

2021-09-08 AMENDED LAW ON VOTER REGISTRATION

This document contains an unofficial translation of: the 8 September 2021 amendment law, followed by a consolidated version of the law with changes highlighted in blue.

LAW No. 19 / 2021 of September 8th

FIRST AMENDMENT TO LAW No. 6/2016, OF 25TH MAY ELECTORAL REGISTRATION LAW

The experience gathered in recent years, with three election processes, two in 2017 and one in 2018, has demonstrated the need to make some adjustments regarding voter registration procedures.

In this way, considering the importance of complying with the various civic duties of citizens listed in the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, and taking into account the importance of preserving State assets, a rule is introduced that provides for the payment of a fee for issuing a new voter's card from the third copy, when it has been damaged or destroyed by the holder.

Likewise, to give greater transparency and rigor to the registration process for voter registration, it is necessary to eliminate the baptismal certificate and the personal certificate of the Islamic community from the allowable set of documents for activation of registration, due to the insecurity that may create, accepting only documents issued by official entities.

It is also intended to expand cooperation with public entities in relation to data cross referencing, as well as with private entities such as telecommunications operators and banking institutions, through a duly justified communication, with a view having the best control of the updated content of the database.

Finally, considering the need for an improvement in the voter registration system through technology and innovation, it is proposed to strengthen the instruments that allow the identification of each voter, with the least risk of error, through a future collection of voter biometric data, in addition to the fingerprint. The use of a census based on biometric characteristics for identifying a voter will facilitate, when applied, the automatic detection of inconsistencies in voter identity data. An innovative aspect linked to this last point will be the incorporation of an electronic chip in the voter card, which collates all the information of the holder of the respective card, equipped with security mechanisms that guarantee the inviolability of the voter's identity, without prejudice to the relevant digital certification.

Thus, the National Parliament decrees, pursuant to paragraph h) of paragraph 2 of article 95 and of paragraph 2 of article 65 of the Constitution of the Republic, the following to be valid as law:

Article 1

Object

This law implements the first amendment to Law No. 6/2016, of May 25, Voter Registration Law.

Article 2

Amendment to Law No. 6/2016, of May 25

Articles 12, 13, 15, 16, 22, 23, 26, 29, 30, 34, 36 and 51 of Law No. 6/2016, of May 25, now have the following wording:

"Article 12

[...]

1. [...];
2. [...];
 - a) [...];
 - b) [...].

3. The National Election Commission, hereinafter referred to as CNE, monitors and supervises the operations referred to in the preceding paragraphs.

Article 13

[...]

1. [...]:
 - a) Number and identification of the registration document in the voter register;
 - b) [...];
 - c) [...];
 - d) [...];
 - e) [...];
 - f) [...];
 - g) [...];
 - h) [...];
 - i) Voter's contact number;
 - j) Voter number;
 - k) Other biometric data of the voter, at the time of implementing the biometric census.
2. [...]:
 - a) [...];
 - b) [...];
 - c) [...].

Article 15

[...]

For verification of identification, deletion of registration due transfers or deaths, and detection of other irregularities in the BDRE, data may be cross referenced to the databases of the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, and the Ministry of Finance.

Article 16

[...]

1. [...].
2. [...].
3. [...].
4. [...].

5. The CNE and the political parties receive from STAE the list with the total number of voters, duly updated.

Article 22

[...]

1. [Previous article body].
2. The deadline for voter registration abroad, the period for updating data during the election period and the respective implementation calendar are defined by Government law.

Article 23

[...]

1. Registration in the voter register is activated by the voter upon presentation of the original or a certified copy of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste identity card, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste passport, or birth certificate of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.
2. [...].
3. [Repealed].
4. [Repealed].
5. [Repealed].

Article 26

[...]

1. [...]:
 - a) Registration document number in the voter register;
 - b) [...];
 - c) [...];
 - d) [...];
 - e) [...];
 - f) [...];
 - g) [...];
 - h) [...];
 - i) [...];
 - j) [...];
 - k) [...];
 - l) Telephone contact number of the voter.
2. [...].

