*

In this COVID-19 crisis, the NEC in consultation with the disinfection authorities set out three main principles for smooth election management and to ensure that all voters could cast their ballots and vote with confidence in their own safety.

The first principle was ‘disinfecting as much as possible is the best election management’ in which the NEC tried to create an environment where people could vote with confidence about their safety by establishing an effective disinfection system.

The second principle was to operate the system in a way suffrage of COVID-19-related persons such as confirmed patients and those in home quarantine were fully protected within the framework of the existing election system outlined by the Public Official Election Act. The scope of home quarantined voters was broadened and on election day the voting time and location for home quarantined voters was separated to allow them to vote and not overlap with other voters. In addition, eight special early voting polling stations were installed and operated for confirmed patients.

Thirdly, by establishing a smooth cooperation system with related organizations responding to COVID-19, organizations in Korea including the government and local governments as well as the National Election Commission made efforts to ensure these elections were held without any issues even in a global crisis.



Voters following social distancing waiting to vote at a polling station

## 2 Cooperation with Disinfection Related Organizations

*“Close cooperation with related organizations was essential to ensure systematic disinfection, secure disinfection equipment and human resources and guarantee the right to vote of confirmed COVID-19 patients.”*

In order to create a safe election environment in the global COVID-19 crisis, cooperation with related organizations was essential. The NEC established a disinfection plan for election management by referring to the ‘Guidelines on the Prevention of the Spread of COVID-19 for Holding Mass Gatherings’ announced by the government and did its best to ensure flawless and safe elections by establishing a system of cooperation with government, local governments and private companies.

Related organizations also sympathized with the importance of election-related affairs and actively cooperated with the NEC. In particular, the NEC maintained close communication and held regular meetings with the relevant organizations working on disease control such as the Ministry of the Interior and Safety, the Ministry of the Economy and Finance, the Ministry of Health and Welfare, the Korean Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety. The main agendas were to secure a budget and human resources for disinfection, establish special early voting polling stations at facilities for confirmed patients, lift restrictions to allow temporary travel for home quarantined voters, and guide the disinfection of polling stations and counting centers.



Meeting held with related organizations

### [Table 3] Requests Made to Related Organizations

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>February 28, 2020</b> | <p>Requested to support human resources for polling stations and counting centers to prevent the spread of COVID-19</p> <p>…→ 12 organizations (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Employment and Labor, Ministry of SMEs and Startups, Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs, National Tax Service, Military Manpower Administration, Rural Development Administration, Korea Forest Service, The Korea Meteorological Administration, Public Procurement Service, Statistics Korea and the Korean Intellectual Property Office).</p> |
| <b>March 6, 2020</b>     | <p>Requested for cooperation in election affairs related to COVID-19 to the Ministry of the Interior and Safety</p> <p>…→ Safe operation of polling stations and counting centers (transfer of suspected patients, cooperation on the installation of temporary polling booths), securing human resources (staff dedicated to checking temperatures and taking care of voters with symptoms and reserve staff) etc.</p>  |
| <b>March 10, 2020</b>    | <p>Requested support from the Ministry of the Interior and Safety regarding home voting registration.</p> <p>…→ Informed those who were accommodated at care centers or hospitals that they could register for home voting during the home voting registration period (March 24-28) after they had been diagnosed with COVID-19.</p>   |
| <b>March 23, 2020</b>    | <p>Requested special supply of masks for polling station and counting center staff (around 1.2 million) to the taskforce under the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety of for the stable supply of masks.</p>   |

### 3 Disinfection Measures Enacted

*“To ensure a systematic and effective response, the NEC established and implemented comprehensive response measures by period and stage as well as sector-specific response measures.”*

After the Korean health authorities raised the infectious disease crisis alert to the highest level of ‘severe’ on February 23, 2020, the NEC announced the ‘Comprehensive Election Management Response Measures Regarding COVID-19’ for the stable management of the 21st National Assembly elections on February 26. The response measures included measures to prevent the spread of infections that may occur during the election management process and countermeasures to respond promptly to infection-related issues.

Based on these comprehensive election management response measures, detailed measures were established for each field of election management including ‘Special COVID-19 Response Measures to Increase Turnout’ (March 12), ‘Special COVID-19 Response Measures for Voting Management’ (March 20) and ‘Special COVID-19 Response Measures for Counting Management’ (April 2) (See appendices 2-4).



Polling stations disinfected according to the disinfection methods

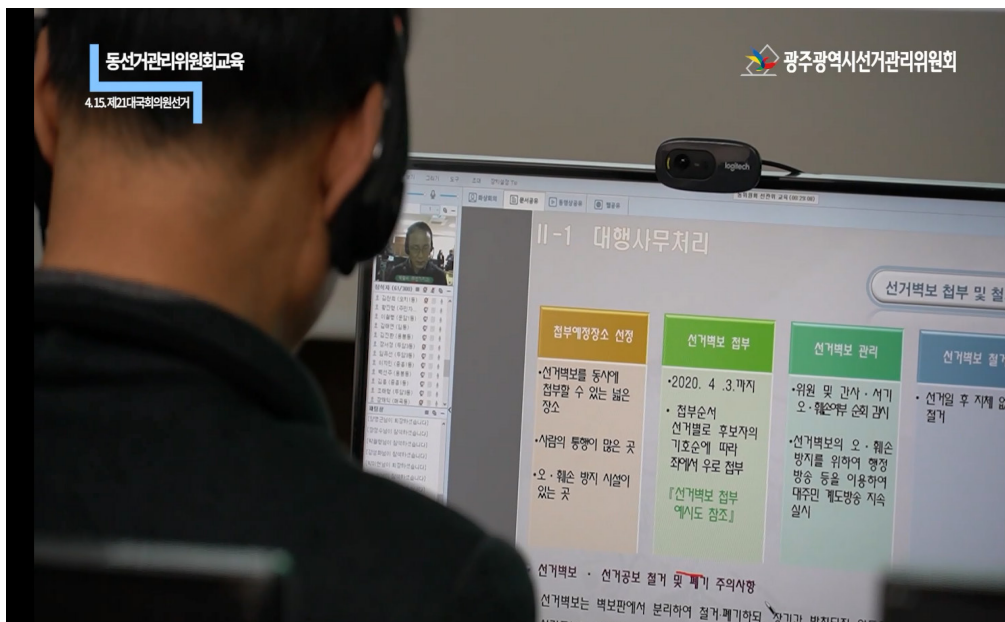
## 4 Human Resources and Necessary Equipment Secured

### Secured Human Resources and Conducted Training

*“In preparation for cases of COVID-19 among election officials, the NEC secured reserve staff and prepared coordination and support plans between commissions.”*

In preparation for cases in which a member of the voting or counting staff from early voting or on election day had a confirmed case of COVID-19 or were unable to carry out the work because they received an order to quarantine as they had come into contact with a confirmed patient, the NEC secured a reserve group of staff made up of public officials, teachers, and members of the public considered fair and neutral. To achieve this, the NEC made official requests to other key governmental bodies to provide human resources for election management, including employees from affiliated organizations.

In addition, various forms of training were operated at a reduced level, and textbooks and videos were distributed to supplement training. When conducting essential training, in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 it was either held in non-contact forms such as using video conference systems, or small-scale training methods were adopted such as visiting the trainees directly.



Training carried out online at a Dong election commission

Meanwhile, the NEC established contingency plans for potential cases where election commission staff had to be isolated. The NEC prepared policies in advance such as reallocating the work within the relevant election commission or department, or providing support from other commissions or departments based on factors such as the number of employees subject to quarantine and the period of time they were quarantined for. In the case these measures did not deal with the issue, a nearby election commission or the relevant higher-level election commission provided support according to the measures set by the NEC.

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### **Secured an Expanded Budget**

***“The NEC consulted with financial authorities and secured the additional budget necessary for disinfection during the elections.”***

The NEC estimated an additional 22 billion Korean won (\$18.4 million USD), which was an increase of approximately 9% of the original budget of 226.7 billion Korean won (\$189 million USD), would be required to respond to COVID-19 and secured approximately 17.6 billion Korean won (\$14.5 million USD) as a reserve after making a request to the financial authorities on the basis that the additional funds would be required to disinfect polling stations and counting centers in order to manage the National Assembly elections in a stable manner. The remaining additional budget required was taken from the NEC’s own budget reserved for other purposes.

The main areas this budget was spent on was disinfecting polling stations and counting centers, purchasing masks for polling and counting staff and thermometers, hand sanitizer, medical gloves, disinfecting tissues and face shields to prevent infections among voters.

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### **Securing Disinfection Equipment**

***“Minimized confusion during the election management process by securing disinfection equipment in advance”***

The NEC identified disinfection equipment and recipients in response to COVID-19 in advance, and the details of the disinfection equipment distribution and the distribution standards are shown in Appendix 5. Because the period for purchasing disinfection equipment was relatively short, the equipment was purchased in a centralized bulk by the NEC.<sup>4)</sup> The quantity of disinfection equipment was calculated based on data from previous elections such as the

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4) Additional disinfection equipment was purchased by the relevant election commissions as required.



number of voters, turnout, and the number of early voting and election day polling stations and counting centers and reserved an additional 10 to 20% of the equipment.

Meanwhile, compared to other disinfection equipment, the supply and demand in the market for masks was very unstable, making it difficult to secure quantities of masks. In response the NEC secured 1.2 million masks as public supplies in consultation with the taskforce (TF) within the government for stabilizing the supply and demand for masks.

Voters were asked to wear masks when coming to the polling station through COVID-19 related information material sent out (Appendix 6) and through the distribution of the code of conduct for participating in the April 15 National Assembly elections (Appendix 7). However, since it would have been unlawful to deny suffrage because a voter is not wearing a mask, polling stations provided a mask only in exceptional cases where the spread of infection was a concern, such as if a person not wearing a mask had a high temperature or respiratory symptoms.

In order to maintain the disinfection effectiveness for polling station and counting center staff as well as observers wearing masks for a long period, if the person was working for more than a normal work shift (more than 8 hours) an additional mask was given to them.

After the election, if there was any unused remaining disinfection equipment, it was provided to schools, kindergartens, military units, small businesses, vulnerable groups such as the low income groups and the disabled, and public health centers. Also, the NEC discarded used masks in one place in a safe way considering environmental issues.



Delivery of disinfection equipment

## 5 PR Activities and Information for Voters

*“The NEC promoted polling stations disinfection measures and a code of conduct through various outlets to help voters cast their ballot with confidence about their safety and to prevent confusion at polling stations.”*

The NEC published a ‘Code of Conduct’ for voters to participate in the April 15 National Assembly elections (Appendix 7) in order to assure voters they could visit polling stations without concerns about their safety and to manage voting in a safe and orderly manner, and this led to voters voluntary participation in voting. It included the following guidelines:

- ① Prepare your ID card in advance before going to the polling station
- ② Avoid being accompanied by young children if possible
- ③ Wash your hands for 30 seconds thoroughly with soap and running water before going to the polling station
- ④ Wear a mask and go to the polling station
- ⑤ Wear the disposable vinyl gloves
- ⑥ Inside and outside of a polling station, stay more than 1m from other voters
- ⑦ Avoid unnecessary conversations inside and outside of the polling station
- ⑧ Lower your mask temporarily at the identification section in the polling station
- ⑨ If you have any symptoms such as a fever, vote at a temporary polling booth and visit a health center after voting
- ⑩ Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and running water for 30 seconds when you return home

This ‘Code of Conduct’ was enclosed in the voting information and election material sent to every household, posted on the NEC’s website, social media, and provided to the media including TV channels and newspapers. In addition, the Chairperson gave two speeches (Appendix 8) to the public (on April 1 and April 14) and this increased the public’s interest and participation in elections by creating an atmosphere where voters cast their ballot with confidence about their safety and fair elections.

In particular e-TV, an election broadcast channel run by the NEC, produced videos explaining the disinfection measures at polling stations and the Code of Conduct for voters. This aimed to increase understanding of the voting process for voters by explaining each step, including making videos using a set that was set up exactly like a polling station and filming the disinfection and voting process with people wearing masks, temperature checks, disposable vinyl gloves, and 1m distancing between voters.

These videos were shown on e-TV and on the NEC’s YouTube channel, and they provided an opportunity to introduce Korea’s disinfection measures at polling stations to a global audience, for example they were used in both domestic and foreign media reports.



