



جمهورية العراق
المفوضية العليا المستقلة للانتخابات
كۆمیسونی بالآی سه ربه خوی هه لێژارد نه كان
The Independent High Electoral Commission

Under the jurisdiction of the BoC, as stated in Article No.(4), Paragraph (8) of the IHEC Law no. 11 for the year 2007, we decided to issue the following regulation:

**Regulation No. () for the year 2009
Media Outlets**

**VRU Period
(Preamble)**

The IHEC was established in accordance with Law No. 11 for the year 2007 to be the sole electoral authority in Iraq. The commission is an independent and impartial professional body with juridical personality. It is under the control of the state and the supervision of the CoR.

**Section One
(Terminology)**

The terms hereinafter have the following meanings:

1. IHEC: The Independent High Electoral Commission.
2. Iraqi Media Network: An independent institution in charge of disseminating information, in accordance with Order No. 66 for the year 2004.
3. Campaign rules: Media coverage instructions for the VRU period.
4. VRU Period: The period in which VRU centers are opened to update the voters' register.
5. Media: Specialized outlets providing news, information or recreational material for the public by audio/visual and print media means.

6. Code of Conduct: The regulations of the media representatives code of conduct, issued by the IHEC.

Section Two

(Transparent Media Coverage)

1. While implementing the principle of the freedom of expression and information access, media outlets should give accurate, complete, and impartial information. They should also be unbiased and impartial when covering the VRU period and what goes on at registration centers.
2. Calling on all Iraqi audio/visual and print media to reduce advertisement costs during the media campaign period, carried out by IHEC, to update the voter register, especially since such campaigns are of national rather than commercial character.
3. A. Media outlets should clearly point out that official information, data, procedures, and electoral regulations are issued by the IHEC. Thus, they should refrain from disseminating such information without checking their accuracy.

B. Media outlets should refrain from distorting any electoral information on VRU issued by the IHEC, whether paid for advertisements, or data, or general media news.

Section Three

(Utilization of media outlets for the VRU period)

No Iraqi media outlet should intentionally distort, block, falsify, mispresent, or delete information, including systematic deletion that would actually affect the public understanding of a subject or an event during the registration period. Information on procedures, regulations, and electoral policy should be based on official data provided by the IHEC.

Section Four

(Iraqi Media Network obligations)

The Iraqi Media Network, as a public broadcast body funded by the country, is legally obliged to educate and inform the Iraqi citizens of the VRU procedures as follows:

1. Educating voters and informing listeners and viewers of the VRU period through newscasts as well as radio and television programs.
2. Providing practical information for the citizens, during their visit to registration centers to cast their votes, and taking measures to guarantee that the information is available to all shades of society.
3. Providing a free television broadcast and allocating available studios and technical resources to educate voters about the importance of VRU.
4. Providing free broadcast of the programs and data issued by the IHEC.

Section Five

(Media outlets' attendance at VRU centers)

1. Representatives of media outlets, who wish to enter the IHEC VRU centers in Baghdad and the governorates, should first obtain the media approval from IHEC through the external media division for accreditation.
2. No photographing or videotaping of any individual is allowed inside these centers without their clear consent.
3. Media representatives should convey the nature of the IHEC administrative organization and its performance in opening VRU centers impartially and accurately.
4. Media outlets should adhere to the instructions of the center manager and OICs.

Section Seven

(Violations)

1. The BoC will withdraw accreditation from any media representative or outlet who violates this regulation and the Code of Conduct.
2. The BoC is to request the Iraqi National Committee for Communications and Media to impose the proper penalty on any media outlet which violates this regulation and the Code of Conduct.
3. The IHEC is to refer any criminal issue to the judicial authority, if there is evidence of a criminal violation.

Section Eight

(Effective Date)

This regulation is effective from the date of its approval by the BoC on
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BoC

Media accreditation procedures for CoR Elections (VRU Period)

Preamble:

The media plays a very important role in promoting credibility and transparency in the VRU period. Media representatives should have the right to learn about the different stages of the electoral process, including VRU, and cover the phase fairly and transparently, with adherence to the rules, regulations, and instructions.

Thus, IHEC seeks to set mechanisms and procedures for the accreditation of media representatives, to guarantee the media's access to election processes, including VRU, while ensuring that this does not disrupt the conduct of the process.

First: Definitions

- Media representatives are journalists, cameramen and other media equipment operators, and their support staff and interpreters, working on a regular basis at daily, weekly, and periodical newspapers and official media institutions and TV and radio stations and online media.

- Registration centers are voter registration centers and places where IHEC conducts election briefing and press conferences.

- Honor Charter is the instructions and principles adopted by the Communication and Media Commission.

Second: General Rules

1. Media representatives have a right to access any place to which the general public has access. Freedom of movement of the media should not be restricted except for security reasons.

2. Media have a right to bring electronic devices – such as tape recorders, cameras or video recorders to specific centers determined by the IHEC.

3. Accreditation of media representatives shall be undertaken by the IHEC. This is without conflict with the implementation of other media rules, including the Honor Charter approved by the Communication and Media Commission.

4. Officials at VRU centers have the right to run these facilities; therefore media representatives should obey instructions from these individuals.

5. Accreditation procedures aim to facilitate access to registration centers. Thus, security for media representatives remains the responsibility of the media outlets.

Third: Rights and Duties of Accredited Media Representatives

- Accredited media representatives have the right to access all registration centers, except for videotaping which is allowed only in specific centers.

- Media representatives will be provided with news that take place in the VRU period to be disseminated to the public through newspapers, magazines, radio, television and websites.

- Media representatives should comply with the instructions of VRU center officials, ensuring the procedures do not conflict with the freedom of journalists in covering the VRU process.

- All registration centers have rules and special procedures accredited media representatives should be aware of and respect.

- To access an election facility, media representatives must show a valid badge with a photo, issued by the IHEC.

- Accredited media representatives wishing to cover the VRU period must be neutral and impartial, and avoid doing anything which might affect voters while visiting VRU centers.

- Media representatives shall not conduct any interview or videotape a voter visiting a VRU center without his consent.

- Electronic devices' security is the responsibility of the MoI and subject to its rules.

Fourth: Accreditation Procedures

- Accreditation badges are given free of charge in three languages (English, Kurdish and Arabic) to those applicants who have submitted a form and who work in media institutions that provide regular news and has a legal status and an audience. Applications for accreditation shall be available at the National Office and GEOs, and online on IHEC website

- A separate application shall be made for each individual seeking accreditation, and the form shall be accompanied by two passport sized photographs, a copy of ID and an approval letter from the media outlet for which he works.

- Individuals under 18 years of age may not be accredited as media representatives.

- Applications may be submitted to either the National Office or the Governorate Electoral Offices. The media representative or outlet has the right to wait to be informed if the application is accepted or rejected.

- The granting of the badge requires the signature of the media representative on the badge and adherence to the rules of media coverage

- IHEC may refuse to accredit anyone on the basis that he/she does not meet the requirements. Where accreditation is refused or withdrawn, a written notice with reasons will be provided to the individual affected.

- Accredited media representatives will be issued with an accreditation badge with a photo of the representative, and should be given only to him.

- Accreditation may be withdrawn if there is any intentional mistakes made on the application or when the representative fails to respect the rules and responsibilities of media representatives.

- Those affected by a decision to refuse or withdraw their accreditation have the right to appeal to the judicial authority, in accordance with Article 8 of the IHEC Law No. 11 of 2007.