Article 29

[...]

1. [...];
2. [...];
3. [...]:
 - a) [...];
 - b) [...];

- c) [...];
- d) Number and type of document used by the voter in the registration;
- e) [...];
- f) [...];
- g) [...];
- h) [...];
- i) [...];
- j) Name and signature of the Director General of STAE;
- k) [...].

4. The voter card includes an electronic chip, as at the time of implementation of biometric registration, as well as the national emblem and the STAE logo and has the following security mechanisms and proof of authenticity:

- a) [...];
- b) [...].

5. [...].

6. Voter cards are the property of STAE and in relation to the cases provided for in article 34 of this law, it must carry out all steps for its recovery, in coordination with public and private entities under the terms to be defined by Government decree.

7. Where a voter card is destroyed or damaged three or more times, the voter must pay a fee, to be defined by Government decree, for the issue of a new voter card.

Article 30

[...]

1. [...].

2. In the case provided for in the preceding paragraph, the voter number is not changed.

Article 34

[...]

[...]:

a) [...];

b) [...];

c) [...];

d) [...];

e) Registration of voters initiated using the same documents is declared invalid by judicial bodies.

Article 36

[...]

1. [...].

2. [...].

3. [...].

4. [...].
5. [...].
6. All relevant entities collaborate with STAE for the detection of multiple registrations.

Article 51

[...]

1. The provision of all documents and forms related to voter registration is exempt from the payment of any fees, except in cases provided for in paragraph 7 of article 29, where payment of fees by the citizen, for the acquisition of forms and documents, is in an amount to be defined by Government decree.
2. [...]."

Article 3

Repeal

Paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of article 23 of Law no. 6/2016, of May 25th are repealed.

Article 4

Republication

Law No. 6/2016, of May 25, is republished, with the current wording and the necessary grammatical and legal corrections, attached to this law, of which it forms an integral part.

Article 5

Implementation

This law enters into force on the day following its Publication.

Approved on June 28, 2021.

The President of the National Parliament,

Aniceto Longuinhos Guterres Lopes

Enacted on September 3, 2021.

To be published.

The President of the Republic,

Francisco Guterres Lu Olo

Republication of Law No 6/2016

As amended by Law 19/2021

The Law on Voter Registration

The constitution defines the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste as a democratic, sovereign, independent and unitary state, based on the popular will and respect for the dignity of humanity. Under Article 2 (1) of the Fundamental Law, sovereignty resides in the People, which exercise it under the law.

The exercise of the right to vote, conferred on all citizens over the age of seventeen, constitutes the expressive and important form of manifestation and exercise of popular sovereignty. The exercise of the right to vote is, however, conditional upon being previously registered in the voter register.

Article 65 (2) of the Constitution provides for compulsory voter registration, and establishes the fundamental principles to which it must be subject, in order to guarantee free and fair elections, which are capable of ensuring the correct expression of the will of the people.

The present law seeks to ensure the establishment of a voter registration system in the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, in accordance with the principles set out in the Constitution, and capable of serving as a solid and credible basis for the choice of the holders of sovereignty and representative organs of Local Government.

Chapter I General Provisions

Article 1 General Rule

Voter registration is mandatory, official, unique and universal, and updated for each election.

Article 2 Obligatory and Official

1. Timorese citizens, older than seventeen years, have the right and the duty to actively register for the electoral process, to verify if they are duly registered and to request correction of their data, in case of error or omission.
2. The updating of voters' information in the voter register can also be done officially by the Technical Secretariat of the Electoral Administration (STAE), based on the information provided by the civil identification authorities.
3. The activities provided for in paragraph 1 shall be compulsory for Timorese citizens who are usually resident in the national territory and who are over seventeen.
4. Inclusion in the voter register presumes the active electoral capacity of citizens.

Article 3 Voter registration abroad

1. The registration of Timorese citizens residing abroad depends on prior consular registration.
2. Citizens registered with consular services are obligatorily and officially registered in the voter lists.