The Chairperson of the NEC makes a speech for voters

#### URL Links to Videos on YouTube

- …→ Come and Vote Safely During Early Voting/Come and Vote Safely on Election Day
  - ① For Early Voting: <https://youtu.be/HPvLnFT4GQc>
  - ② For Election Day Voting: <https://youtu.be/V2rYxQaX07M>
- …→ Code of Conduct for Participating in the April 15 National Assembly Elections: <https://youtu.be/vxOBPQtW7kQ>

In addition the NEC live broadcast voting and counting through e-TV and on Naver TV, Kakao TV, YouTube and Facebook to ensure the transparency and credibility of election management as well as to assure voters they could cast their ballot with confidence.

Under the theme ‘New Workers: 1948-2020, Sending the Peoples Representatives to the National Assembly’, a special exhibition was held in collaboration with a private art museum to look back at the last 73 years of elections from the first Constituency Assembly elections in 1948 to these elections and as a result increased interest and participation in these elections by providing an opportunity where voters could participate in artwork themselves.



Live streaming of counting by e-TV, the channel run by the NEC



Promotional Artwork Encouraging People to Participate in Voting Installed in Cheonggyecheon



Special election exhibition 'New Workers: 1948-2020, Sending the Peoples Representatives to the National Assembly'

### [Table 4] Main PR Activities for Increasing Participating in Voting

Motivate people to vote and create a consensus by sharing videos, including famous celebrities encouraging people to vote in the stagnant election mood due to COVID-19.

- Spread an atmosphere of safe voting by sharing viral videos of national action guide contents and containing support messages by celebrities related to COVID-19

| Medium         | Content  | Editions |
|----------------|--|----------|
| Video Campaign | 'Code of Conduct for Participation in the April 15 National Assembly Elections' TV CF      | 1        |
| Viral Videos   | Overcoming COVID-19 message and guides on prevention measures (including with celebrities) | 4        |
|                | Encouragement for voting participation and prevention methods (including with celebrities) | 2        |
| Infographic    | COVID-19 response measures in polling stations   | 2        |
| Card News      | Making voting safe together! etc.  | 3        |
| Webtoon        | Voting can't be stopped by COVID-19  | 1        |
| Placards       | Information on response measures called 'vote safely'                                      | 1        |

Intensive PR activities including on safe voting procedures and the disinfection of polling stations so that the public can vote with confidence and visit polling stations

- Installed confidence in voters through intensive publicity of response measures at polling stations, including broadcasting special features and sending test messages with information to the public

Non face-to-face PR activities such as SNS relay campaigns due to the difficulty in PR activities by visiting voters and using large scale events

# Candidate Registration and Election Campaigning

## Candidate Registration

***“The NEC installed transparent plastic plates to prevent infections during the written submission of candidate registrations.”***

According to the Public Official Election Act, candidates are required to submit a candidate registration application in writing to the relevant election commission, so direct contact during this process was inevitable. In order to prevent the spread COVID-19 temperature checks were carried out on all persons entering the registration place, hand sanitizer was used, all persons had to wear a mask and transparent plastic plates were installed between the candidate and the registration staff.



Installed transparent screen to prevent infection during candidate registration

## Election Campaigning by Candidates and Political Parties

***“Political parties and candidates conducted campaigning in new ways avoiding face-to-face contact.”***

Campaigns by political parties and candidates showed features of ‘untact’ campaigning according to the social distancing movement. Each party decided to refrain from face-to-face election campaigning such as distributing business cards to people or shaking hands at subway

stations and markets where many people commute to minimize direct contact with voters, and campaigning on the internet, text message or by phone was mainly carried out. Also candidates actively used online campaigning, including posting videos of candidates greeting local residents on the street during their commute on YouTube or social network services (SNS), or by introducing videos on how to prevent infectious diseases.

COVID-19 created some obstacles to campaigning, but paradoxically, it was also used as the main issue of election campaigns. Candidates wore work clothes and patrolled streets spreading disinfectant spray, and the word ‘disinfection election’ was born. Also, a new type of election campaigning emerged and was carried out combined with disinfection activities, including texting local residents to give guidance on disinfection measures such as washing hands and wearing masks, or by providing fact checking on COVID-19-related information.



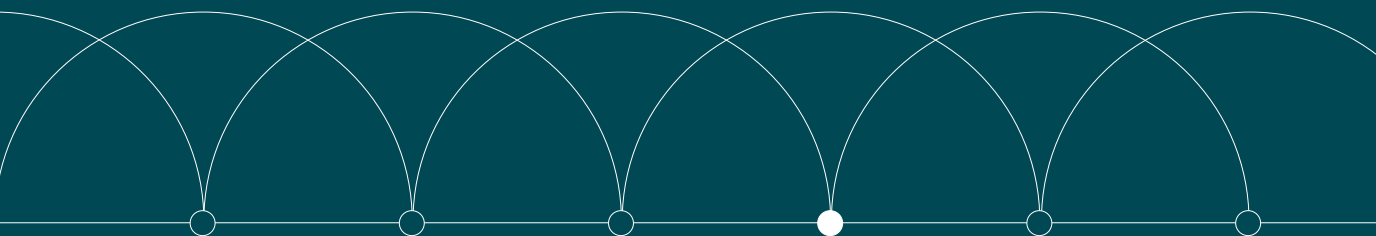
Election campaigning by carrying out disinfection



Election campaigning whilst maintaining social distancing

# Part 4 **Voting Management in Response to COVID-19**

- 1 Set up and Disinfection of Polling Stations**
- 2 Polling Staff Management**
- 3 Home Voting Management**
- 4 Early Voting Management**
- 5 Election Day Voting Management**
- 6 Overseas Election Management**



# Voting Management in Response to COVID-19



## 1 Set up and Disinfection of Polling Stations

### Set Up of Early Voting and Election Day Polling Stations

*“The NEC set up polling stations to separate the voting path for general voters and voters with symptoms such as a high temperature and to minimize congestion in the polling station”*



In these elections, 14,330 election day polling stations and 3,508 early voting polling stations were operated nationwide. When installing these polling stations, the location of the staff assigned to checking voters’ temperatures and a location for installing temporary polling booths for voters with symptoms such as a high temperature were designated in advance considering the layout of the polling station and voting process for voters. Temporary polling booths were generally set up near the entrance of the polling booth, where ventilation was best without overlapping with other voters.



In addition, to maintain order among the voters, information on COVID-19 was posted at the entrance of polling stations. At the exit, the NEC set up bins so voters could dispose of the vinyl gloves used during voting.

In order to minimize the contact between voters, the voting procedure was marked with arrows on the ground. In addition, in order to maintain an appropriate distance between voters, “social distancing of 1m or more” stickers were attached to the ground around polling stations and at the entrances.



Temporary polling booth outside the polling station

### Disinfection of Early Voting and Election Day Polling Stations

***“All polling stations were disinfected before and after voting through private companies specialized in disinfection.”***

The NEC disinfected all polling stations before and after voting took place using private companies specialized in disinfection in order to prevent any infections spreading to voters and those using the facilities. Since early voting took place over a two day period, disinfection of early voting polling stations also took place after the first day of early voting.

A disinfectant approved for COVID-19 by the Ministry of Environment was used and the facility was not used for a period of six hours after disinfection was completed. However, disinfectants with sodium hypochlorite at a level of 1,000ppm or more were not used in polling



Polling station disinfection

stations, since the disinfection authorities recommended that facilities disinfected with sodium hypochlorite should not be used until the day after disinfection.

After the disinfection was carried out, a disinfection certificate was submitted by the company. In addition, by 11pm on the day before the early voting period and election day, it was confirmed again whether or not all polling station places across the country were disinfected so that voters could visit the polling place with confidence.

## 2 Polling Staff Management

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### Secured Additional Human Resources

*“The NEC secured additional staff responsible for disinfection, including staff responsible for taking voters temperature.”*

In these elections, additional personnel at all polling stations were needed to prevent the spread of COVID-19, such as for checking voters’ temperature, checking whether the voters are wearing masks, and aiding with hand sanitizing and wearing disposable vinyl gloves. Therefore, the NEC secured an additional one or two polling station staff for each polling station to do so.

However, there was a reluctance from the staff to check voters’ temperature for a long period and for a number of voters, and it was difficult to secure additional human resources. Therefore, the polling station staff designated to checking voters’ temperature were provided with a face shield in addition to a mask and medical gloves to ensure they could work safely.

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### Polling Station Staff Training

*“The NEC rigorously educated polling station staff on disinfection measures and how to respond to voters.”*

The NEC provided additional education on infection prevention to polling station staff and observers through the polling station manager responsible for the relevant polling station. The main content of the training included information on wearing a mask, periodic disinfection of election equipment including marking devices using disinfecting tissues, and ventilating polling stations. In addition, the polling station staff responsible for checking voters’ temperature and the staff responsible for temporary polling booths were trained in advance about how to respond to voters, including on how to ask voters with symptoms to cast their ballots following the disinfection procedures without reluctance (Appendix 9 and 10)

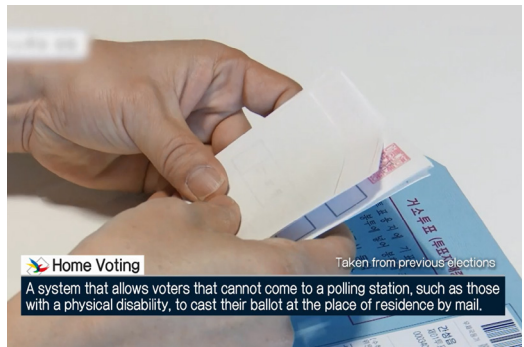


Training for polling station staff

### 3 Home Voting Management

*“The NEC allowed COVID-19 patients to participate in home voting and guaranteed the rights of voters in home quarantine.”*

Home voting is a system where a person who is unable to move freely due to a serious physical disability or a person who has been admitted for a long time in a hospital, sanatorium or detention center can receive their ballot papers by mail and cast their ballot at the place they were residing. Also the NEC allowed home voting for those who were confirmed with COVID-19 and quarantined at a hospital or care center before the home voting registration period closed on March 28.



Home Voting

In addition, the registration process was diversified in consideration of the spread of infectious diseases. As before registration in writing was required, but for these elections home voting registration by e-mail, facsimile and text message was allowed when it was confirmed the registration was made according to their own will.

5) These are the envelopes containing home voting ballots



A voter casting their ballot during home voting (a polling booth in a hospital, sanatorium or care center)

The NEC instructed registered home voters to wear masks and disposable plastic gloves during the voting processes, including when they received their home voting ballot papers. The home voting return envelopes collected from hospitals and care centers were put into the mailbox or turned over to the post office after disinfection. When receiving the returned envelopes<sup>5)</sup>, the relevant Gu/Si/Gun commissions strengthened hygiene management by wearing masks and gloves and frequently using hand sanitizers.

## 4 Early Voting Management

***As many voters participated in early voting, it reduced the number of voters in polling stations on election day.”***

Early voting is a system that allows voters to cast their ballot at any polling station across the country, and an early voting polling station was installed in every Eup/Myeon/Dong for a two day period starting from five days before election day for voters who could not cast their ballot on election day. There were a total of 3,508 early voting polling stations, including eight special early voting polling stations which were additionally installed at care centers where COVID-19 patients were being treated.

6) Voters casting their ballot outside their registered district also received a return envelope

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## Voting Procedure for Early Voting

*“All voters had their temperature checked at the entrance of the polling station and any voter with symptoms was guided to a temporary polling booth.”*

The voting procedure for voters with no symptoms was as follows:

- ① Polling station staff responsible for checking voters’ temperatures checked the temperature of all voters.
- ② Voters with a high temperature (37.5°C or above) or respiratory symptoms moved to a temporary polling booth to vote, and those with no symptoms entered the early voting polling station.
- ③ Voters disinfected their hands with the hand sanitizer and wore vinyl gloves provided upon entering the early voting polling station.
- ④ After the voter’s ID had been checked, they receive their ballot papers<sup>6)</sup>. For identification purposes, polling station staff instructed voters to lower or take off their masks briefly unless the voter could be identified with their mask on. If the voter refused to lower or take off their mask, polling station staff informed them that they may not participate in voting.
- ⑤ Next the voter marked their ballot papers in the polling booth, placed them inside the ballot box.
- ⑥ Voters placed their gloves into the bin set up at the exit of the polling station prior to leaving.

In addition, during the early voting process the early voting polling station staff regularly ventilated the polling station and sterilized election equipment using disinfecting tissues. Disposable vinyl gloves worn by voters were put into a disposal bin (disposable bag) and were incinerated at the end of early voting.

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7) Voters casting their ballot outside their registered district put the return envelope inside the temporary polling booth envelope.

