



Republic of the Philippines  
**Senate**  
Pasay City

POLICY ORDER NO. 2016-002 (OSP)  
Series of 2016

SUBJECT : RULES AND GUIDELINES ON THE RECEPTION OF THE  
CERTIFICATES OF CANVASS AND ELECTION RETURNS FOR THE  
MAY 9, 2016 ELECTIONS FOR PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

**WHEREAS**, Article VII, Section 4, Paragraph 4 of the Constitution provides that the returns of every election for President and Vice President, duly certified by the Board of Canvassers of each province or city, shall be transmitted to the Congress, directed to the President of the Senate;

**WHEREAS**, Republic Act No. 9369, Republic Act No. 8436, and other relevant election laws and COMELEC Resolutions, which authorize the Commission on Elections to use an automated election system, provide for the transmission of election results to the Congress, directed to the President of the Senate;

**WHEREAS**, COMELEC Resolution Nos. 10063, 10052, 10045, and 10048, adopted pursuant to Republic Act No. 9189, Republic Act No. 10590, and other relevant election laws on overseas absentee voting, provide for the transmission of election results to the Congress, directed to the President of the Senate;

**WHEREAS**, COMELEC Resolution Nos. 10062 and 10003, adopted in accordance with Republic Act No. 10380, Executive Order No. 157, and other relevant election laws on local absentee voting, provide for the transmission of election results to the Congress, directed to the President of the Senate;

**WHEREAS**, the city or municipal board of canvassers, the district board of canvassers, the provincial board of canvassers and the special board of canvassers for overseas and local absentee voting, shall transmit the duly certified Certificates of Canvass and/or Election Returns to the Congress as the National Board of Canvassers for President and Vice-President, directed to the President of the Senate;

**WHEREAS**, in order to ensure faithful compliance with the Constitutional mandate and to provide for an orderly and systematic proceeding, the following Rules and Guidelines on the Reception of the Certificates of Canvass and Election Returns for the May 9, 2016 Elections for President and Vice President are hereby adopted:

**Rule 1**  
**RECEPTION OF PHYSICALLY TRANSMITTED**  
**CERTIFICATES OF CANVASS AND ELECTION RETURNS**

**A. VENUE, RECEPTION AND STORAGE AREAS**

**Sec. 1.** The reception of the Certificates of Canvass and Election Returns shall be at the Senate of the Philippines located at the GSIS Building, Pasay City.

**Sec. 2.** There shall be separate reception areas for the ballot boxes purportedly containing the Certificates of Canvass and the ballot boxes purportedly containing the Election Returns.

The ballot boxes purportedly containing the Certificates of Canvass and supporting documents and paraphernalia, if any, shall be received at the Senators Claro M. Recto and Jose P. Laurel Rooms at the second floor of the Senate of the Philippines. The ballot boxes purportedly containing the Election Returns and supporting documents and paraphernalia, if any, shall be received at the ground floor lobby of the Senate of the Philippines.

**Sec. 3.** The storage area for the ballot boxes purportedly containing the Certificates of Canvass shall be at a place designated in the Senator Claro M. Recto Room. The storage area for the ballot boxes purportedly containing the Election Returns shall be at the covered parking area adjacent to the ground floor lobby.

The storage areas for the Certificates of Canvass and Election Returns shall be covered, on a twenty-four hour basis, by closed circuit television cameras.

**Sec. 4.** Only authorized Senate personnel, accredited representatives and COMELEC officers as defined hereunder shall be allowed access to the reception and/or storage areas.

“Authorized Senate personnel” are Senate employees who are members of the *Ad Hoc* Committee and its reception teams created pursuant to Senate Special Order No. 2016-027, and such persons designated by the President of the Senate to receive and safeguard the Certificates of Canvass, Election Returns and other election materials and paraphernalia transmitted to the President of the Senate.

“Accredited Representatives” are representatives of presidential and vice presidential candidates, representatives of political parties fielding presidential and vice presidential candidates, representatives of citizens’ arm, and members of the media.