Article 4
Permanence

Inclusion in the voter registration is permanent and can only be canceled in the cases and on the terms provided by this law.

Article 5
Uniqueness and universality

1. There is a single voter registration for all elections by direct and universal suffrage and for referendums.
2. Voter registration covers all citizens with active electoral capacity.

Article 6
Single registration

No one may be registered more than once in the voter register.

Article 7
Geographical voter registration units

The following are the geographic units for voter registration:

- a) In the national territory, the administrative area (posto administrativo);
- b) Abroad, as the case may be, the consular district or the country of residence, if there is only an embassy there.

Article 8
Place of voter registration

1. Voters are registered at the workplace of the registration entity with territorial jurisdiction corresponding to their usual residence.
2. When, after the age of seventeen, citizens require the issue or renewal of an identity card or passport, and do not show a voter card, the services responsible for issuing those documents shall inform STAE, which proceeds with the registration of those citizens, according to the law.

Chapter II
Voter registration process

Article 9
Voter registration entities

1. Voter registration is implemented:
 - a) In the national territory, by STAE;
 - b) Abroad, by voter registration commissions, consisting of two career consular officials or, when these do not exist, by two diplomatic officials, with the exception of the ambassador, one being a delegate of the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration (STAE) and the other a delegate of the National Election Commissions.
2. Only Timorese citizens with active electoral capacity and properly registered during voter registration can exercise their functions within the voter registration process.

Article 10
Voter registration locations

1. Timorese citizens go to register or update their registration data in the voter register at the followings sites:
 - a) In national territory, at decentralized STAE offices or at voter registration posts which have jurisdiction over the area where they are usually resident;
 - b) Abroad, at the headquarters of embassies, consular posts or voter registration offices, with jurisdiction over their area of residence abroad.
2. The registration entities open voter registration posts, whenever the number of voters or their geographical dispersion warrants it, identifying their respective geographic areas of jurisdiction, duration and the places where they will operate.
3. The creation of voter registration posts and their respective areas of jurisdiction, duration and places of operation shall be announced in the Official Gazette and in the media, at least 30 days before they commence operating.

Chapter III
Voter Registration Database

Article 11
Purpose and update

1. The purpose of the voter register database (BDRE) is to organize and maintain permanent and current information on voters registered in the voter register.
2. The BDRE shall be permanently updated on the basis of the information in the voters' files from the various geographic registration units and in the deletion advices provided for in this document.
3. The BDRE shall validate all the information, in accordance with the preceding paragraph, ensuring the implementation of the principle of a single registration.

Article 12
Management and supervision of BDRE

1. The organization, management and maintenance of the voter registration database are the responsibility of STAE.
2. The organization, management and maintenance of the voters' files of the various geographic registration units are the responsibility of:
 - a) In the national territory, the decentralized STAE offices;
 - b) Abroad, the voter registration commissions.
3. **The National Election Commission (CNE) monitors and supervises the operations referred to in the preceding paragraphs.**

Article 13
BDRE and voter files content

1. The BDRE and the voters' files in each geographical unit of registration shall consist of the following voter identification data:
 - a) **Number and identification of the registration document in the voter register;**
 - b) The designation of the geographical unit of registration in which the registration was inscription was done;
 - c) Full name;
 - d) Name of father and mother;
 - e) Date of birth;
 - f) Place of Origin (municipality, administrative post, suco and village);
 - g) Usual residence (municipality, administrative post, suco and village);
 - h) Signature and fingerprint of the voter.
 - i) **Voter's contact number;**
 - j) **Voter number;**
 - k) **Other biometric data of the voter, at the time of implementing the biometric census.**
2. The BDRE should also include, as appropriate, the following information fields:
 - a) Note that the voter is a provisionally registered voter, in accordance with the provisions of Article 24;
 - b) Information on the active and passive electoral capacity of the voter;
 - c) Identification of the country and place of residence of voters residing abroad.

Article 14
Integration of BDRE data

In order to verify the identification, and to eliminate unwanted entries due to transfer, deaths and detection of other irregularities in the BDRE, the information received from STAE's offices and from the voter registration commissions is integrated each month.

