Draft Regulations laid before Parliament under section 201(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 for approval by resolution of each House of Parliament.

DRAFT STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2015 No.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE, NORTHERN IRELAND

The Parliamentary Elections (Forms) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2015

Made - - - - ***

Coming into force in accordance with regulation 1(2)

In accordance with section 201(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1983(**a**), a draft of these Regulations has been laid before and approved by a resolution of each House of Parliament.

In accordance with section 7(1) and (2)(e) of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000(**b**), the Secretary of State has consulted with the Electoral Commission prior to these Regulations being made.

Accordingly, the Secretary of State makes the following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 53(1)(c), 201(1) and (3) and 202(1) of, and rules 24(1)(c) and (3), 28(3) and (3A), and 32(3) of Schedule 1 to, the Representation of the People Act 1983(**c**) and section 15(5) of the Representation of the People Act 1985(**d**).

Citation, commencement, extent and interpretation

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Parliamentary Elections (Forms) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2015.

(2) These Regulations come into force on the day after the day on which they are made.

(3) These Regulations extend to Northern Ireland only.

(**a**) 1983, c. 2; section 201(2) was substituted by section 24 of, and paragraph 69 of Schedule 4 to, the Representation of the People Act 1985 (c. 50), and amended by S.I. 1991/1728; section 158 of, and paragraph 6 of Schedule 21 to, the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (c. 41); and section 13(2) of the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014 (c. 13).

(**b**) 2000 c. 41; amendments have been made to section 7 but they are not relevant to these Regulations.

(**c**) See the definition of "prescribed" in section 202(1). Rule 24 was substituted by section 37 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 (c. 22). Section 201(1) was amended by S.I. 1991/1728. Section 201(3) was added by paragraph 21 of Schedule 1 to the Representation of the People Act 2000 (c. 2) and amended by paragraph 6 of Schedule 21 to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (c. 41). Rule 28(3) was amended by paragraph 70 of Schedule 1 to the Electoral Administration Act 2006 (c. 22); rule 28(3A) was inserted by paragraph 14 of Schedule 1 to that Act and extended to Northern Ireland by S.I. 2014/1116.

(**d**) 1985 c. 50; section 15 has effect as if it were contained in Part 1 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (c. 2) (see section 27(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1985 (c. 50)).

(4) In these Regulations, "the 2008 Regulations" means the Representation of the People (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2008(**a**).

Amendments relating to the declaration of identity

2.—(1) In regulation 71(b) of the 2008 Regulations, for the words "a local" substitute "another".

(2) In regulation 87 of the 2008 Regulations (procedure in relation to declarations of identity)—

(a) in paragraph (1)(a), omit the words "and given his name and address"; and

(b) after paragraph (1) insert—

"(1A) A person must not sign the declaration as a witness under paragraph (1)(a) unless he is—

(a) aged 18 years or over; and

(b) satisfied to the best of his knowledge and belief as to the identity of the voter.".

Amendment of Schedule 3 to the 2008 Regulations (Forms)

3.—(1) Schedule 3 to the 2008 Regulations (Forms) is amended as follows.

(2) Replace Form A (elector's official poll card) with the form in Schedule 1 to these Regulations.

(3) Replace Form A1 (elector's official postal poll card)(**b**) with the form in Schedule 2 to these Regulations.

(4) Replace Form B (proxy's official poll card) with the form in Schedule 3 to these Regulations.

(5) Replace Form B1 (proxy's official postal poll card)(**c**) with the form in Schedule 4 to these Regulations.

(6) Replace Form E (proxy paper)(**d**) with the form in Schedule 5 to these Regulations.

(7) Replace Form F (certificate of employment) with the form in Schedule 6 to these Regulations.

(8) Replace Form L (declaration of identity)(**e**) with the form in Schedule 7 to these Regulations.

(9) Replace Form M (declaration of identity (combined polls))(**f**) with the form in Schedule 8 to these Regulations.

Name
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Northern Ireland Office

Date

(**a**) S.I. 2008/1741; relevant amendments are referenced in these Regulations.
(**b**) Form A1 was inserted by S.I. 2014/1808.
(**c**) Form B1 was inserted by S.I. 2014/1808.
(**d**) Form E was amended by S.I. 2014/1808.
(**e**) Form L was amended by S.I. 2014/1808.
(**f**) Form M was amended by S.I. 2014/1808.

SCHEDULE 1

Regulation 3(2)

Form A

Front of card

Poll card

UK Parliamentary Election
[insert name of constituency] **constituency**

Voting information	
Polling day	
Polling hours	7.00am to 10.00pm
Ballot box number	
Your polling station will be	

You do not need to take this card with you in order to vote but it will save time if you do.