“COMELEC officers” are COMELEC officials, members of the Board of Canvassers, and the Chairmen of the Special Board of Canvassers under Republic Act No. 9189, as amended by Republic Act No. 10590, governing Overseas Absentee Voting, and under Executive Order No. 157 and Republic Act No. 10380 governing Local Absentee Voting, and their respective authorized representatives.

**Sec. 5.** Identifying tags provided by the Senate shall be worn at all times by authorized persons entering the reception and/or storage areas. For the Senate personnel, they shall, in addition to the identifying tags, wear their official Senate identification card.

**Sec. 6.** Whenever required by the proper Senate authorities, other identifying documents to show authorization to enter the reception and/or storage areas shall be presented on demand.

**Sec. 7.** Only the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms, upon prior approval by the President of the Senate, is authorized to issue tags to any person seeking access to the reception and/or storage areas. The Office of the Sergeant-at-Arms (OSAA) shall provide the appropriate color-coding for personnel granted access to these areas.

Upon presentation of authority and proper identification, the representatives of the accredited citizens' arm, the accredited political parties, the presidential and vice presidential candidates, and members of the media shall be entitled to the issuance of identification tags.

## **B. SECURITY MEASURES AND HOUSE RULES**

**Sec. 8.** Legislative pages shall be stationed at the ground floor lobby at all times. One page shall accompany the COMELEC officer and escort/s to the second floor for the reception of the Certificates of Canvass, while another shall accompany the COMELEC officer and escort/s to the ground floor lobby for the reception of the Election Returns.

**Sec. 9.** Firearms shall not be carried within the Senate premises, including the parking areas.

The COMELEC officer and/or escort/s shall be required to deposit their firearms, if any, with the OSAA.

**Sec. 10.** Smoking shall be strictly prohibited within the Senate building.

**Sec. 11.** The OSAA shall ensure that all fire-fighting equipment of the Senate shall be ready and serviceable on a twenty-four (24) hour basis.

**Sec. 12.** In case of emergency or calamity, the OSAA shall be responsible for the orderly and secure evacuation of the personnel and the ballot boxes purportedly containing the Certificates of Canvass and the ballot boxes purportedly containing the Election Returns in the custody of the Senate.

**Sec. 13.** Effective May 9, 2016, only vehicles carrying ballot boxes purportedly containing Certificates of Canvass and ballot boxes purportedly containing Election Returns and such other vehicles that the President of the Senate may authorize shall be allowed entry into the Senate covered parking area.

**Sec. 14.** Absolutely no withdrawal of COMELEC ballot boxes and other receptacles inside the storage areas shall be allowed, except when expressly authorized in writing by the President of the Senate.

**Sec. 15.** The Senate Sergeant-at-Arms shall enforce these policies.

#### **C. ASSUMPTION OF RESPONSIBILITY**

**Sec. 16.** The Senate shall assume responsibility over the security of the ballot boxes purportedly containing the Certificates of Canvass and ballot boxes purportedly containing the Election Returns only upon issuance of the official receipt duly signed by the team leader of the respective reception teams.

#### **D. PROCEDURE FOR RECEPTION OF THE CERTIFICATES OF CANVASS AND ELECTION RETURNS**

**Sec. 17.** The reception of ballot boxes/receptacles purportedly containing the Certificates of Canvass and ballot boxes/receptacles purportedly containing Election Returns shall start on May 9, 2016, at six o'clock in the evening (6:00 p.m.).

**Sec. 18.** Each presidential and vice presidential candidate, every political party fielding a presidential and/or vice presidential candidate and the accredited citizens' arm are entitled to one (1) representative in each of the reception areas. They shall be allowed to witness the reception of the ballot boxes/receptacles purportedly containing the Certificates of Canvass, ballot boxes/receptacles purportedly containing Election Returns and other election documents/paraphernalia, as well as note the condition of said ballot boxes/receptacles upon receipt thereof by the reception teams and other particulars relating to the same.