Article 15
Data cross checking

For verification of identification, deletion of registration due transfers or deaths, and detection of other irregularities in the BDRE, data may be cross checked with the databases of the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, **and the Ministry of Finance.**

Article 16
Right to information and data access

1. Any person who has been properly identified has the right to know the contents of the registration or database records in respect of that person, as well as to require the correction of information contained therein and to complete data that has total or partial omissions.
2. For the purposes of the preceding paragraph, the Director General of STAE authorizes the provision of a certificate or computerized report of the personal registration contained in the database.
3. For access to the voter register, data recording, removal of registration or any corrections to be made in the database, STAE employees who are expressly authorized for this purpose must be identified by means of a periodically altered password.
4. STAE maintains a list with a history of those authorized to access the database.

5. CNE and the political parties receive from STAE a list and the total number of voters whose records have been updated.

Article 17
Communication of data

The Director General of STAE authorizes the communication of data contained in the BDRE to security forces and services, or to Public Administration services and bodies, who have been properly identified, in cases where this is indispensable for the continuation of the work of the requesting services and provided that this is not incompatible with the purpose that determined the choice.

Article 18
Information for statistical or research purposes

The dissemination of data for statistical and research purposes of public interest, is permitted if authorized by the Director General of STAE, provided that the persons to whom the data relates cannot be identified.

Article 19
Security

1. STAE shall provide the BDRE, voters files, the respective STAE offices and the voter registration commissions with security systems that prevent access, modification, destruction or addition of data by persons not authorized to do so and allow the detection of unauthorized access to information.
2. In order to ensure the security of the information contained in BDRE, the services responsible for the collection, updating and processing of data shall comply with the following rules, among others:
 - a) Entry to sites used for the processing of personal data shall be subject to controls in order to prevent access by any unauthorized person;
 - b) Data "containers" are subject to controls to prevent them from being read, copied, altered or removed by any unauthorized person;
 - c) Data entry is subject to control to prevent the unauthorized addition, access to, amendment or deletion of personal data;
 - d) Computerized data processing systems shall be subject to controls to prevent unauthorized persons from using them through data transmission equipment;
 - e) Access to data shall be subject to controls so that authorized persons may only access data relevant to the performance of their duties;
 - f) The transmission of data is controlled to ensure that its use is limited to authorized entities;

The addition of personal data to computerized processing systems shall be subject to controls that verify the completeness of the information, the date and authorship.

3. It is the duty of CNE to provide an opinion on compliance with the provisions of the preceding paragraphs.

Article 20
Responsibility for data protection

1. The Director General of STAE shall be responsible for the security of BDRE and for the protection of personal data contained therein.

2. The municipal directors of STAE are responsible for the security of the voters' files and for the protection of their data.

Article 21
Professional secrecy

1. Any person who, in the performance of his or her duties, becomes aware of personal data contained in the BDRE or the register of voters shall be bound by professional secrecy in accordance with the Civil Service Statute.
2. Officials and agents of the public administration who fail to comply with the provisions of the preceding paragraph shall be subject to the disciplinary and criminal proceedings that may apply to the case.

CHAPTER IV
Voter Registration Operations

Section I
General provisions

Article 22
Period of operations

1. Voter registration, amendment and deletion of voter registrations, for the purposes of updating the voter register, takes place continuously, without prejudice to the period within which alterations cannot be made provided for in the present document.
2. The deadline for voter registration abroad, the period for updating data during the election period and the respective implementation calendar are defined by Government law.

