

## Village Council Act

The Village Council Act, Chapter 88 of the Laws of Belize governs Village Council Elections.

Statutory Instrument No 134 of 2009 and 31 of 2010 are the most recently enacted.

Section 35(1) Part VI of the Act empowers the Election & Boundaries Commission to make regulations.

Village Council Elections are held every three years to elect one Chairperson and six Members

The Elections and Boundaries Commission shall at least seven days before any general election of members of the council become due, dissolve that council by order published in the *Gazette* and on the radio

The Elections and Boundaries Commission makes the regulations relating to elections and provisions for the trial of election petitions and procedures for challenging an election.

### Who can be elected?

Any person who is:

- a citizen of Belize **and**
- at least eighteen years of age **and**
- has been residing in the village for at least 12 months immediately preceding the elections

### Who can vote?

Any person who is:

- a. on the official voters list for that village or community **or**
- b. is Belizean by birth or naturalization; who is at least eighteen years of age and residing in the village for at least two months prior to the election **or**
- c. is a Permanent Resident in Belize and is in possession of a Permanent Residence Card or proof of possession thereof; is at least eighteen years of age **and** residing in the village for at least two months prior to the election

### Who cannot vote?

Any person who is:

- certified to be of unsound mind under the laws of Belize
- has voted in another village or community election held for that period

Residents are entitled to vote in **ONLY** one village or community

### Nomination

- \* Nomination for persons wishing to be elected to office is held from 9:00a.m. – 10:00 a.m. on Election Day
- \* Nominees **MUST** meet the required qualifications

\* no person shall be nominated in **Absentia**

### Hours of Polling

\* Polls open at 10:00 a.m. and close at 1:00 pm, 3:00 pm or 5:00 pm (Closing time is approved by the Elections & Boundaries Commission and is published in advance of Election Day).

### Voting Process

- \* Election Officer announces the voter's name in a loud tone for agents to hear
- \* if voter's name is on the voters list a line is marked through the name
- \* name of permanent residents who qualify to vote will be added to the list of electors
- \* voter dips right index finger into the indelible ink
- \* Election Officer initials and gives the voter two ballot papers (1-Chairperson, 1-Members)
- \* voter proceeds to booth to write number or name of person(s) he/she wishes to vote for
- \* voter deposits ballot paper in the respective ballot box provided
- \* voter then exits polling station

### Presentation of Voter I. D. Card

Voters are **encouraged to present** their voters I.D. card to facilitate the voting process however; voters who **do not**

**present** their I.D. cards **will be allowed** to vote once they meet all requirements

### **Things you need to Know**

- \* if a voter makes an error with the ballot paper he/she can return it to the Election Officer for cancellation and obtain another ballot paper
- \* if **only** one candidate for Chairperson and six members are nominated they shall immediately be declared as duly elected for the position nominated
- \* no voter shall vote by proxy
- \* incapacitated voters are allowed to bring a person of his/her choice to assist in marking his/her ballot paper

### **Counting Process**

- \*Counting is done for Chairperson followed by members after closing of polls. All ballot boxes are counted in one central location for a particular village
- \* Election Officer publicly announces the official results after confirming the results inside the counting station
- \* if candidates for any post emerge with an equal number of votes; a tie breaker shall be decided by flipping a coin

### **Offences/Penalties**

- \* persons seeking election as Chairperson or member knowingly that they do not qualify may be fined \$3,000 or two years imprisonment or both
- \* persons voting in more than one village or community election may be fined \$3,000 or two years imprisonment or both
- \* sale of intoxicating liquor by any holder of a liquor licence during the opening of polls and before the announcement of the results may be fined \$250.00 or six months imprisonment

### **Elections and Boundaries Department**

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*Be a part of the Democratic Process by exercising your right to vote.*

*Elections and Boundaries Department  
January 2013*

# **VILLAGE COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2013**

## **What you need to Know**