**Sec. 19.** The President of the Senate shall receive the first delivered ballot boxes/receptacles purportedly containing the Certificate of Canvass. Subsequent ballot boxes/receptacles purportedly containing the Certificates of Canvass and ballot boxes purportedly containing the Election Returns shall be received by the reception teams as provided herein.

**Sec. 20.** There shall be at least two (2) Secretariat reception teams per shift which shall receive the ballot boxes/receptacles purportedly containing the Certificates of Canvass and shall be composed of the following personnel per team:

- (a) a team leader, preferably a lawyer;
- (b) a stenographer;
- (c) a clerk; and
- (d) a utility aide.

There shall be three (3) Secretariat reception teams per shift which shall receive the ballot boxes/receptacles purportedly containing the Election Returns and shall be composed of the following:

- (a) a team leader, with the rank of at least LSO V;
- (b) an assistant team leader; and
- (c) a utility aide.

**Sec. 21.** The reception teams shall be on duty on a 24-hour basis, with each team observing an 8-hour shift. All members of the reception teams shall report for duty at least one (1) hour before the start of their shift and shall remain at their post until relieved by the next reception team.

**Sec. 22.** The members of the reception teams and shift supervisors and such other personnel as may be necessary shall be designated by the President of the Senate.

All members of the reception teams shall undergo a training/seminar on their reception duties.

**Sec. 23.** Reception proceedings for the Certificates of Canvass shall be recorded by a stenographer and shall be covered by video and still cameras. In the case of Election Returns, reception proceedings shall be covered by video and still cameras.

#### **RECEPTION OF CERTIFICATES OF CANVASS**

**Sec. 24.** The COMELEC officer and escort/s delivering the Certificate of Canvass shall register in the entry logbook provided for by the OSAA at the ground floor lobby. They shall be provided with Senate identification tags, and thereafter escorted to the reception area at Senators Claro M. Recto and Jose P. Laurel Rooms.

**Sec. 25.** At the entrance to the reception area for the Certificates of Canvass, the COMELEC officer shall register in the COC Logbook and thereafter present to the team leader the ballot box with a transmittal receipt, and the said COMELEC officer shall state whether the purported Certificate of Canvass delivered is complete or only a partial canvass.

The team leader shall describe, in the presence of the COMELEC officer, the condition of the ballot box, state its serial number, the number of keys and locks turned over, and the serial number of the self-locking seal. The COMELEC officer shall be asked to conform to or comment on the description or observation made by the team leader.

The team leader shall only receive the ballot box(es) purportedly containing the Certificates of Canvass but shall not open the same.

The team leader shall then turn over the ballot box purportedly containing the Certificate of Canvass to the Senate OSAA for storage.

**Sec. 26.** There shall be a prescribed Senate form incorporating the details mentioned in the immediately preceding section. The form shall be signed by the team leader and the COMELEC officer, and attested to by the representatives mentioned in Section 18 hereof.

The representatives of the accredited political parties, the presidential and vice presidential candidates, and the citizens' arm shall each be entitled to a duly accomplished copy of the aforementioned Senate prescribed form.

**Sec. 27.** The team leader shall sign for and on behalf of the President of the Senate, the Senate official receipt for the purported Certificate of Canvass in two (2) copies. The team leader shall retain the first copy and the second copy shall be given to the COMELEC officer who shall acknowledge receipt of the same.

The official receipt shall describe the condition of the ballot box purportedly containing the Certificate of Canvass as herein provided.

**Sec. 28.** Whenever the purported Certificate of Canvass is not placed in a ballot box or is contained in a receptacle other than a ballot box, the COMELEC officer making the delivery shall state the reason for the purported Certificate of Canvass not being placed inside a ballot box.

The team leader shall describe the condition of the receptacle, and then the COMELEC officer shall open the receptacle and take out the envelope purportedly containing the Certificate of Canvass. Thereafter, the team leader shall describe the condition of the envelope, indicate whether it is sealed or not, state whether there are signatures appearing therein, its serial number, and such other relevant comments and observations. The team leader shall ask the COMELEC officer to place it and all the contents of the receptacle in a ballot box and shall seal and padlock the same. The ballot box, seal and padlock to be used shall be provided by COMELEC.