The voting procedure for voters with symptoms such as a high temperature should follow the process below after moving to a temporary polling booth:

- ① The voter disinfected their hands with the hand sanitizer provided and wore vinyl gloves.
- ② The polling station staff responsible for the temporary polling booth checked the voters identification using their ID card and the voter filled in the 'confirmation of identity' form.
- ③ Once the ID check was complete, the polling station staff responsible for the temporary polling booth then received the ballot papers and went to pass the ballot papers to the voter together with a temporary polling station envelope
- ④ The voter went inside the temporary polling booth and marked the ballot papers, with observers present outside.
- ⑤ The voter put the marked ballot papers inside the temporary polling station envelope<sup>7)</sup> and sealed it to keep the ballot secret before they passed it to the polling station staff responsible for the temporary polling booth.
- ⑥ The polling station staff, in the presence of observers, passed the envelope to the polling station manager.
- ⑦ The polling station manager placed the ballots or the return envelope into the ballot box in the presence of observers.
- ⑧ Polling station staff sterilized equipment using disinfection tissues and ventilated temporary voting booths.



① Temperature Checks



②

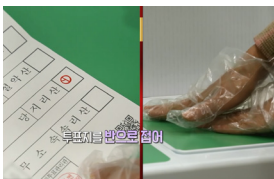
Voting procedure for voters with no symptoms



③ Hand Sanitizing, Disposable Gloves



④ ID Verification, Ballot Paper Receipt



⑤ Marking the Ballots, Placing in the Ballot Box



⑥ Leave the Polling Station



②

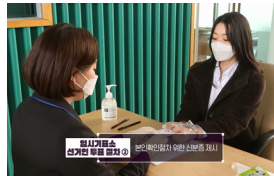
Voting Procedure for Early Voting with a High Temperature or Respiratory Symptoms



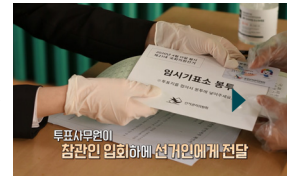
Temperature Check (37.5 degrees or above)



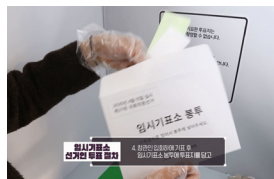
① Hand Sanitizing, Disposable Gloves



② ID Verification



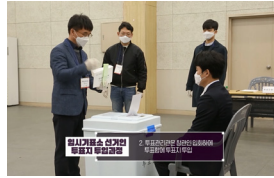
③ Delivery of Ballots Papers etc



④ Marking the Ballots in the Temporary Polling Booth



⑤ Delivery of Envelope



⑦ Placing Ballots in the Ballot Box



⑧ Disinfection and Ventilation

## Set up of Special Early Voting Polling Stations

*“The NEC guaranteed the right of voters who were confirmed with COVID-19 and being treated in care centers after the end of the home registration period.”*

The NEC established special early voting polling stations in eight care centers across the country where those with relatively mild cases of COVID-19 were being treated and were allowed to move freely within the facilities in order to guarantee the right of voters who were unable to register for home voting because they were confirmed with COVID-19 after March 28, the deadline for home voting registration. In addition, measures were put in place to allow medical staff working at these quarantine facilities to also vote at these special early voting polling stations.



Polling station staff wearing level-D PPE <news1>

Polling station staff for special early voting polling stations were recruited from among employees at the relevant care centers and NEC officials, taking into account peoples reflectance to work at special early voting polling stations in care facilities and coming into contact with COVID-19 patients and that the staff would have to be home quarantined and would not be able to go to work. In particular, in the case of the staff from NEC, their voluntary support as volunteers reduced the burden on the duties of the election commissions at each level. In addition, in consultation with the disinfection authorities, safety equipment such as protective clothing worn by medical staff at the care center, was provided to the polling station staff. Personal protective equipment (PPE) had to be worn in accordance with the instructions provided by the center and staff were advised not to take off PPE arbitrarily.



Voting taking place



Disinfecting early voting return envelopes



In order to prevent the spread of the infection at the special early voting polling stations, confirmed patients voted after medical staff had cast their ballot, the order of voting was broadcast around the facility to prevent voters overlapping and also voters came to the polling station one by one as instructed by the polling station staff. The polling staff avoided unnecessary conversation as much as possible during the voting process and guided the voters through the process using hand gestures or other non-verbal guidance.

In addition, items such as polling booths and stationary that were used at the polling station were disposed of at the facility to prevent infection, and the return envelopes were disinfected and handed over to the post office.

## 5 Election Day Voting Management

Election day voting means that a voter must cast their ballot at their designated polling station according to their registered residence. There were a total of 14,330 polling stations across the country.

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### **Voting Procedures for Election Day**

*“The NEC gave guidance to voters that they would be required to have their temperature checked and hands sanitized and they had to wear masks and disposable vinyl gloves to vote”*

Election day voting was conducted in the same manner as early voting except for return envelopes for voters casting their ballot outside their registered district. The main parts of the process were:

- ① Voters wearing a mask had their temperature checked at the entrance of the polling station and used the hand sanitizer provided.
- ② Voters wore the vinyl gloves provided at the entrance of the polling station and had their ID checked.
- ③ Voters received their ballot papers, marked their ballot papers in the polling booth.
- ④ Voters put the ballots in the ballot box
- ⑤ Voters put their disposable vinyl gloves as they left the polling station.

The voting procedures that voters with symptoms such as a high temperature used to cast their ballot in a temporary polling booth was the same as those for early voting.

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8) Those who came into close contact with a person with COVID-19 or those who are required to quarantine after arriving from abroad.

## Protecting the Right to Vote for Home Quarantined Voters

*“The NEC guaranteed the right to vote for home quarantined voters but at the same time protected against the spread of COVID-19 by separating the voting process from other voters.”*

In order to guarantee the suffrage of home quarantined voters<sup>8)</sup> who have the right to vote, the authorities responsible for quarantines temporarily lifted restrictions on their movement on election day through consultation with the NEC. However, there was a concern about the possible spread of COVID-19 to voters and polling station staff if home quarantined voters visited polling stations on election day, and therefore countermeasures were prepared and implemented (Appendix 11).



Voting in process

The NEC decided to separate the voting times and locations so that voters and home quarantined voters could cast their ballots without overlapping. Firstly in regards to different voting periods, home quarantined voters arrived at their polling station just before the close of voting (6pm) and waited at a nearby waiting place. After the voting period had ended, the home quarantined voters entered the temporary polling booth one by one. According to election law



Polling station staff operating temporary polling booths for home quarantined voters



Voting by home quarantined persons

8) Those who came into close contact with a person with COVID-19 or those who are required to quarantine after arriving from abroad.

in Korea, since any voter waiting to cast their ballot at the close of voting is given a numbered ticket to allow them to vote and the polling station should only be closed after they have voted, the NEC applied this provision to home quarantined voters to guarantee their right to vote in a safe manner.<sup>9)</sup>



Voters waiting

Next, when it came to separating the location of voting, the NEC decided to use a temporary polling booths that were used for voters with a high temperature or respiratory system at each polling place. The temporary polling booths were set up in a well-ventilated place in the polling place or outside so contact with other voters could be minimized.

The NEC prepared a plan to move the home quarantined voters to the polling station. The authorities responsible for quarantines only allowed home quarantined voters who did not have a high temperature or respiratory symptoms and could travel to a polling station from their place of quarantine within 30 minutes to cast their ballot. Home quarantined voters were only allowed to travel to polling stations accompanied by staff appointed by local governments in a way that minimized contact with the public, such as by foot or by car (use of public transport prohibited).

In addition, the authorities responsible for quarantines designated dedicated personnel for the management of quarantined persons to each polling station in addition to the polling station staff appointed by the NEC to support home quarantined voters waiting to cast their ballot to enter temporary polling booths in order and the management of the process.

Meanwhile, since home quarantined voters were more likely to be infected with COVID-19 than other voters, the NEC provided a higher level of personal protection equipment to the polling station staff responsible for temporary polling booths for home quarantined voters. They wore type 4 protective clothing, face shields, masks, medical gloves, and shoe covers. Also, in addition to the existing allowances and remuneration of 90,000 Korean won (\$75 USD), an additional 60,000 Korean won (\$50 USD) was paid to those staff.

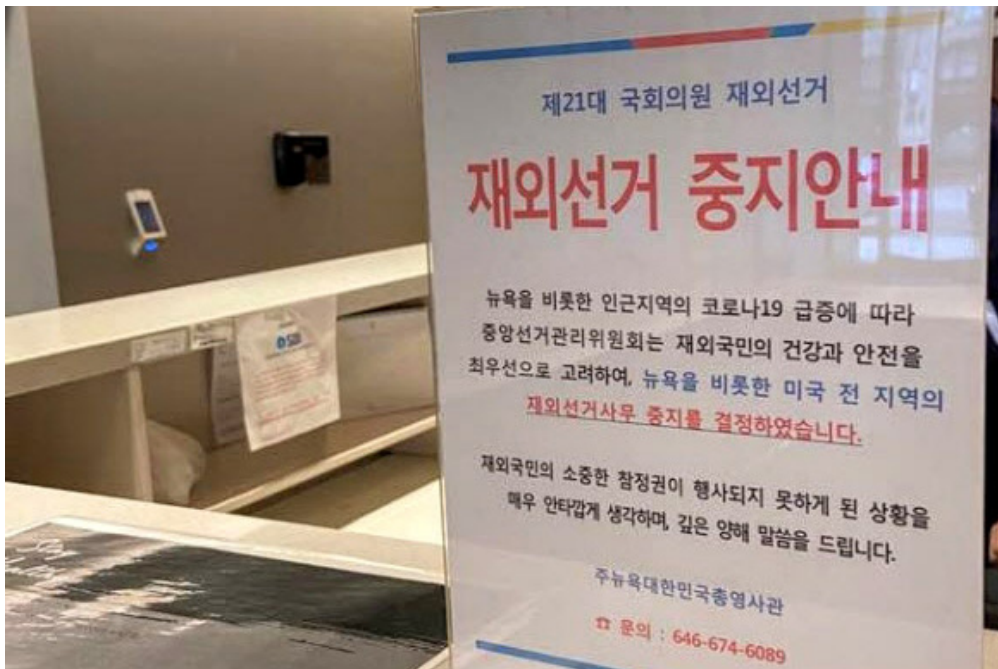
9) Public Official Election Act Article 155 (Balloting Hours) (1) A polling station shall open at 6 a.m. and close at 6 p.m. (8 p.m. in the special election, etc.) on the election day: Provided, That if there are electors waiting to vote at the polling station at the time it is closed, the number tickets shall be given to them and the polling station shall be closed after they finish voting. <Amended by Act No. 7189, Mar. 12, 2004>

## 6 Overseas Election Management

*“Flexible responses were undertaken, for example deciding on whether or not overseas voting was carried out or whether or not the ballots from overseas voting were returned to Korea for counting, depending on the situation of the host country and the head of the relevant diplomatic mission’s opinion, including if there were restrictions on mobility.”*

Overseas voting for the 21st National Assembly elections was originally planned to be held at 176 diplomatic missions in 117 countries. However, there were some countries where the host country implement restrictive measures to citizens, including quarantines and lockdowns or it was impossible to operate overseas polling stations because the diplomatic mission had been closed and the staff were forced to work from home. Therefore the NEC made ten separate decisions to suspend all overseas election-related operations at 91 diplomatic missions in 55 countries to protect the lives and safety of overseas Koreans.

When it was difficult to secure a polling station staff due to the COVID-19 situation, the polling station was operated with a minimum number of personnel and to prepare for possible infections a reserve of polling station staff was secured in advance.



Announcement of the suspension of overseas voting



Overseas polling station staff

Also, as a measure against the spread of COVID-19, an emergency contact network was established to communicate with the health authorities in the host country, and a nearby medical facility that could treat COVID-19 patients was contacted and set in advance. Disinfection

of polling stations was carried out, and disinfection equipment such as thermometers, hand sanitizer, and disposable plastic gloves were placed in the polling stations. The door handles, polling booths and marking devices were periodically sanitized by polling station staff with disinfecting tissues.

Polling station staff all wore masks and medical gloves, and unnecessary conversation was prohibited. Voters had to maintain a distance of 1 meter or more from each other, and voters with a high temperature or respiratory symptoms were asked to vote separate temporary polling booths.

