

# Press Release

## Employers are Statutorily Obligated to Grant Time-Off to Employees to Vote at General and Regional Elections

**17<sup>th</sup> July, 2025 GEORGETOWN** – With General and Regional Elections set to take place on Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2025, the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) is cognizant that persons may be required to work, or will be stationed away from their respective polling district on duty during the conduct of the polls. It is therefore in this regard that GECOM takes this opportunity to inform all employers of the legal provisions to grant employees the requisite time-off to vote at the elections.

Specifically, Section 81 (1) of the Representation of the People Act (ROPA), Cap 1:03 makes it mandatory that, ***“every employer shall permit every elector in his employ, other than any elector on whose behalf another elector has been appointed to vote as a proxy, to be absent from his work on election day for a reasonable time, in addition to the normal midday meal hour, for the purpose of voting at the election; and no employer should make any deduction from pay or other remuneration of any such elector or impose on him or exact from him any penalty by reason of his absence during such period.”***

Accordingly, employees are advised that it is their constitutional right to vote at the election. As such, it is also their responsibility to engage their respective employers ahead of time to discuss the requisite time-off and to obtain the necessary approvals. Failure on the part of any employer to grant such request constitutes an election offence.

Section 82 of ROPA provides that, ***“any employer who directly or indirectly, refuses or who by intimidation, undue influence or in any other way interferes with the granting to any elector in his employ of the period for voting prescribed by section 81 shall on summary conviction be liable to a fine of sixty-five thousand dollars (\$65,000) and to imprisonment for six (6) months.”***

In view of the foregoing, GECOM is urging all persons to take note and put the necessary systems in place to ensure that they are able to vote on election day.

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