Your details:

[Elector's name and qualifying address details here]

Number on register:

Remember that you will not be able to vote unless you show one of the following forms of photographic identification:

- **A UK, Irish or EEA driving licence**
- **A UK or Irish passport**
- **An Electoral Identity Card**
- **A Translink Senior SmartPass**
- **A Translink 60+ SmartPass**
- **A Translink War Disabled SmartPass**
- **A Translink Blind Person's SmartPass**

Please turn over

Back of card

If you are away or cannot go to the polling station on [day] [date of poll] you can do one of the following:

- Apply to vote by post. Completed applications must be returned **by 5pm on [day] [date of deadline]**. If you are given a postal vote, you will not be able to vote in person at this election.

OR

- Apply to vote by proxy (this means someone else can vote on your behalf). Completed applications must be returned **by 5pm on [day] [date of deadline].**

An application form is available on the website or can be requested from the helpline.

If you need any help, require information in another format or language or wish to find out if your polling station is accessible, please contact us.

[Insert helpline and other contact details including website]

Electoral fraud is a crime

Issued by the Chief Electoral Officer.

If undelivered return to: *[Insert return address]*

SCHEDULE 2

Regulation 3(3)

Form A1

Front of card

Postal poll card

UK Parliamentary Election
[insert name of constituency]
constituency

Voting information
We will send your postal vote approximately 10 working days before polling day.

Your details:

**[Elector's name and qualifying address details here]*

Number on register:

**Returning Officer to omit where postal poll card sent to an anonymous elector. Postal poll card to an anonymous elector must be delivered in a sealed envelope.*

Your postal vote

- You will receive a postal vote for this election because you successfully applied to vote by post.
- You will not be able to vote in a polling station.
- **If you have not received your postal vote by [day] [date] [name of month] please contact us.**

Please turn over

Back of card

How to vote

1. When you receive your postal vote, read the instructions carefully.
2. Your postal vote includes your ballot paper and a declaration of identity.
3. Complete the declaration of identity.
4. Complete the ballot paper.
5. Return your postal voting papers in the envelope provided.
6. We need to receive your postal vote by **10pm on [day/date of poll]**. Postal voting papers cannot be accepted at polling stations.

If you need help to vote, you can ask someone you know or get advice by calling our helpline.
If you need information in another format or language please call our helpline.

If you make a mistake:

- Please phone the helpline immediately.
- We can only issue a replacement postal vote if you return all your postal vote documents **by 5pm on [day/date of deadline]**.

If you would rather vote in person, or ask someone else to vote on your behalf, you must cancel your postal vote **before 5pm on [day/date of deadline]**.
*[*Note that if you have an anonymous entry on the register you will not be able to vote in person, but you can ask someone else to vote by post on your behalf.]*
**Returning Officer to only include on postal poll card sent to an anonymous elector.*

Electoral fraud is a crime

[Insert helpline and other contact details including website]

Issued by the Chief Electoral Officer.

If undelivered return to: *[Insert return address]*

SCHEDULE 3

Regulation 3(4)

Form B

Front of card

Proxy poll card

UK Parliamentary Election
[insert name of constituency] **constituency**

Voting information	
Polling day	
Polling hours	7.00am to 10.00pm
Ballot box number	
Polling station	

For this election you are proxy for:
[Elector's name
Elector's address
Elector's number on register]

You do not need to take this card with you in order to vote but it will save time if you do.

Your details:

[Proxy's name and address details here]

Remember that you will not be able to vote unless you show one of the following forms of photographic identification for yourself:

- **A UK, Irish or EEA driving licence**
- **A UK or Irish passport**
- **An Electoral Identity Card**
- **A Translink Senior SmartPass**
- **A Translink 60+ SmartPass**
- **A Translink War Disabled SmartPass**
- **A Translink Blind Person's SmartPass**

Please turn over

Back of card

How to vote as a proxy
At the polling station, tell the staff that you are a proxy for the person named on the front of this card. Show an accepted form of photographic identification for yourself. They will give you that person's ballot paper.
If you need any help, just ask the staff.

If you are away or cannot go to the polling station on [day] [date of poll]:

- You can apply to vote by post. The deadline for completed applications is **5pm on [day] [date of deadline]**.
- If you are given a postal vote, you or the person you are proxy for will not be able to vote in person at this election.
- **To find out how to apply, please contact us.**

The person you are proxy for can vote themselves if they wish – but only if you have not already voted on their behalf.

If you need any help, require information in another format or language or wish to find out if your polling station is accessible, please contact us.

[Insert helpline and other contact details including website]

Electoral fraud is a crime

Issued by the Chief Electoral Officer.