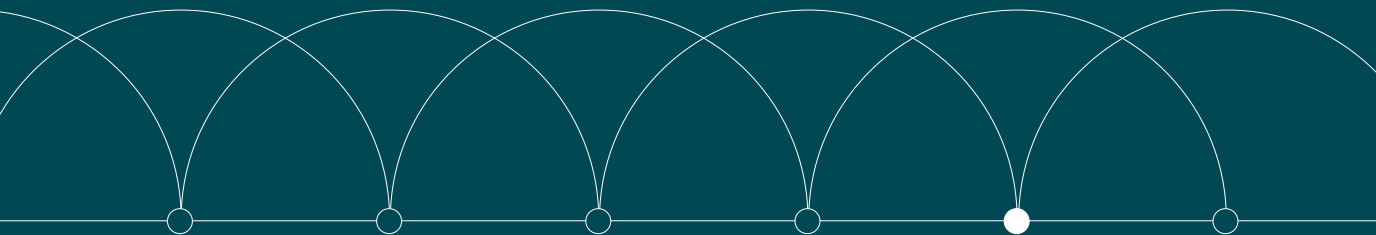
As for returning ballots to Korea, firstly efforts were made to send the ballots directly back to Korea but if that was not possible it was also allowed to deliver the ballots via a third country using a diplomatic pouch. However if it was not possible to return the ballots to the relevant Gu/Si/Gun election commission by 6pm on election day, counting was conducted at the diplomatic missions.<sup>10)</sup>

10) Counting at diplomatic missions was done for the first time in history during the 21st National Assembly elections at 18 diplomatic missions in 17 countries.

Part 5

# Counting Management in Response to COVID-19

- 1 Set up and Disinfection of Counting Centers
- 2 Counting Staff Management
- 3 Counting Process



# Counting Management in Response to COVID-19



## 1 Set up and Disinfection of Counting Centers

*“Because a counting center is a place where a large number of people may gather, the NEC paid attention to disinfection and controls at the entrance of counting centers.”*

When voting ended on election day, the ballot boxes from each polling station were transferred to the relevant counting center to proceed with counting. Since counting centers were set up at a place where a large number of people including counting staff and observers gathered, a space as large as possible was secured to prevent the spread of COVID-19.



Panorama shot of a counting center

In addition, counting centers were set up in a way that each counting section and all counting staff members were an appropriate distance apart. For counting observers an area of observation was set up so that they could maintain an appropriate distance from counting staff when observing, for example using tape on the floor.



Disinfection of a counting center

Before and after counting the inside and outside of counting centers, hallways, toilets and elevators were disinfected using specialist disinfection companies. On election day when counting was held, disinfection mats for disinfecting peoples shoes were installed in the entrance of counting centers, temperature checks were carried out and hand sanitizer was placed at the entrance at various points inside the counting center.



Disinfection of a counting center



## 2 Counting Staff Management

*“The NEC restricted entrance to the counting center for people with a high temperature or symptoms and secured reserve staff in case counting staff experienced symptoms such as a high temperature.”*

Not only election commissioners and election commission staff, but also national and local civil servants, school staff, staff from public institutions, and members of the public considered fair and neutral who were appointed as counting center staff undertook and supported counting procedures in cooperation with medical, fire fighting, electrical and security staff.



Training for counting staff

To ensure that counting could proceed safely at counting centers, the NEC informed related bodies such as organizations that nominated counting staff and political parties that temperature checks would be held and those with symptoms such as a high temperature would not be allowed to enter a counting center. Counting staff and observers with symptoms such as a high temperature could be replaced by reserve staff if necessary.

In addition, reserve counting center staff were secured with the cooperation of related organizations in preparation for an emergency situation in which a member of the counting staff could not perform their counting work, for example if they were confirmed with COVID-19



Training for counting staff

### 3 Counting Process

*“During the counting process, guidance for counting was broadcast regularly inside the counting center to maintain order in the counting center.”*

Any person who had symptoms such as a high temperature was prevented from entering the counting center by assigning a member of staff responsible for checking the temperature of all entrants into the counting center, including counting staff and observers.

Also, all entrants into the counting center, including counting staff and observers, had to wear masks inside and outside of the counting center and used the hand sanitizer placed at the entrance of the counting center so that they could regularly sanitize their hands inside the counting center. Door handles and election equipment that were frequently touched by counting staff were sterilized frequently using disinfecting tissues.

Counting staff had to wear a mask, medical gloves and a face shield when undertaking



Temperature and mask check for counting staff

©Newsis



Panorama shot of a counting center

counting and avoid unnecessary conversations not related to counting during the counting process. Counting observers kept an appropriate distance from the counting staff when observing the counting process. When moving within the counting center, observers were encouraged not to come into close



Counting Staff in counting centers wearing face shields

contact with other counting staff or observers and to go outside the counting center if they wanted to carry out any long conversations (Appendix 12).

During the counting process, guidance on the behaviour of counting staff was broadcast and if any member of the counting staff did not comply with the guidance, for example if they did not wear a mask, they may have been sent out of the counting center.



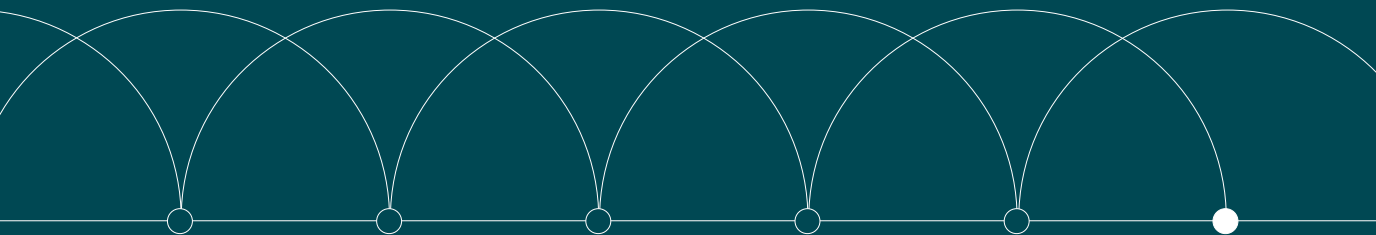
Counting staff inside the counting center wearing masks, face shields and medical gloves

Part 6

# Election Management Evaluation

1 Media Overview

2 International Cooperation and Information Dissemination



# Election Management Evaluation



***“These elections were as a result of thorough preparation by the NEC, active cooperation of related organizations, and a mature sense of civic consciousness among voters.”***

These National Assembly elections in Korea were held during the spread of COVID-19 under the principle that 'disinfecting as much as possible is the best election management,' and 'not one person' was infected with COVID-19 related to these elections through the efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19 in the elections.

In particular, the NEC cooperated not only with national and local government, related agencies, private companies, political parties and candidates, but also voluntarily and actively cooperated with voters to thoroughly prepare in advance in a short period of time. The NEC made an environment where voters could cast their ballot safely, including by creating a Code of Conduct for voters, and fostered an atmosphere where people could participate in voting. The NEC also protected the right to vote as much as possible, including by setting up special early voting polling stations in care centers for patients with COVID-19.

Of course, despite the efforts of the NEC introduced in this paper to prevent the spread of COVID-19, it was difficult to guarantee the suffrage of every single person in quarantine and there were limitations to the suffrage of some overseas Koreans due to the suspension of election-related affairs at some overseas voting locations. In addition, as the political parties and candidates had to conduct non-face-to-face election campaigns it might have been difficult for voters to actively participate in all parts of the election, so in the long term it will be necessary to supplement the new systems in response to an era with less personal contact.

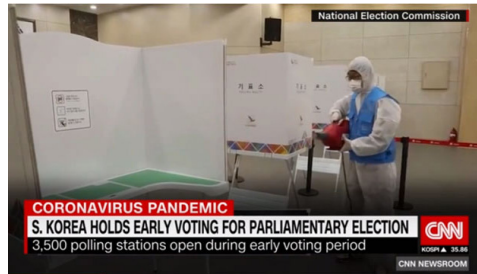
Nevertheless, the overall turnout for the 21st National Assembly elections was 66.2% (29.12 million), reaching the highest level in National Assembly elections in 28 years, and the early voting turnout for these elections was the highest recorded since the introduction of the early voting system in 2013 (26.69%, 11.74 million people). Although these elections were held in the situation where all social activities were restricted due to COVID-19, voters passionately expressed their mature sense of civic consciousness through voting. The success of these elections was a result of the NEC and the disinfection authorities working together to create an environment where voters could cast their ballot safely and voters, who trusted these efforts and followed the guidelines.

# 1 Media Overview

*“South Korea shows the world how to hold elections during a pandemic.”<sup>11)</sup>*

News organizations from around the world, including CNN, used English press releases posted on the NEC’s English homepage and overall the elections received a positive evaluation for being held successfully.

Time Magazine noted that ‘if the vote is conducted without causing a spike of coronavirus infections, it may provide a roadmap for upcoming elections in other countries, including the Nov. 3 election in the United States.’<sup>12)</sup> Meanwhile, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) evaluated that ‘the seamless management of these elections by the NEC and the level of voter participation despite the serious risks of exposure to the COVID-19 disease, offered an early indication that, for the most part, the stringent safeguards that were put in place by the NEC worked well.’<sup>13)</sup>



CNN report on the elections



BBC report on the elections

11) 'Opinion: South Korea shows the world how to hold elections during a pandemic' (Washington Post, April 15, 2020)  
12) 'South Korea Is Voting in the Middle of Coronavirus. Here's What U.S. Could Learn About Its Efforts to Protect Voters' (Time Magazine, April 13 2020)  
13) 'Managing Elections under the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Republic of Korea's Crucial Test' (International IDEA, April 18)

## 2 International Cooperation and Information Dissemination

*“The NEC has been sharing Korea’s experiences with election management bodies to help other countries amid the COVID-19 crisis ahead of their elections.”*

The NEC normally operates an 'International Election Observation Program' for every election which introduces the election system in the Republic of Korea to election officials from around the world. However due to the spread of COVID-19, it was difficult to invite officials from around the world for an in-person observation and it was replaced by cyber international election observation, which allowed indirect observation in a non-face-to-face manner.

The NEC produced video entitled ‘Democracy Blooming in the Middle of a Crisis: 2020 National Assembly Elections in the Republic of Korea’ in five languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Russian) that vividly captures the entire election process, including images from voting and counting, COVID-19 response measures in voting and counting and citizens keeping to social distancing guidelines. It was posted on NEC’s English homepage and on YouTube and was sent to organizations originally planning to participate in the NEC’s observation program, international organizations, and embassies in Korea.



Video published by the NEC 'Democracy Blooming in the Middle of a Crisis – 2020 National Assembly Elections in the Republic of Korea.'

### Video Links

Democracy Blooming in the Middle of a Crisis: 2020 National Assembly Elections in the Republic of Korea

- NEC English Homepage: [https://www.nec.go.kr/engvote\\_2013/07\\_inact/07\\_05.jsp](https://www.nec.go.kr/engvote_2013/07_inact/07_05.jsp)
- NEC YouTube Page: [https://youtu.be/l\\_-Bnmk26Wc](https://youtu.be/l_-Bnmk26Wc)

In addition, real-time live broadcast schedules and links for early voting, election day voting and counting were announced and posted on the NEC homepage, a full report entitled 'Election Management in Response to COVID-19 and the 21st National Assembly Elections in the Republic of Korea' was translated and provided in English to give practical help to other countries.

When the NEC received requests to share Korea's experience in responding to COVID-19, the NEC actively responded by participating in webinars, answering questions and provided required documents. The NEC attended conference calls at the request of the US State Department ahead of the November US Presidential election on May 29 and with the Central Election Commission of the Kyrgyz Republic ahead of the October general elections on July 16, and expects to hold in five more conference calls, including with the Organization of American State (OAS).

The NEC also plans to hold a webinar entitled 'Election Management During COVID-19' in which it will share to Korean experience in COVID-19 response measures together with the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB). Three to four webinars will be held, each for participants from difference continents. On June 3 the first in the series was held together with A-WEB and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) with seven election management bodies from South and Central America.