In no case shall the envelope purportedly containing the Certificate of Canvass be opened. However, if an envelope is open upon delivery, the contents thereof shall not be taken out; the fact that the envelope was already open upon delivery shall be recorded in writing.

**Sec. 29.** The ballot boxes purportedly containing the Certificates of Canvass shall be arranged by the OSAA inside the storage area in the order received by the reception teams.

#### RECEPTION OF ELECTION RETURNS

**Sec. 30.** The COMELEC officer and escort/s delivering the Election Returns shall register in the attendance logbook provided for by the OSAA at the ground floor lobby. They shall be provided with Senate identification tags, and thereafter escorted to the reception area at the ground floor lobby.

At the reception area, the COMELEC officer shall describe the condition of the ballot box, state its serial number, the number of keys and locks turned over and the serial number of the self-locking seal/s.

The team leader shall only receive the ballot box(es) purportedly containing the Election Returns but shall not open the same.

When the envelopes purportedly containing the Election Returns are contained in receptacles other than ballot boxes, the COMELEC officer making the delivery shall state the reason for the purported Election Returns not being placed inside a ballot box. The COMELEC officer shall describe the condition of the receptacle, state the number of keys and locks turned over and the serial number of the locks, if any. The COMELEC officer shall then be asked to take out the envelope purportedly containing the Election Returns and put it and all the contents of the receptacle in a ballot box and seal and padlock the same. The ballot box, seal and padlock to be used shall be provided by COMELEC.

**Sec. 31.** The COMELEC officer delivering such ballot boxes and/or receptacles shall indicate in the transmittal receipt whether the delivered Election Returns contained in the ballot boxes and/or receptacles are complete or partial. The first copy of the transmittal receipt shall be given to the team leader, while the COMELEC officer shall retain the second copy and acknowledge receipt of the same. The team leader shall issue an official receipt indicating the number of ballot boxes or receptacles received.

**Sec. 32.** The ballot boxes shall be arranged by the OSAA in the storage area by region and by provinces in alphabetical order and within sight of everybody. Such ballot boxes shall remain in the Senate premises until further orders by the President of the Senate.

#### **RECEPTION OF THE FIFTH COPY OF THE MUNICIPAL/COMPONENT CITY CERTIFICATES OF CANVASS**

**Sec. 33.** All ballot boxes and/or receptacles purportedly containing the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) copy of the Municipal/Component City Certificates of Canvass and their supporting documents and paraphernalia, if any, sent to the President of the Senate shall be received in the same manner as that for the ballot boxes and/or receptacles purportedly containing the Election Returns as provided in in the preceding sections.

Such ballot boxes and their supporting documents or paraphernalia shall be stored and secured in a separate area next to the storage area for ballot boxes purportedly containing the Election Returns at the covered parking area adjacent to the ground floor lobby of the Senate premises. The said ballot boxes shall be arranged and labeled in the same manner as that for ballot boxes purportedly containing the Election Returns. They shall remain in the Senate premises until ordered otherwise by the President of the Senate.

The concerned reception team leader and/or supervisor shall duly record the transmittal to the Senate of said ballot boxes and issue the corresponding receipt therefor.

#### **E. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

**Sec. 34.** A guard designated by the Sergeant-at-Arms shall be stationed at the entry of the storage area. He/she shall record in a logbook the arrival and removal of envelopes and ballot boxes.

**Sec. 35.** The keys to the locks on the ballot boxes shall be properly tagged and placed in two separate glass encased cabinets with locks, one for the ballot boxes purportedly containing the Certificates of Canvass and another one for ballot boxes purportedly containing the Election Returns. These cabinets shall be within the sight of everybody.

**Sec. 36.** The Secretariat, through the Secretary of the Senate or, in his absence, the Deputy Secretary for Legislation, shall submit daily advisories to the President of the Senate as to the number of Certificates of Canvass and Election Returns already received and their respective places of origin. For this purpose, the Secretary shall designate a Records Officer who shall be responsible for the collection and safekeeping of all accomplished forms obtained at the reception areas.