If undelivered return to: *[Insert return address]*

SCHEDULE 4

Regulation 3(5)

Form B1

Front of card

Proxy postal poll card

UK Parliamentary Election
[insert name of constituency]
constituency

Voting information
We will send your postal vote approximately 10 working days before polling day.

For this election you are proxy for:
**[(Elector's name)*
(Elector's address)
(Elector's number on register)]
[the person with this elector number: (Insert elector's number on register)].
**If anonymous elector omit the words in the first set of square brackets, if not omit the words in the second set of square brackets.*

Your details:

**[Proxy's name and address details here]*

**Returning Officer to omit where proxy postal poll card sent to the proxy of an anonymous elector. Proxy postal poll card to proxy of an anonymous elector must be delivered in a sealed envelope.*

Your postal vote

- You will receive a postal vote for this election because you successfully applied to vote by post.
- You will not be able to vote as a proxy in a polling station.
- **If you have not received your postal vote by [day] [date] [name of month] please call the helpline.**

Please turn over

Back of card

How to vote
1. When you receive your postal vote, read the instructions carefully.
2. Your postal vote includes your ballot paper and a declaration of identity.
3. Complete the declaration of identity.
4. Complete the ballot paper.
5. Return your postal voting papers in the envelope provided.
6. We need to receive your postal vote by **10pm on [day/date of poll]**. Postal voting papers cannot be accepted at polling stations.

If you need help to vote, you can ask someone you know or get advice by calling our helpline.
If you need information in another format or language please call our helpline below.

If you make a mistake:
- Please phone the helpline immediately.
- We can only issue a replacement postal vote if you return all your postal vote documents **by 5pm on [day/date of deadline]**.

If you would rather vote in person, you must cancel your postal vote **before 5pm on [day/date of deadline]**. For more information, please call the helpline.
*[*Note that if you are a proxy for a person with an anonymous entry on the register you will not be able to vote in person.]*
**Returning Officer to only include on proxy postal poll card sent to the proxy of an anonymous elector.*

Electoral fraud is a crime

[Insert helpline and other contact details including website]

Issued by the Chief Electoral Officer.

If undelivered return to: *[Insert return address]*

SCHEDULE 5

Regulation 3(6)

Form E

Proxy Paper

UK Parliamentary Election	
***[insert name of constituency]* constituency**	
Name of Proxy	
Address of Proxy	

You have been appointed as proxy for

_____ (name of elector)

who is qualified to be registered at

(Qualifying address) _____

to vote for them at *[Local Council/Parliamentary/European Parliamentary/Assembly] elections.

Signature _____ (Electoral Registration Officer)

Date _____

** Delete whichever is inappropriate*

1. This proxy paper gives you the right to vote as a proxy for the elector who is named above.

2. You may not vote as proxy at the same election for more than two electors, unless you are their spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild.

3. You may vote as proxy at the polling station allotted to the elector on whose behalf you are appointed. Shortly before polling day you will be sent a proxy poll card telling you where the polling station is. You do not need to take either the poll card or this paper with you to vote but it will save time if you do take the poll card with you.

4. If you cannot vote in person at the polling station, contact the helpline or visit our website.

5. If you have been appointed as a proxy on behalf of an elector who has an anonymous entry in the register, you can only vote by post. If you have not already been granted a postal vote, you should contact the electoral registration officer.

[Insert helpline and other contact details including website]

SCHEDULE 6

Regulation 3(7)

Form F

Certificate of Employment

UK Parliamentary Election

***[insert name of constituency]* constituency**

Date of election [day] [date] [month] [year]

Ballot box number:

The person named below is entitled to vote at any polling station in the above constituency on production and surrender of this certificate to the Presiding Officer.

I certify that _____ (name of elector)

who is numbered _____ in the register of electors for the constituency named above cannot reasonably be expected to go in person to the polling station allotted to them at this election by reason of his/her employment on the above date for a purpose connected with this election:
- as a constable*
- by me (Only applies to Returning Officer's staff)*

Signature _____Returning Officer/Police Officer *(Chief Inspector or above)**

Date _____

* Person completing the form to delete whichever does not apply.

SCHEDULE 7

Regulation 3(8)

Form L

Front of declaration

Declaration of Identity

UK Parliamentary Election
***[insert name of constituency]* constituency**
Date of election [day] [date] [month] [year]

Important – you must fill in and return this declaration of identity with your completed ballot paper for it to be counted.

Please read the instructions on the back of this form carefully.

*Name _____ Ballot paper number _____

* *Returning Officer to omit name where sent to an anonymous elector*

(!) Check that the number on the back of your ballot paper matches the number shown above. If these do not match, call us **immediately** on (*insert helpline number*).

