



Frequently Asked Questions *about* **THE PRESIDENTIAL RUN-OFF ELECTION**

Presidential
Run-Off
Election

Sierra Leone
31 March 2018
7am - 5pm

For more information about
the National Electoral
Commission,
please visit:
www.nec.gov.sl

What is a run-off election and why is it necessary?

According to the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Presidential election requires a candidate to win no less than 55 percent of the valid votes. In the case that no candidate wins 55 percent of the valid votes, the two candidates with the highest number of votes should compete in a second election, also called a “run-off” election. The candidate who receives the higher number of valid votes will be declared President. In this case, the two competing candidates will be Samura Matthew Wilson Kamara (All Peoples Congress), and Julius Maada Bio (Sierra Leone Peoples Party).

When will the 2018 Presidential run-off election be held and when will the result be announced?

Following a legal injunction that delayed logistical preparations, the National Electoral Commission (NEC) will conduct a run-off Presidential election on Saturday 31 March. A winner will be announced as soon as the NEC is able to share accurate results; and the Presidential assumption of office will take place on the same day.

Must voters participate in the run-off election if they plan to vote for the same candidate as before?

Yes. Only valid ballots papers, cast on 31 March will be counted in the run-off election. Even if voters plan to select the same candidate as they did before, they must participate in the run-off election and make their mark beside the candidate of their choice. Election results are not cumulative: results from the 7 March election will not be counted in the run-off.

May returning voters select a different candidate than they did in the first election?

Yes. Voters may select either of the two candidates, competing in the run-off election, regardless who they voted for in the past.

Will voters require new voter ID cards?

No. No new cards will be issued before the run-off election. Voters should use the same ID cards that they used to vote on 7 March.

If a voter did not participate in the first round (7 March) election, may he/she participate in the run-off election?

Yes. It is the Constitutional right of every eligible voter to cast a ballot paper in any election – even if he/she has never done so before.

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What are the procedures for voting in the runoff election?

There are several simple steps to follow, when voting; and NEC staff will be nearby, to guide voters through the process:

1. Join the queue, outside the polling station.

While you are in the queue, the Polling Station Queue Controller will confirm that you are queuing at the correct station.

2. Enter the polling station and confirm your identity.

Inside the polling station, a Voter Identification Officer will confirm that your left index finger is not already inked (because this would indicate that you had already voted) and ensures that the details on your voter identification card are the same as those recorded in the voter register. You will be asked to sign or put a thumb print beside your personal details in the register.

2. Collect your ballot paper.

The Ballot Paper Issuer will detach the ballot paper from the ballot paper booklet, fold it (first vertically and then horizontally), and validate it with a stamp on the back, before giving it to you.

3. Mark your ballot paper.

You will be directed to a voting screen, where you may mark your ballot paper, in privacy. Place a mark in the box beside the single candidate of your choice, on the ballot paper. Do not write your name or any other words on the ballot paper. Refold the ballot paper, in the same way it had already been folded.

4. Cast your ballot paper.

A Ballot Box Controller will guide you toward the ballot box, in which you will cast your ballot.

5. Have your finger inked and quietly leave the polling station.

The Ballot Box Controller will then mark your finger with indelible ink. This indicates that you have participated in the election and ensures that every voter votes only once. You should then leave the station and allow others to vote, without distraction.

What provisions will be made to accommodate voters with disabilities?

Ramps will be used where premises are not wheelchair-accessible; and every polling station will have at least one screen that is lower, in relation to the height of wheelchairs and for those who need to sit down while completing their ballot papers.

As in the first Presidential election, the Tactile Ballot Guide will enable blind and visually-impaired persons to identify their preferred candidate by feeling the ballot, without having to see it.

And all disabled and elderly voters are permitted to be accompanied by their own appointed helpers – even behind the voting screens. These helpers need to be registered to vote and should take their voter ID card with them to the polling centre