Video conference sharing election experiences between Korean and the US on May 29

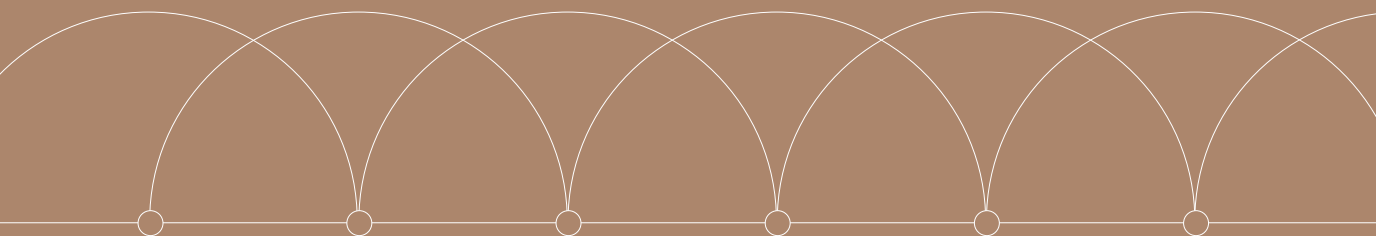


First webinar in a series focusing on sharing Korea's COVID-19 response measures in election management held on June 3



# Appendix

- 1 <FAQ> Key Questions and Answers on the Election Management in Korea
- 2 NEC's Election Management in Response to COVID-19 in Stages
- 3 Main Contents of the Comprehensive COVID-19 Response Measures in Election Management
- 4 Main Contents of the COVID-19 Response Measures to Increase Turnout
- 5 Pictures of and Distribution Guidelines for Main Disinfection Equipment
- 6 Information Related to COVID-19 for Voters
- 7 Code of Conduct for Participation in the April 15 National Assembly Elections
- 8 Message to Citizens by the Chairperson of the NEC
- 9 Guidelines for Staff Conducting Temperature Checks on Helping Voters
- 10 Guidelines for Polling Station Staff Designated to Temporary Polling Booths on Helping Voters
- 11 Voting Process for Quarantined Voters
- 12 Guidelines for Counting Officials



## <FAQ> Key Questions and Answers on Election Management in Korea

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### Physical and Human Resources

- Q.** How did you calculate the required quantity of disinfection equipment such as masks, face shields and hand sanitizer?
- A.** We calculated the required quantity based on data such as the number of eligible voters by region, historical turnout and the number of early voting and election day polling stations. The NEC prepared an additional 10 to 20% than the estimated required quantity allowed
- Q.** Was there a separate guideline for the delivery of disinfection equipment? How did you store the disinfection equipment?
- A.** There were no guidelines for the delivery of disinfection equipment. However, delivery responsibilities were specified in the procurement contract, and monitoring of the deliveries were strengthened due to the tight schedule. Delivered disinfection equipment was kept in free storage space such as the meeting room of the relevant Gu/Si/Gun election commission.
- Q.** How many additional polling station staff were required at each polling station, and how did you recruit them?
- A.** One or two members of staff were additionally assigned to check voters' temperature at each polling station, and they were mainly recruited from among civil servants, school staff or members of the public considered fair and neutral directly or through the cooperation of local governments.
- Q.** How did you hold training for polling station staff?
- A.** The Gu/Si/Gun election commissions conducted training for polling station managers and other related persons, and then polling station managers provided training for polling station staff on the prevention of infections and how to respond to voters. In addition, training by video and conference call was conducted by producing videos of voting procedures related to COVID-19 prevention.

**Q. What measures were taken to ensure the safety of polling and counting staff?**

**A.** Polling and counting staff wore masks and medical gloves, and voters wore disposable vinyl gloves to block any direct contact. However, additional protection was provided to polling station staff such as face shields for staff responsible for checking voters' temperature and for counting staff and face shields and medical-level protective clothing for polling station staff responsible for temporary polling booths for home quarantined voters.

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## **Establishment of a Disinfection System**

**Q. Were there any additional precautions introduced to ensure the safety of voters over the age of 60?**

**A.** No additional measures were taken for voters over 60 years old in relation to the prevention of the spread of COVID-19. However, through various channels the NEC informed those in high-risk groups, such as the elderly or those with underlying illnesses, to pay more attention to personal hygiene.

**Q. Were there any changes to election management due to the disinfection guideline?**

**A.** Under the principle that 'disinfecting as much as possible is the best election management' a disinfection system was implemented to help voters cast their ballot safely. However, the essential principles of election management, such as ID verification, were maintained.

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## **Candidate Registration and Election Campaigning**

**Q. How did candidates submit candidate registration documents?**

**A.** Candidate registration documents were received in person or by mail. If the documents were received in person, a screen was installed between the staff and candidates to prevent COVID-19 infections, and all persons were asked to wear masks and medical gloves and disinfect their hands with hand sanitizer.

**Q. What types of election campaigning were carried out and what was maximum number of people allowed to gather at a location where election campaigning is taking place?**

**A.** Election campaigning for the 21st National Assembly elections were conducted mostly online rather than in person. Although there was no regulation on the maximum number of people who could engage in in-person campaigning, candidates proceeded to campaign while minimizing in-person contact and keeping social distance as much as possible.

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## General Voting

**Q. Did you secure large spaces for polling stations than the normal standard?**

**A.** With the election imminent it was difficult to change the 14,330 polling stations nationwide, however some changes were made to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Most polling stations were operated while keeping an appropriate distance between voters inside and outside the existing polling station according to the provided guidance.

**Q. How did you maintain an appropriate distance between voters in polling stations?**

**A.** With the cooperation of local governments, 'One meter distance' stickers were placed on the floor inside and outside of polling stations. In addition, a polling station staff guided voters to keep more than one meter apart from other voters in the polling station, and required other remaining voters to wait outside.

**Q. Was there a separate document voters had to submit to prove that they were not carrying COVID-19?**

**A.** There were no separate documents required for the general public. However, by conducting a temperature check for all voters at the entrance to the polling station, those who were suspected of having potential cases of COVID-19 were directed to vote at a temporary polling booth separately.

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## Voting for Patients Confirmed with COVID-19 and Home Quarantined Voters

- Q. How did confirmed COVID-19 patients cast their ballots?**
- A.** Those who were confirmed with COVID-19 before the end of the home voting registration period and were being treated in hospital or care centers could register as home voters and participate in home voting. However, those who were confirmed with COVID-19 after the end of the home voting registration period were able to participate in early voting in one of the eight special early voting polling stations set up in care centers.
- Q. Were ballots cast by those such as COVID-19 patients disinfected separately?**
- A.** During early voting, where voting was held at a care center where COVID-19 patients had cast their ballots all of the equipment used for voting was disinfected and the ballots were transferred.
- Q. How did home quarantined voters cast their ballot on election day?**
- A.** They were able to cast their ballots at temporary polling booths for home quarantined voters who arrived at the polling station just before 6pm by foot or by car. Polling station staff wearing personal protective equipment disinfected the ballot booth and the marking device with disinfecting tissue every time a voter had finished casting their ballot. However, home quarantined voters were only allowed to vote if they applied for voting prior to voting. They were also unable to vote if they had a high temperature or respiratory symptoms.

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## Overseas Voting

- Q. How did you deliver the overseas voting election equipment?**
- A.** We did not take any special measures when delivering the overseas voting election equipment to the diplomatic missions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs prior to the large-scale spread of COVID-19. However, disinfectant was sprayed on the diplomatic pouch when returning overseas voting ballots, and all officials conducted daily temperature checks and wore disposable masks and medical gloves during the overseas voting process.
- Q. How did you promote participation in overseas elections?**
- A.** Promotion of participation in overseas voting was done mainly focusing on online channels not through in-person methods. In addition, as overseas voting was suspended at a number of diplomatic missions, information on the method and process for voting if voters returned to Korea was created and given to overseas Koreans.

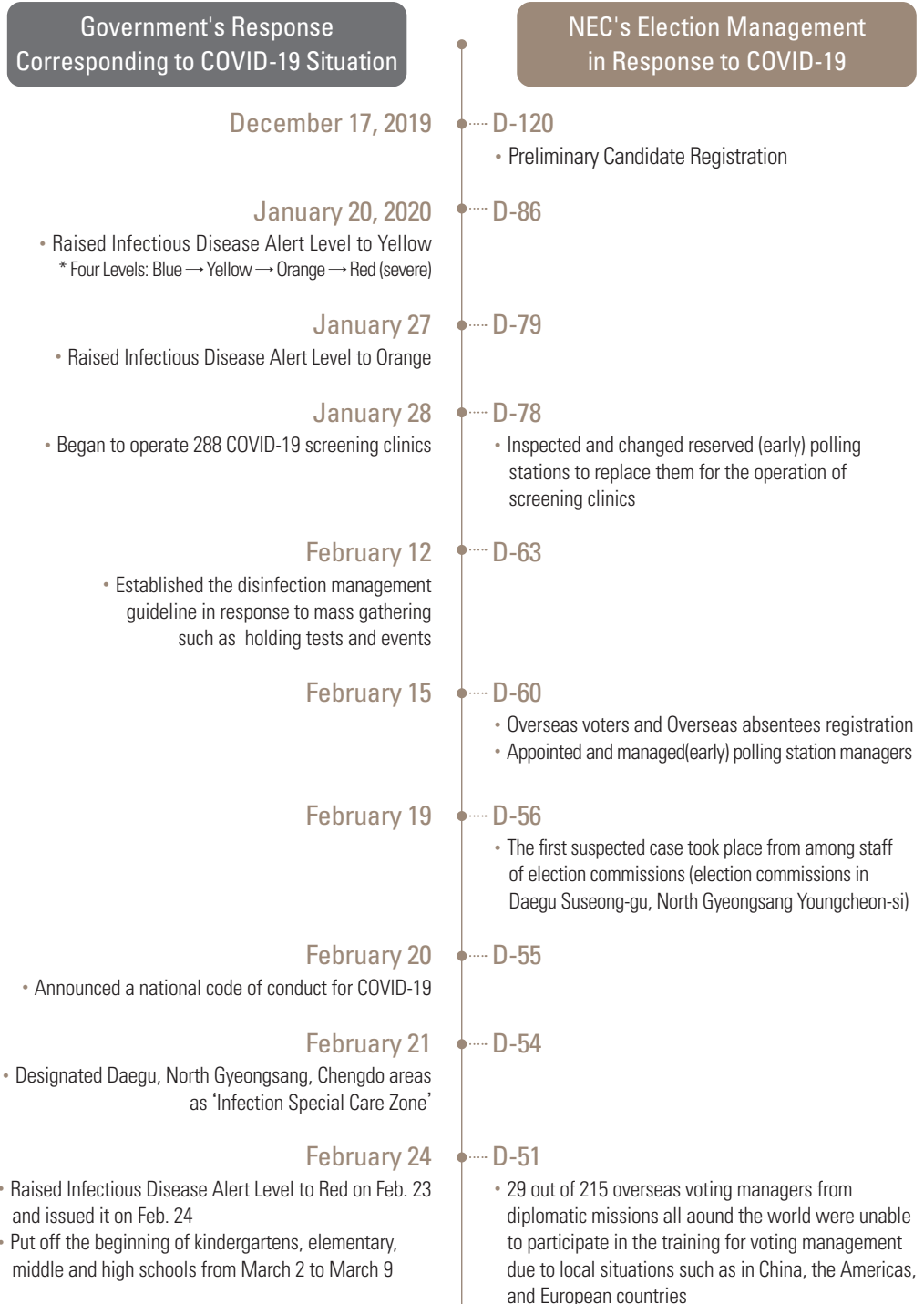
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## Evaluation of the Elections

- Q. What was the overall attitude of voters?**
- A.** Voters in general tried to comply with the Code of Conduct for preventing the spread of COVID-19. There were some concerns about voters pulling down their masks for a short period during the ID check, however it was necessary to comply for identification because it is a required procedure to maintain the principle of direct elections.
- Q. What is the basis for being sure that no new COVID-19 cases were confirmed due to the elections?**
- A.** Considering the COVID-19 incubation period is two weeks, during which you can receive a positive COVID-19 diagnosis, monitoring of the spread of COVID-19 was strengthened for two weeks after election day. As a result of an epidemiological investigation into confirmed COVID-19 cases from two weeks after election day, it was determined there were no cases of infection due to the election.