Section II
Registration

Article 23
Registration action

1. Inclusion in the voter register is activated by the voter upon presentation of the original or a certified copy of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste identity card, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste passport or birth certificate of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste..
2. If there is doubt as to the authenticity and correctness of the documents presented, as provided in the preceding paragraph, the registration office may require the presentation of another document that supports the identification of the voter or request information from the entity that issued the document presented.
3. (Repealed)
4. (Repealed)
5. (Repealed)

Article 24
Provisional voter registration

1. Citizens who are sixteen years old shall have the right to activate their voter registration on a provisional basis, provided that they do not have any other impediment to their capacity to register.
2. The citizens referred to in the preceding paragraph shall be considered provisional voters until the day they reach seventeen years old, at which time they automatically become effective voters.
3. Citizens registered in the voter register that attained the age of seventeen years old up until the day of the election or referendum are also effective voters.

Article 25
Voter Registration form

1. The registration form shall consist of an original, a duplicate and a triplicate.
2. The original of the registration form is intended to form the register of voters, organized in order of registration number, maintained in each geographical unit of registration.
3. The duplicate of the registration form is used for the maintenance and updating of the BDRE, through its immediate dispatch to STAE.
4. The triplicate of the registration form is sent to the municipal archive.
5. It is the duty of decentralized STAE offices and voter registration commissions to send to STAE the duplicate registration forms.

Article 26
Content of registration

1. Registration is effected by completing the information fields in the voter registration form, which are as follows:
 - a) Registration document number in the voter register;
 - b) Designation of the register entity that processes the registration;
 - c) Full name;
 - d) Gender;
 - e) Father's name;
 - f) Mother's name;
 - g) Date of birth;
 - h) Place of Origin (municipality, administrative post, juice, village);
 - i) Usual residence (country, municipality, administrative post, juice, village);
 - j) Date of voter registration;
 - k) Signature and fingerprint.
 - l) Telephone contact number of the voter
2. In cases in which the voter cannot affix their signature and fingerprint, due to a physical limitation, the official responsible for the registration annotates the back of the form, canceling the places for signature and printing of the voter.

Article 27
Acceptance of the form

The acceptance of the form does not imply a decision on the register process.

Article 28
Voter Registration sponsored by STAE

1. If registration is sponsored by STAE services, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2 of article 8, the form is officially filled in by that service and presented to the voter for signature.
2. If the voter refuses to sign the form, STAE advises this to the district court with territorial jurisdiction over the voter's usual residence, so that it orders the relevant registration.

Article 29
Voter Card

1. At the time the voter registration form is submitted, the voter card, duly authenticated by the registration entity, shall be handed over to the registered voter, as proof of his/her registration in the voter register.
2. If registration is not accepted, STAE will communicate its decision to the citizen, who is obliged to return the voter card.
3. The voter card contains the following elements:
 - a) Full name of the voter;
 - b) Card number;
 - c) Identification of the geographic unit of voter registration;
 - d) Number and type of document used by the voter for registration ;
 - e) Fingerprint of the voter;
 - f) Photograph of the voter;
 - g) Date of birth of the voter;
 - h) Voter's place of origin (municipality, administrative post and suco);
 - i) Date of issue;
 - j) Name and signature of the Director General of STAE;
 - k) Signature of the voter.
4. The voter card includes an electronic chip, as at the time of implementation of biometric registration, as well as the national emblem and the STAE logo and has the following security mechanisms as proof of authenticity:
 - a) Hologram of the national emblem;
 - b) Bar code of the code generated by the electronic voter card issuing system.
5. In the event of loss of a voter card, the relevant holder shall immediately inform STAE in writing, together with proof of advice of the theft or loss to the police, which shall issue a second copy up until the fifteenth day prior to an electoral act.
6. Voter cards are the property of STAE and in relation to the cases provided for in article 34 of this law, it must carry out all steps for its recovery, in coordination with public and private entities under the terms to be defined by Government decree.
7. Where a voter card is destroyed or damaged three or more times, the voter must pay a fee, to be defined by Government decree, for the issue of a new voter card.

Section III
Amendments, transfers and deletions

Article 30
Changes to identification information

1. Any modification to the elements included in the registration form is done by completing the data update form.
2. In the case provided for in the preceding paragraph, the voter number is not changed.