I am the person the ballot paper numbered above was sent to.

My Date of Birth is: ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

Day Month Year

***My Signature is:**
**Returning Officer to omit where elector has been granted a waiver.*

We will check this information against our records for security.

The voter has signed this declaration in my presence.

Witness signature _____

The witness must be aged 18 or over and satisfied to the best of their knowledge and belief as to the identity of the voter.

Please turn over

Back of declaration

Instructions for voting by post

Please read through carefully. If you need help, please contact us.

1. For your vote to be counted, you must fill in, in the presence of a witness, and return this declaration of identity with your ballot paper.
2. Make sure you have filled in all the information on this declaration of identity and your witness has signed it.
3. Vote **only once** by putting a cross [x] in the box next to your choice on the ballot paper.
4. Do not mark the ballot paper in any other way or your vote may not count.
5. Put the ballot paper in the smaller envelope marked "A" and seal it. Then put the envelope marked "A", together with this declaration of identity, in the larger envelope marked "B".
6. We must receive your postal vote in the envelope provided by **10pm on [day] [date of poll]**.
7. After receiving this postal vote, you cannot vote in person at a polling station in this election.

Getting Help

- If you need help to vote, you can ask someone you know or get advice by calling the helpline. The person helping you must not tell anyone how you voted.
- Please call the helpline if you need information in another format or language.
- If you make a mistake you can get a replacement if you return all your postal vote documents. Call us immediately as **we can only issue a replacement before 5pm on [day] [date] [month]**.

[Insert helpline and other contact details including website]

Electoral fraud is a crime.

Issued by the Chief Electoral Officer.

SCHEDULE 8

Regulation 3(9)

Form M

Front of declaration

(for use when a parliamentary poll is combined with another poll)

Declaration of Identity

UK Parliamentary Election
***[insert name of constituency]* constituency**
Date of election [day] [date] [month] [year]

To be returned with the *[insert colour of ballot paper]* coloured ballot paper.

Important – you must fill in and return this declaration of identity with your completed ballot paper for it to be counted.

Please read the instructions on the back of this form carefully.

*Name _____ Ballot paper number _____

** Returning Officer to omit name where sent to an anonymous elector*

(!) Check that the number on the back of your ballot paper matches the number shown above. If these do not match, call us **immediately** on (*insert helpline number*).

I am the person the ballot paper numbered above was sent to.

My Date of Birth is: | | | | | | | | |
Day Month Year

***My Signature is:**
**Returning Officer to omit where elector has been granted a waiver.*

We will check this information against our records for security.

The voter has signed this declaration in my presence.

Witness signature _____

The witness must be aged 18 or over and satisfied to the best of their knowledge and belief as to the identity of the voter.

Please turn over

Back of declaration

Instructions for voting by post

Please read through carefully. If you need help, please contact us.

1. For your vote to be counted, you must fill in, in the presence of a witness, and return this declaration of identity with your ballot paper. You must do this even if you have already signed a similar declaration of identity for another election to be held on the same day.
2. Make sure you have filled in all the information on this declaration of identity and your witness has signed it.
3. Vote **only once** by putting a cross [x] in the box next to your choice on the ballot paper.
4. Do not mark the ballot paper in any other way or your vote may not count.
5. Different colours are used for the ballot papers for each election. Each ballot paper has its own ballot paper envelope (the smaller envelope marked "A"), declaration of identity and covering envelope (the larger envelope marked "B"). The covering envelope and declaration of identity will refer to the colour of the ballot paper. It is important to use the correct envelopes and declaration of identity.
6. Place each ballot paper in the correct smaller envelope marked "A" and seal it. Then put the envelope marked "A", together with the correct declaration of identity, in the correct larger envelope marked "B" and seal it.
7. We must receive your postal vote in the envelope provided by **10pm on [day] [date of poll]**.
8. After receiving this postal vote, you cannot vote in person at a polling station in this election.

Getting Help

- If you need help to vote, you can ask someone you know or get advice by contacting us. The person helping you must not tell anyone how you voted.
- Please contact us if you need information in another format or language.
- If you make a mistake you can get a replacement if you return all your postal vote documents. Call us immediately as **we can only issue a replacement before 5pm on [day] [date] [month]**.

[Insert helpline and other contact details including website]

Electoral fraud is a crime.

Issued by the Chief Electoral Officer.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations amend the forms used at parliamentary elections held in Northern Ireland for poll cards, postal poll cards, proxy poll cards, proxy postal poll cards, declarations of identity, proxy papers and certificates of employment. These Regulations also remove the requirement for a witness to a declaration of identity to provide a name and address and define who may act as a witness.

An impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no impact on the private or voluntary sectors is foreseen.

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