## Appendix 2

# NEC's Election Management in Response to COVID-19 in Stages



## Government's Response Corresponding to COVID-19 Situation

### February 26

- Accumulated confirmed cases of COVID-19 reached 1,146  
 ※ The highest number of 909 new confirmed cases took place on Feb. 29 and 2,931 cumulative cases recorded
- Announced the 2nd disinfection management guideline for holding mass gathering events and made a request to refrain from holding such events
- Distributed five million publicly-distributed face masks per day through pharmacies, post offices and the agricultural cooperative-run markets

### March 4

- Recorded 5,328 cumulative confirmed cases of COVID-19
- Operated three care centers in Daegu and Noth Gyeongsang province
- Established a plan for the operation of Drive Thru screening clinics  
 ※ 1,110 mild symptom patients accommodated in the care centers (As of March 7)

### March 9

- Implemented five-day rotation system for the purchase of publicly-distributed face masks

### March 11

- WHO declared COVID-19 a pandemic.
- Operated special immigration procedures for those who are coming from abroad.  
 → 14 days home quarantine and checking health status through monitoring application were required

### March 15

- Recorded 8,086 cumulative confirmed cases (As of March 14)
- Declared Daegu, and Gyeongsan, Cheongdo, Bongwha in North Gyeongsang as 'Special Disaster Zone'

### March 16

### March 17

- Postponed the beginning of all kindergartens, elementary, middle and high schools from March 23 to April 6

## NEC's Election Management in Response to COVID-19

### D-49

- Established and instructed 'Comprehensive Election Management Response Measures Regarding COVID-19'
- Prepared the list of overseas voters and absentees by March 6

### D-42

### D-37

### D-35

### D-31

- Distributed hand sanitizers, thermometers to Gu/Si/Gun election commissions

### D-30

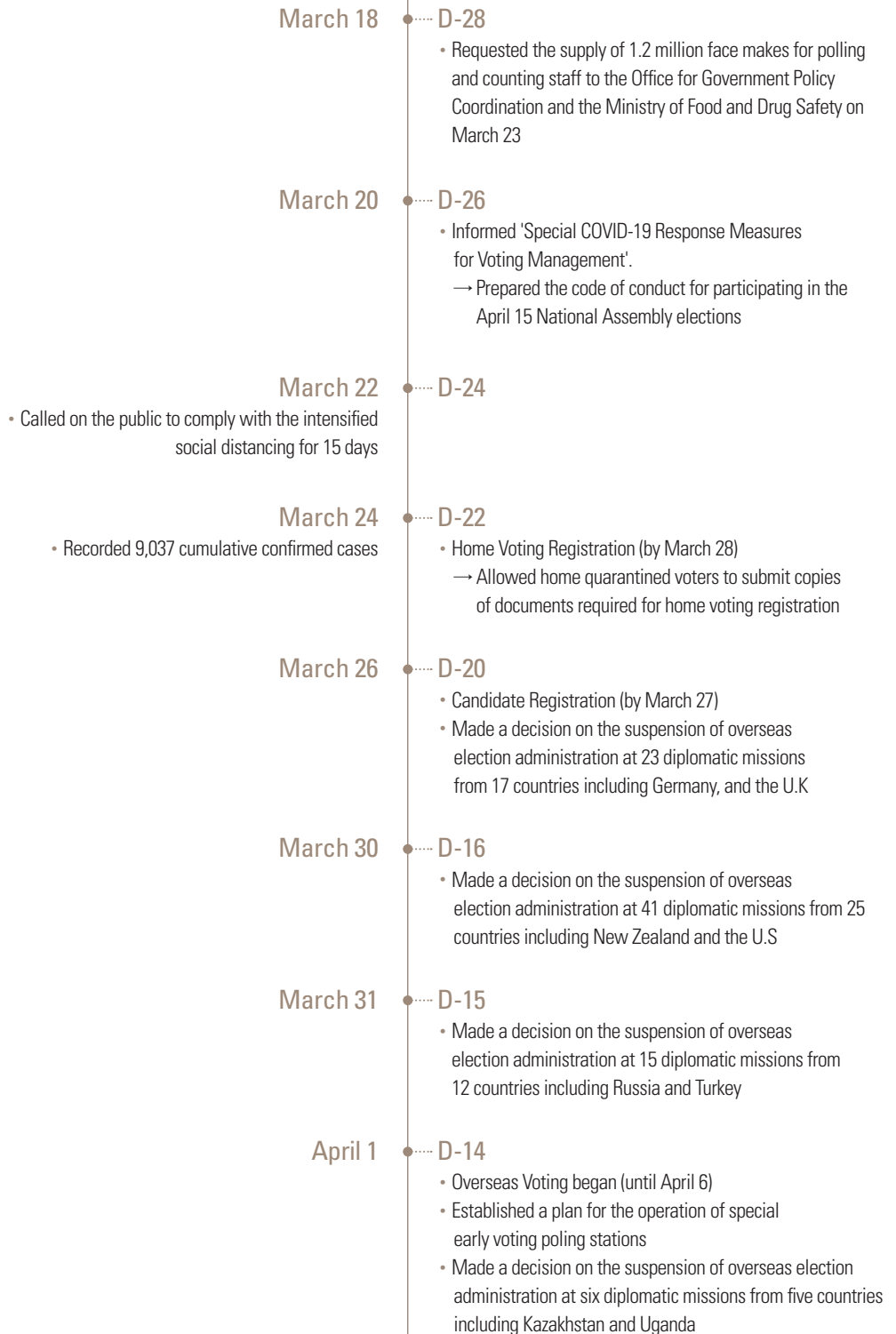
- Confirmed the list of the registered overseas voters and absentees
- Made a decision on the first suspension of overseas election administration at the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea in Wuhan, China

### D-29



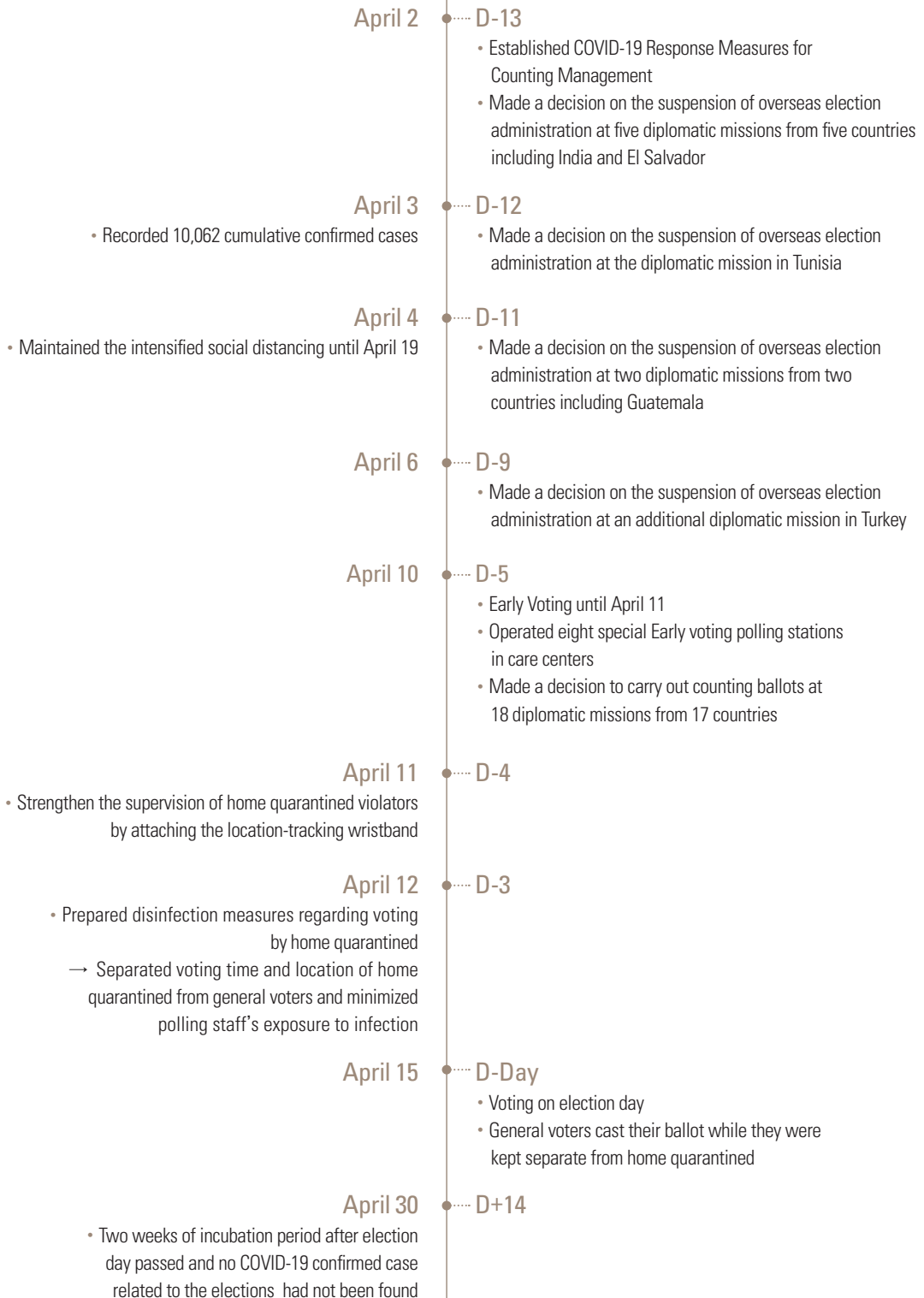
**Government's Response  
Corresponding to COVID-19 Situation**

**NEC's Election Management  
in Response to COVID-19**



**Government's Response  
Corresponding to COVID-19 Situation**

**NEC's Election Management  
in Response to COVID-19**



# Main Contents of the Comprehensive COVID-19 Response Measures in Election Management

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <p><b>Overall Principles</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Flexibly adjusted training including conducting training via video or video conferencing software, except for essential training.</li> <li>▶ Dealt with emerging situations case by case, such as by redistributing work if election commission staff are quarantined, and strengthening hygiene measures for election commission staff.</li> <li>▶ Changed face-to-face PR activities to PR activities through mediums such as TV and Newspaper, online websites or accessible facilities.</li> </ul> |
|----------------------------------|---|

## 01

### Securing Human Resources and Various Forms of Training

#### 1. Support for Election Commissions Where Staff are Quarantined

- Step One: If less than 50% of the employees of an election commission office were quarantined and their legally-required work could be handled by existing personnel, work was redistributed. However, if it is difficult for to fulfill legally required work because senior staff such as directors of election commissions are quarantined, the relevant Si/Do election commission provides staff,
- Step Two: If 50% or more of the employees of an election commission office were unable to carry out their legally-required duties due to being quarantined or for any other reason, the Si/Do office carried out the tasks directly or provided support from a nearby commission.
- Step Three: If it was deemed that it was difficult for a nearby commission or the Si/Do commission to carry out the legally-required duties, the NEC provided human resources.

#### 2. Management of Polling and Counting Staff

- If local civil servants could not perform election duties due to being confirmed with COVID-19 or coming into close contact with a confirmed case, the NEC prepared and secured reserve staff mainly from among civil servants from national bodies or school staff.
- If local civil servants were required to work on dealing with quarantines, including if the local area was designated as a 'infectious disease special management area,' or if any of the counting staff were confirmed with COVID-19 or came into close contact with a confirmed case, The NEC designated a member of the reserve staff.

#### 3. Training etc.

- Thorough disinfection measures such as temperature checks, hand sanitizing and wearing of masks were in place when holding information sessions for candidates. However, if it was difficult to hold sessions, information was given directly to the candidates through either visits to the candidate or individual sessions in the election commission.
- Training for executive staff or senior staff was replaced by using video conferencing software or using teaching materials or videos.

# 02

## Management of Voting and Counting Processes

### 1. Voting Management

- If the planned location for a polling station has an issue such as it has been used by a confirmed COVID-19 patient, another location was secured and the polling station was changed.
- Disinfected all polling stations and cooperated with relevant authorities to prepare disinfection for the use of the polling station facility from two days before and after election day.
- Masks and gloves were worn by all polling station staff, and hand sanitizer was provided and used at every polling station.
- Provided thermometers for temperature checks at every polling station and supported and operated staff dedicated to checking the temperature of voters (around two per polling station).
- Regularly disinfected items such as door handles, ballpoint pens used for marking the voters list and marking devices using disinfecting tissue and ventilated the polling station.
- If a voter has a high temperature or respiratory symptoms, they voted at temporary polling booths. After voting the temporary polling booths were disinfected with disinfecting tissues.
- Maintained an emergency line of communication with competent local care center and test center and respond to any emergency situations

<Sample>

**Temperature Check Notice**

Our commission, in accordance with the ‘Guidelines for Government and Local Government Events on the Prevention of the Spread of COVID-19’ set by the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, at the (Name of polling station or counting center) is conducting temperatures checks (checking for temperatures of 37.5°C or above). We hereby give notice that if you have a high temperature of respiratory symptoms, you may have to vote at a temporary polling booth (or refused entry at a counting center) and we ask for your cooperation.

2020. 4. .