Article 31
Amendment to address data

1. The residence modification to another geographical unit of voter registration implies the transfer of the register to the geographic unit of corresponding to its new residence, maintaining the number of inscription.
2. The residence modification within the same geographical unit of voter registration implies the duty to communicate the new residence to the voter registration entity, by completing the data update form.
3. The voter shall attach to the communication provided for in the preceding paragraph a declaration issued by a public officer or by the suco chief certifying the new address.

Article 32
Transfer of voter registration

1. Where there is a change of residence to another geographic unit of voter registration, the voter does the transfer of registration with the voter registration entity with jurisdiction over his/her new area of residence, through completing the data update form and handing over his/her voter card, and a new voter card is issued for the voter.
2. Deletions determined by STAE, as a result of transfers, must be made in the relevant voters' files as soon as they are received.

Article 33
Amendment of data

1. Any amendment of the elements of the voter registration form, such as for errors in the names, spelling and dates, is done by completing the data update form, and a new card is issued.
2. Until the thirtieth day prior to the date of an electoral act no change in the voter registration data may be made.

(Translator note: this is the opposite of what is stated in Article 42 of this law, and logically is incorrect)

Article 34
Official deletion of voter registration

The following are officially deleted by STAE:

- a) Registration of those who cease to have active electoral capacity, in accordance with the law;

- b) Registration of citizens who have lost their Timorese nationality, in accordance with the law;
- c) Registration of voters who have since died;
- d) Registration canceled in accordance with Article 36.
- e) Registration of voters initiated using the same documents is declared invalid by judicial bodies.

Article 35

Information on active electoral capacity

1. Courts shall notify STAE of their decisions on prohibitions, loss of nationality and prohibiting the exercise of public office, within a period of thirty days from the date of the relevant final judgment.
2. Suco chiefs send to STAE, by the eighth day of each month, the list of deaths that have occurred in their suco in the previous month.

Article 36

Multiple voter registration

1. When a case of multiple voter registration is detected, the most recent entry prevails, and the previous entries are deleted.
2. If the voter registrations have the same date, the voter is notified to opt for one of them, within a period of fifteen days.
3. If there is no response, STAE, in a decision with reasons, decides and communicates to the voter and to the services that have done the registrations which registration prevails.
4. If the most recent entry cannot be determined, the last communication to BDRE shall prevail.
5. The deletion of a voter registration determined by STAE due to multiple registration is communicated to STAE services or to the voter registration commission that has carried out the relevant registration, which should facilitate the immediate deletion of the voter's file and the collection of the voter card.
6. All relevant entities collaborate with STAE for the detection of multiple registrations.

Section IV

List of voters

Article 37

Elaboration

The voter register comprises the list of voters compiled by STAE.

Article 38

Organization

1. Voter lists are organized alphabetically.
2. The voter lists are numbered, have an annual period of opening and closing and are subscribed and authenticated by STAE.
3. The numbering of the pages of voter lists is sequential and continuous from list to list and is unique by geographic unit of voter registration.

Article 39
Update

1. The lists of voters shall be updated, as appropriate:
 - a) By changing the names of voters;
 - b) By removing voter registrations that have been deleted;
 - c) By modification of the postal address of the voters;
 - d) By adding new voter registrations.
2. The Director General of STAE shall forward to the decentralized STAE offices the list of modifications referred to in the preceding paragraph and the reasons for them.

Article 40
Extraction of copies and exhibition for inspection

1. The Director General of STAE shall extract and forward lists of voters from decentralized STAE offices and from voter registration commissions for the purposes of inspection and complaint by interested parties.
2. Once the deadlines for complaint and appeal have elapsed, decentralized STAE offices and voter registration commissions shall immediately proceed to process amendments resulting therefrom and notify them to STAE within eight days for inclusion in the BDRE.
3. Within thirty days, STAE Director General shall forward to its respective offices and to the voter registration commissions copies of the corrected lists of voters.

Article 41
Hard copies of voter lists in election period

The Director General of STAE orders the extraction and delivery of hard copies of voter lists for polling stations in the national territory and abroad.

Article 42
Period within which no alterations may be made

Voter lists may not be changed within the period from 30 days prior to any election or referendum until the proclamation of results.