**Sec. 37.** All forms to be used in the reception areas shall be accountable forms. Accomplished forms, documents, video films, still photographs and such other materials related to the reception and canvassing shall be turned over to the Senate Legislative Archives Service for safekeeping after the proclamation of the duly elected President and Vice President.

#### **F. TRANSMITTAL TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Sec. 38.** Only upon written order of the President of the Senate shall the ballot boxes purportedly containing the Certificates of Canvass be transferred to the House of Representatives.

**Sec. 39.** Upon transmittal to the House of Representatives, the ballot boxes purportedly containing the Certificates of Canvass shall be deposited in the Plenary Hall under the joint responsibility of the House and Senate Sergeants-at-Arms.

**Sec. 40.** The ballot boxes purportedly containing the Election Returns and the ballot boxes purportedly containing the Fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) Copy of the Municipal/Component City Certificates of Canvass shall remain at their respective storage areas in the Senate premises. Withdrawal of any of the ballot boxes shall be made only upon written order of the President of the Senate.

#### **Rule 2**

#### **RECEPTION OF ELECTRONICALLY TRANSMITTED CERTIFICATES OF CANVASS**

**Sec. 41.** The reception of the electronically transmitted Certificate of Canvass directed to the President of the Senate shall be at the House of Representatives. The designated area shall be manned by authorized Senate personnel and secured by the Senate OSAA in coordination with the House of Representatives.

**Sec. 42.** After the initialization by the President of the Senate of the Consolidation and Canvassing System (CCS) to be used for the reception of the electronically transmitted Certificates of Canvass, only members of the *Ad Hoc* Committee, the members of the reception teams and security teams as may be hereafter constituted, and other



persons designated by the President of the Senate shall man, monitor, observe and secure the CCS.

**Sec. 43.** Upon the direction of the President of the Senate, the Secretary of the Senate shall submit periodic reports to the President of the Senate as to the place of origin and the number of Certificates of Canvass already transmitted to and received in the CCS. No person, including those personnel assigned to man, monitor, observe and secure the CCS shall access or try to access any information or data relating to the results of the elections as contained in the transmitted Certificates of Canvass.

**Sec. 44.** The Senate shall assume and exercise responsibility over the CCS from the time of its installation and initialization until the convening of the Congress in Joint Session to canvass the votes for President and Vice-President.

**Sec. 45.** The Senate shall adopt adequate, effective and secure measures to ensure the integrity of the Certificates of Canvass transmitted electronically.

**Sec. 46.** The representatives mentioned in Section 18 hereof are authorized to observe the proceedings in the reception of the electronically transmitted COCs.

### **Rule 3 IMPLEMENTATION**

**Sec. 47.** The Secretary of the Senate is hereby authorized to issue such orders as may be necessary to carry out the effective implementation of these Rules and Guidelines.

**Sec. 48.** Violation of any of these Rules and Guidelines shall subject the offender to disciplinary action in accordance with Civil Service rules and regulations and/or other pertinent laws.

### **Rule 4 EFFECTIVITY AND PUBLICATION**

**Sec. 49.** These Rules and Guidelines shall take effect upon approval and shall be published in two (2) newspapers of general circulation and in the official website of the Senate of the Philippines.

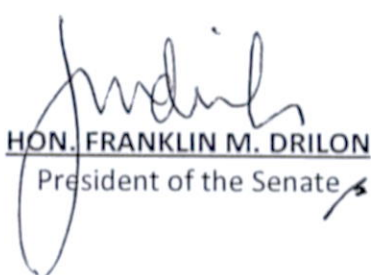
**SO ORDERED.**

APR 28 2016

April \_\_\_\_\_ 2016, Pasay City

Recommending Approval:

  
**ATTY. OSCAR G. YABES**  
Secretary of the Senate

  
**HON. FRANKLIN M. DRILON**  
President of the Senate