(Name of Local Election Commission)

<Process for the Closure of Polling Stations by Time>

| Time                | Early Voting  | Election Day   |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Before Voting Began | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a polling station had been disinfected and it was deemed there were no safety issues                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Polling Station was used with no change</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If it was deemed it was unavoidable to change the location of the polling station                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it could have been moved to an alternative location or a temporary facility such as a tent could have been installed and operated on site, for example on a school playground.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |  |
| During Voting       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chairperson of the relevant Gu/Si/Gun election commission had to decide to 'suspend operations at the polling station'</li> <li>• The fact that the voting had been suspended at the polling station and a notice at the polling station to guide voters would have been posted on the website.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>※ Polling station manages transported voters from closed early voting polling station to a nearby early voting polling station</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The polling station manager would have had to immediately block and seal the slot of the ballot box in the presence of voting observers, affix a special seal and transfer the ballot box to the relevant Gu/Si/Gun election commission.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Another alternative location for a polling station should have been secured quickly and election equipment such as ballot boxes, marking devices, ballot papers and the voters list would have been transferred in the presence of voting observers and voting would have been restarted.</li> <li>• If there was no alternative location, a temporary facility such as a tent could have been installed at a nearby vacant spot and voting restarted.</li> </ul> |

## 2. Management of Counting

- After cooperating with the relevant authorities such as the Ministry of the Interior and Safety, all counting centers were disinfected and back-up locations were prepared.
- Masks and gloves were worn by all counting center staff, and hand sanitizer was provided and used at every counting center.
- Temperature checks were undertaken at the entrance of the counting center for all entrants and if any person had a high temperature of respiratory symptoms.

# 03

## PR Activities for Citizens

- Instead of offline events, other PR activities were undertaken such as online PR campaigns using photographs and videos.
- Rather than directly finding voters through PR events such as volunteering and participatory events, the NEC provided election information to the relevant organizations and associations.

## Main Contents of COVID-19 Response Measures to Increase Turnout

### Promoted the 'Code of Conduct' for Voters











- Increased public awareness through public speeches by the NEC Chairperson and special features in media coverage.
- Undertook broadcast activities including joint campaigns by broadcasting campaigns, using information delivery programs, anchor comments on news and radio and subtitles provided on broadcast channels.
- Advertised on portal websites such as Naver and actively provided information to large groups of people on social media such as card news, producing and spreading viral videos using famous influencer.
- Placed placards on safety at polling stations, including the Code of Conduct for participating in the elections.
- Posted content on the NEC homepage such as videos and banners on the Code of Conduct.
- Sent safety messages to all voters including the Code of Conduct (on the day before election day)
- Made internal broadcasts such as in apartments (during early voting and on election day)

### Produced and Spread NEC E-TV Videos

- Produced video explaining the disinfection measures at polling stations to allow voters to come and vote safely, the implementation process for safety measures and the voting process.
  - ※ CNN, NHK, MBC and other broadcasters used the material in news coverage
- Produced an example video in order for voters to participate safely showing the entire voting process in accordance with the Code of Conduct from the voter leaving their home to finishing voting.
  - ※ Sign language was provided for voters with hearing disabilities.
- Through the live broadcasting of voting and counting explained and shared images of voters and polling station staff following the rules and created a sense of confidence to participate in voting by live broadcasting around the world, including on YouTube.
  - ※ Simultaneous live broadcasting on the National Assembly TV channel, portal sites (Naver and Daum), YouTube and Facebook.

# Pictures of and Distribution Guidelines for Main Disinfection Equipment

## 1. Pictures of Main Disinfection Equipment

| Item                                  | Picture   | Item                              | Picture   |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| Masks (disposable-type, medical-type) |    | Disposable Vinyl Gloves           |     |
| Hand Sanitizer                        |    | Face Shield                       |     |
| Contactless Thermometers              |   | Type 4 Protective Clothing        |    |
| Disinfection Tissues                  |  | Temporary Polling Booth Envelopes |  |
| Medical Gloves                        |  | Tape for Entrances and Exits      |   |

## 2. Distribution Guidelines and Recipients of Main Disinfection Equipment

| Category                                   | Distribution Guidelines  | Recipient and Use  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>① Masks (3,000,000 in total )</b>       |  |  |
| Election Commissions                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Si/Do: 800 each</li> <li>• Gu/Si/Gun: For preparing for elections (varied proportionately to the number of voters)</li> <li>• Eup/Myeon/Dong: For distributing campaign material - according to the number of households:<br/>less than 2,500: 10<br/>2,500 - 5,000: 15<br/>5,000 - 7,500: 25<br/>7,500 - 10,000: 30<br/>10,000 - 12,500: 35<br/>12,500 or more: 40</li> </ul>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For operation counting situation room</li> <li>• For people who participated in sending home voting ballot papers, voting management training, and simulation tests for ballot sorting machines</li> <li>• For actual workers including administrators, clerks, and day laborers</li> </ul> |
| (Early Voting) Polling Stations            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two each per polling station staff, 1.5 each per observer</li> <li>• Temporary polling booth: Number of early voters in the 7th nationwide simultaneous local elections in 2018 × 5% (approx.)</li> <li>* Reserved amount for temporary polling booths:<br/>Only provided in a case where there is a concern about the spread of COVID-19, including for a voter with a high temperature</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For polling station staff, voting observers</li> <li>• For those without masks and with symptoms</li> </ul>   |
| Counting Centers                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to the number of voters<br/>less than 100,000: 450<br/>100,000 - 200,000: 700<br/>200,000 - 300,000: 1,000<br/>300,000 - 400,000: 1,200<br/>400,000 or more: 1,600</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For election commissioners and staff, counting staff, counting observers, etc.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>② Hand Sanitizer (286,725 in total)</b> |  |  |
| Election Commissions                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 per Si/Do and Gu/Si/Gun Office</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For training, public service etc.</li> </ul>  |



| Category  | Distribution Guidelines   | Recipient and Use   |
|---|---|---|
| (Early Voting) Polling Stations   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 28 bottles per early voting polling station <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For voters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>: 12 x two days (Assumed early voting turnout of 23%, assumed amount of use: 4ml per voter)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- For polling station staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>: 2 x two days (Assumed amount of use: 50ml per early polling staff or observer)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• 12 bottles per election day polling station <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For voters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>: 10 (Assumed voter turnout of 37% on election day, assumed amount of use: 4ml per voter)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- For polling station staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>: two (Assumed amount of use: 50ml per polling station staff or observer)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For early and election day voting management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Voters etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |
| Counting Centers  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approximately 35 bottles per counting center on average <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Varied proportionately to the number of counting staff (Assumed amount of use: 50ml per counting center staff or observer)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For counting management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Counting staff, counting observers</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <b>③ Thermometers (20,730 in total)</b>                                   |   |   |
| Election Commissions  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four each per Si/Do and Gu/Si/Gun</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For training, public service etc.</li> </ul>   |
| (Early Voting) Polling Stations   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One or two per station <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reusing the ones used at early voting polling stations on election day</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For early and election day voting management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Voters</li> </ul> </li> </ul>        |
| Counting Centers  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reusing the ones distributed to the Gu/Si/Gun offices</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For counting management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Counting staff, counting observers</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <b>④ Sanitizing Tissues (315,381 packs in total / 75 sheets per pack)</b> |   |   |
| Election Commissions  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible adjustment within the total amount of distribution according to Si/Do</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For sanitizing election supplies and equipment</li> </ul>  |

| Category                        | Distribution Guidelines   | Recipient and Use  |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| (Early Voting) Polling Stations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24 packs per early voting polling station (Assumed early voter turnout of 23%, one per voter x 0.8 x two days)</li> <li>• Ten packs per polling station (Assumed voter turnout of 37% on election day, one per voter x 0.8)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For sanitizing polling station supplies and temporary polling booths</li> </ul> |
| Counting Centers                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approximately eight packs on average - Varied proportionately to the number of counting staff</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For sanitizing counting station supplies and equipment</li> </ul>               |

**5 Medical Gloves (26,350 packs in total / 100 sheets per pack / Sizes S, M, L)**





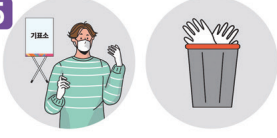
|                                 |   |  |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Election Commissions            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible adjustment within the total amount of distribution according to Si/Do</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For public service staff</li> </ul>               |
| (Early Voting) Polling Stations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100 per early voting polling station [One set of two for early voting polling station managers and staff x two times + reserved amount]</li> <li>• 50 each per election day polling station [One set of two for polling station managers and staff x two times + reserved amount]</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For polling station managers and staff</li> </ul> |
| Counting Centers                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approximately 1,000 on average : Varied proportionate to the number of counting staffs (One set per counting staff x two times + reserved amount)</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For counting staff</li> </ul>                     |

**6 Single-use Vinyl Gloves (1,256,300 packs in total / 50 sheets per pack)**

|                                 |  |  |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| (Early Voting) Polling Stations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early voting polling stations: Number of early voters in the 7th nationwide simultaneous local elections in 2018 x two x 1.2</li> <li>• Election Day Polling stations: Number of voters per polling station in the 7th nationwide simultaneous local elections in 2018 x 40% x two x 1.2</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided to the voters</li> </ul> |
|---------------------------------|--|--|

| Category  | Distribution Guidelines   | Recipient and Use  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>7 Face Shields (182,840 in total)</b>              |   |  |
| Election Commissions                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20 per Si/Do and Gu/Si/Gun</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For counting situation rooms, staff responsible for fever checks, and public service</li> </ul>               |
| (Early Voting) Polling Stations                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of early polling station staff × two days × 0.3 × 1.1</li> <li>• Number of polling station staff × 0.4 × 1.1</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For polling station staff responsible for fever checks and temporary polling booths (around three)</li> </ul> |
| Counting Centers                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of counting center staff x 1.1</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For all the counting staff</li> </ul>   |
| <b>8 Type 4 Protective Clothing (14,330 in total)</b> |   |  |
| Polling Stations                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One per polling station</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For temporary polling booth staff for home quarantined voters</li> </ul>                                      |

## 코로나19 관련 안내 및 예방수칙

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1</p>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ 마스크를 착용하여 주시기 바랍니다.</li> <li>☑ 투표소에 입장하려는 모든 선거인은 투표사무원에게 체온을 확인받으세요.<br/>※ 앞사람과 1m 이상 적정거리를 유지하고, 불필요한 대화를 자제합니다.</li> </ul> |
| <p>2</p>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ 이때, 발열 또는 호흡기증상이 있는 선거인은 투표사무원의 안내에 따라 임시기표소로 이동합니다.</li> </ul>   |
| <p>3</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ 투표소 입구 등에 비치된 손소독제로 손소독을 꼼꼼히 실시한 후 일회용 비닐장갑을 양손에 착용합니다.</li> <li>☑ 이때, 신분증을 미리 준비하시면 편리합니다.</li> </ul>                        |
| <p>4</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ 투표소로 입장합니다.<br/>※ 본인확인 시에는 투표사무원 안내에 따라 마스크를 벗거나 내려주시기 바랍니다.</li> </ul>   |
| <p>5</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ 투표를 마친 선거인은 투표소 출구에 비치된 일회용 비닐장갑 처리함에 일회용 비닐장갑을 넣고 퇴소합니다.</li> </ul>  |

코로나19 전염 확산 방지를 위하여 사전에 투표소를 철저히 소독하였음을 알려드립니다.  
또한, 선거인은 아래사항에 대하여 적극 협조하여 주시기 바랍니다.

- |                    |                                  |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| ☑ 마스크 착용하기         | ☑ 발열 체크 받기                       |
| ☑ 앞사람과 1m 이상 거리 두기 | ☑ 손 소독 후 비닐장갑 착용하기               |
| ☑ 불필요한 대화 자제하기     | ☑ 발열 또는 호흡기증상이 있는 경우, 임시기표소에서 투표 |

## Code of Conduct for Participation in the April 15 National Assembly Elections

### 4·15 총선 투표참여 대국민 행동수칙

- ✓ (사전)투표소 가기 전 신분증 준비하기
- ✓ 어린 자녀 등은 가급적 (사전)투표소에 동반하지 않기
- ✓ (사전)투표소 가기 전 흐르는 물에 비누로 꼼꼼하게 30초 이상 손씻기
- ✓ 마스크 착용하고 (사전)투표소 가기
- ✓ (사전)투표소 입구에서 발열체크를 받고 손소독제로 꼼꼼하게 소독 후 일회용 비닐장갑 착용하기
- ✓ (사전)투표소 안·밖에서 다른 선거인과 1m 이상 거리 두기
- ✓ (사전)투표소 안·밖에서 불필요한 대화 자제하기
- ✓ (사전)투표소에서 본인확인 시 마스크 잠깐 내리기
- ✓ 발열증상 등이 있는 경우 임시기표소에서 투표 후 보건소 방문하기
- ✓ 귀가하여 흐르는 물에 비누로 꼼꼼하게 30초 이상 손씻기



## Message to Citizens by the Chairperson of the NEC

### Message to Citizens For ‘Beautiful Elections’

First Speech

Dear honorable citizens!