Section V
Complaints and appeals

Article 43
Complaints

1. Citizens have the right to file a complaint against a refusal of registration or update of data by the official responsible for voter registration.
2. During the public display period, any voter or political party may complain in writing to STAE about omissions or improper registration on the voter lists.
3. In the case of a claim of improper registration, STAE immediately informs the relevant voter who must respond within two days.

4. STAE shall decide on complaints within two days of their submission and shall immediately display its decisions at the national headquarters of STAE and at the headquarters of the decentralized STAE office or the voter registration commission, as applicable, that processed the registration.

Article 44

Appeals

1. STAE decisions on complaints submitted to it may be appealed to the CNE, within a period of twenty-four hours from the announcement of the decision.
2. STAE shall send to the CNE, within a period of twenty-four hours of the filing of the appeal, a certified copy of the proceedings in which the contested decision was made.
3. The CNE shall decide on appeals within forty-eight hours of the receipt of the documents provided for in the preceding paragraph, notifying its decision to the applicant and to STAE.
4. Decisions issued by CNE may be appealed to the Supreme Court of Justice, within twenty-four hours of their being announced.
5. The CNE shall, within twenty-four hours, forward to the Supreme Court of Justice the appeal, accompanied by a certified copy of the documents which record the proceedings in which the contested decision was made.
6. The Supreme Court of Justice shall decide on the appeal within forty-eight hours from the time of receipt of the documents referred to in the preceding paragraph, notifying its decision to STAE immediately.

Article 45

Standing

1. Voters who lodge a complaint as well as political parties have the standing to appeal the decisions of STAE to the CNE.
2. The complainant electors, the political parties and STAE have the right to appeal decisions of CNE to the Supreme Court of Justice.

Section VI

Complementary operations

Article 46

Conservation

It is the duty of STAE to keep and conserve the documents related to voter registration operations.

Article 47

Number of voters enrolled in the voter register

STAE publishes in the Official Gazette the number of voters registered in the voter register for each geographical unit.

CHAPTER V
Monitoring and observation of voter registration

Article 48
Monitoring of voter registration

1. Political parties have the right to monitor the entire voter registration process.
2. The monitoring provided for in the previous paragraph is done through agents appointed by the political parties, identified by credentials issued by STAE.
3. An appeal against a decision of STAE to deny a request for candidate agent accreditation for voter registration may be filed with CNE within twenty-four hours from the notification of the decision to reject.

Article 49
Voter registration observation

1. STAE shall grant national and international observer credentials to those who require this status for the purpose of monitoring voter registration.
2. An appeal against a decision of STAE to deny a request for observer accreditation for voter registration may be filed with CNE within twenty-four hours from the notification of the decision to reject.

CHAPTER VI
Voter Registration Finance

Article 50
Voter Registration expenses

1. Costs of voter registration shall be the costs resulting from its preparation and execution.
2. The payment of the costs of voter registration shall be paid from the general budget of the State:
 - a) In the national territory, through the funds allocated to the budget for STAE's expenditure;
 - b) Abroad, through the funds allocated to the budget for the expenses of embassies and consulates.

Article 51
Exemptions

1. The supply of all documents and forms related to voter registration is exempt from the payment of any fees, except in cases provided for in paragraph 7 of article 29, where payment of fees by the citizen, for the acquisition of forms and documents, is in an amount to be defined by Government decree.
2. Appeals to the Supreme Court of Justice against decisions issued by CNE regarding voter registration shall be exempt from the payment of any fees or court costs.

CHAPTER VII
Final dispositions

Article 52
Collaboration with voter registration operations

The agencies and services of public administration, and suco and village chiefs collaborate with the voter registration entities in the operation of voter registration.

Article 53
Templates of forms

The templates of the forms foreseen in the present document, as well as in the relevant regulation, are approved by a government decree.

Article 54
Repeal

Regulation 45 / STAE / II / 08, of 20 December, is hereby repealed.

Article 55
Entry into force

This law enters into force on the day after its publication.