The 21st National Assembly elections are two weeks away.

Starting today, political parties and their candidates will begin election campaigning.

The entire nation has suffered severely from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) for over two months now. I, on behalf of the National Election Commission (NEC), send my condolences to all citizens.

In particular I wish to express the NEC’s thanks and ongoing support to medical staff, volunteers and public servants who are devoting themselves day and night to disinfecting the virus and treating patients at the frontline of the outbreak.

In the past, Korea overcame many national crises through unity and cooperation among the people. Likewise, I also believe the collective wisdom of the Korean people can help overcome the ordeal of COVID-19.

This election holds special significance because it coincides with the 60 year anniversary of the April 19 Revolution. It will become an important milestone on the path to the Korea of the future.

With the belief that ‘disinfecting as much as possible is the best election management,’ the National Election Commission will prepare and carry out measures to ensure voters can cast their ballots without concerns about their safety.

Also, the NEC ensures voters that all polling stations will be disinfected thoroughly.

Those who have been confirmed with cases of COVID-19 and applied for home voting may cast their vote where they are residing, including their hospital or care center.

For those who have been confirmed with cases of COVID-19 after the home voting registration period ended, the NEC will set up special early voting stations to ensure

everyone can exercise their right to vote.

On election day, voters will have their temperature checked at the entrance to polling stations, and special temporary polling booths will be set up for those with high temperatures.

Dear citizens!

In the Republic of Korea, all power comes from the people.

The principle of sovereignty can only be realized through people's participation.

Electing representatives who will lead Korea with hope depends on every single vote by citizens.

The NEC strongly encourages citizens to cast their valuable ballot after carefully reviewing the policies and pledges presented by political parties and candidates.

To parties and candidates, the NEC asks you to compete on a level playing field by abiding by laws and presenting plausible policies and pledges to voters.

The NEC also urges all public officials to keep their neutrality in all cases in order to avoid becoming embroiled in misunderstandings about interference in these elections.

The National Election Commission will manage these elections fairly with firm neutrality and take stern measures against any violations of laws pertaining to elections.

All election-related staff, including NEC staff, polling and counting station officials and observers are encouraged to fulfill their duties with a sense of duty and responsibility in managing these important elections for the nation.

Dear honorable citizens!

Elections are the heart of democracy.

When voters can make informed choices, a democracy of hope and unity will fully bloom.

I believe your participation in this election with a mature civic consciousness and great responsibility will bring together the will of the people and achieve a social unity, and by doing so the people will show that this country belongs to them.

Thank you.

**Kwon Soon-il**  
**Chairperson of the National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea**  
**April 1, 2020**

## **Message to Citizens For Voter Participation**

### **Second Speech**

Dear honorable citizens!

We have arrived at the dawn of election day for the 21st National Assembly elections!

We are now holding elections in a very difficult situation caused by the shrinking of economic activities and the implementation of social distancing due to the spread of COVID-19.

Nevertheless, we have confidence that we can overcome these national difficulties with a mature sense of civic consciousness and unity.

Contrary to the expectation that voter turnout could decrease, early voting recorded its highest ever turnout and this showed the high civic consciousness and confidence in these elections among voters.

This will be the first election held since the political participation of citizens was expanded after the voting age was lowered to 18.

This is a great opportunity for elections to prove themselves as the heart of democracy.

Dear citizens!

The NEC has provided diverse information on these elections so that voters can have as much knowledge as possible and select the political parties and candidates participating in these elections.

We have already sent an election material to every household in the country.

On the NEC website, you can check the pledges of the political party, pledges desired by voters, and candidate information.



Once again, we recommend that you carefully compare the policies and pledges by political parties and candidates by reviewing their validity and feasibility to make an informed choice.

The NEC is committed to helping voters cast their ballot with confidence about their safety.

To achieve the desired outcome, it is imperative that all voters understand and cooperate with our efforts.

When going to vote, be sure to wear a mask, keep a distance of 1m or more from other voters and follow the Code of Conduct, including refraining from conversation and actively cooperating with the guidance of the polling station staff.

To ensure all voters can exercise their suffrage, asymptomatic home quarantined voters will be able to cast their ballot after voting for other citizens has closed.

In order to ensure a safe voting environment, we will thoroughly implement the disinfection guidelines for home quarantined voters.

Dear citizens!

Now on April 15, 2020, the time to choose has arrived.

A Republic of Korea made by voters starts through voting.

Everybody bar none should go to the polling place tomorrow and show that citizens are owners of this country.

Let's show the power of our proud Korean people through these 21st National Assembly elections.

Thank you

**Kwon Soon-il**

**Chairperson of the National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea**

**April 14, 2020**

# Guidelines for Staff Conducting Temperature Checks on Helping Voters

## For Voters with No Temperature

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>① Temperature Check</p>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Say “Please let me check your temperature” (As it is a contactless thermometer, do not make contact and take the temperature on the forehead, wrist or back of the ear)</li><li>▸ (If the voter rejects) Explain that the temperature check is in accordance with government guidelines and ask for cooperation</li></ul> |
| <p>② Temperature Result</p>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Say “There is no problem”</li></ul> <p>Ask the voters to maintain a distance of at least 1m from the person in front and suggest that the voter prepares their ID in advance for their convenience</p>  |
| <p>③ Hand Sanitizing and Wearing Disposable Vinyl Gloves</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▸ Ask the voter to follow the guidelines of the staff and ask the voter to carefully disinfect their hands with the hand sanitizer placed at the entrance of the polling station and then wear the disposable vinyl gloves on both hands.</li></ul>   |

## For voters with a high temperature or respiratory symptoms

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>① Temperature Check</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Say “Please let me check your temperature” (As it is a contactless thermometer, do not make contact and take the temperature on the forehead, wrist or back of the ear)</li> </ul>  |
| <p>② Temperature Check Result</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Say “your temperature is over 37.5 degrees celcius, and so I would like to ask for your cooperation in moving to a temporary polling booth for you to vote.”<br/>(Contact the staff designated to temporary polling booths)<br/>(Guide the voter to the area the temporary voting booth is set up)</li> <li>▶ (if the voter rejects) Explain the purpose of setting up a temporary polling booth and ask for the voter’s cooperation.<br/>(if the voter still rejects) Contact the polling station manager ⇨<br/>Polling station manager asks for the voter’s cooperation ⇨ If they still reject the polling managers asks voters waiting inside the polling station to wait and allow the voter with a high temperature to vote first ⇨ Disinfect and ventilate the polling booth and equipment used.</li> </ul> |
| <p>③ Polling Station Staff Designated to Temporary Polling Booths Takes Charge</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Say “Please disinfect both hands with the hand sanitizer place at the entrance of the polling station and wear disposable gloves on both hands”</li> <li>▶ Say “Please sit comfortably here and fill out this identity confirmation form.” (From then on, follow the ‘Temporary Polling Booth Voting Process for Voters with a High Temperature or Symptoms”</li> </ul>   |
| <p>④ Provide Information on Welfare Center</p>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Say “Please contact your welfare center on 1339 or (area code) + 120 and ask about your symptoms and follow their advice”</li> </ul>  |

## Guidelines for Polling Station Staff Designated to Temporary Polling Booths on Helping Voters

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>① Receive Form of ID (e.g. National ID Card)</p>   | <p>▶ Say “Please submit your identity confirmation form and your ID card.”</p>  |
| <p>② Receiving Ballot Papers</p>  | <p>▶ Go into the polling station and receive the relevant ballot papers</p>   |
| <p>③ Delivering the Ballot Papers, including the Temporary Polling Booth Envelopes</p>      | <p>▶ Pass the ballots and envelope to the voter) Say “Please vote inside the temporary polling booth and put the ballots inside the temporary polling booth envelope”</p> |
| <p>④ Take the Ballots (that are inside the envelope) from the Voter</p>                     | <p>▶ Receive the temporary polling booth envelope with the ballots inside from the voter</p>  |
| <p>⑤ Transfer the Ballots (that are inside the envelope) to the Polling Station Manager</p> | <p>▶ Hand over the temporary polling booth envelope with the ballot inside to the polling station manager</p>   |
| <p>⑥ Disinfect the Temporary Polling Booth and Ventilate the Area</p>                       | <p>▶ Disinfect the temporary polling booth using disinfectant tissues and ventilate the area</p>  |

## Voting Process for Quarantined Voters

### Guidelines for Polling Station Staff Designated to Temporary Polling Booths

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>Preparing the Temporary Polling Booths</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The polling station staff should prepare the list of the quarantined voters provided by the designated local government officer and give the numbered tickets for the voters to the designated local government officer</li> <li>▶ 10 minutes before the end of voting the designated member of polling station staff wears the PPE provided</li> <li>▶ After all regular voters have cast their ballot, the designated member of polling station staff prepares the voters list, ballot papers and temporary polling booth envelopes and in the presence of voting observers moves them to the temporary polling booth</li> </ul> <p>※ Ballots were pre-prepared according to the number of quarantined voters, with the polling station managing affixing their signature and the serial number on the corner of the ballot cut in advance in the presence of observers.</p> |
| <p>Begin the Voting</p>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Instruct the designated local government officer to guide quarantined voters to the temporary polling booth one by one in the order of their number</li> </ul>   |
| <p>ID Check</p>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Check the identity of the quarantined voter and ask them to sign or place their seal on the voters list</li> <li>▶ Pass the ballot papers and temporary polling booth envelope to the quarantined voter and ask them to enter the temporary polling booth. Then disinfect the pen and any other equipment the quarantined voter came in contact with using disinfectant tissue</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Voting</p>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Every time the quarantined voter has left the temporary polling booth, disinfect the polling booth, marking device and other equipment using disinfectant tissue</li> <li>▶ After all quarantined voters have finished marking their ballots, take the temporary polling booth envelopes with the ballots inside and the voters list to the polling station in the presence of observers</li> <li>▶ In the presence of the polling station manager and observers, the ballots should be taken out of the temporary polling booth envelopes and put into the ballot box, being careful not to show the mark on the ballot paper</li> </ul> <p>※ Be careful not to reveal the ballot.</p>  |

## Guidelines for Quarantined Voters

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Moving to the Polling Station</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Move to the waiting area at your polling station before the close of voting (6pm). Wear a face mask and travel by walking, driving alone, accompanied by your designated local government officer or using an emergency vehicle (not allowed to use public transportation)</li> <li>※ Had to wear a mask and had to walk, with the local agent and with one to one supervision or using emergency vehicles (public transport banned)</li> <li>▶ Follow the directions of the designated local government officer and wait safely to vote.</li> <li>※ Maintain a gap of 2 meters with others</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Begin the Voting</b></p>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Enter one by one according to the directions given by the designated local government officer.</li> <li>▶ Wear a mask, use the hand sanitizer and wear the disposable gloves</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>ID Check</b></p>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Submit your ID to the designated member of polling station staff and after having your identity confirmed, sign or place your seal on the voters list</li> <li>▶ Receive the ballot papers and the temporary polling booth envelope and move to the temporary polling booth</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Voting</b></p>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ After marking the ballots in the temporary polling booth, place the ballots in the temporary polling booth envelope and transfer it to the designated member of polling station staff</li> <li>▶ Dispose of the vinyl gloves in the box provided at the exit, use the hand sanitizer and leave</li> </ul>  |

## Guidelines for Counting Officials

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>Counting Staff</p>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Wear a mask and medical gloves to perform counting<br/>             ※ If you change or take off the gloves, use hand sanitizer.</li> <li>▶ Complete the training for your section before the start of counting and during counting refrain from unnecessary conversations.</li> <li>▶ Refrain from personal contact or conversation in the counting center during breaks.</li> </ul>   |
| <p>Counting Observers</p>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Observe from an appropriate distance from the counting center staff and refrain from conversation as much as possible, including by raising your hand when raising an objection.</li> <li>▶ If you need to speak to other observers (or other persons on the phone) for a long period, conduct those conversations outside the counting center.</li> <li>▶ Be careful not to make close contact with counting center staff or other observers when moving around the counting center.</li> </ul> |
| <p>Support Staff</p>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ An organization that received a request from the election commission had to recommend a number of people that was not more than the number requested by the election commission.</li> <li>▶ Wait at the designated place without changing or leaving their seats randomly and conduct tasks in accordance with the election commission’s instructions.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Media and Others Watching Counting</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Prohibited from entering the internal section of the counting center and view or report from the designated place.</li> </ul>  |







## Maintaining Safety and Trust in Elections During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Paper on Election Management Based on the  
21st National Assembly Elections in the Republic of Korea

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**Published** August 2020

**Publisher** National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea,  
Administration and International Affairs Division

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