

## Lebanese electoral law 2017:

### Chapter One: The voting system and the number of Members of Parliament and electoral districts

#### Article 1: The voting system and number of MPs

The Lebanese Parliament consists of 128 members, whose term of office is four years, elected on the basis of the proportional system of which the voting shall take place in public, in secret and in a single session.

#### Article 2: The Parliamentary seats and electoral districts

1 - The number of Parliamentary seats and their distribution across sects according to electoral districts shall be determined according to the attached appendix to this law (Annex 1). The nomination for these seats shall be based on this annex and the appendix shall be considered an integral part of this law.

2 - All voters in the constituency shall vote for the candidates in their respective districts.

### Chapter Two: Voter and candidate eligibility

#### Article 3: Right to vote

1 - Any Lebanese man or woman, who has reached the [required] age specified in the Constitution, whether resident or non-resident in Lebanese territory, and enjoying his civil and political rights being not involved in one of the cases provided for in this law, has the right to vote.

#### Article 4: Deprivation of Right to Vote

1 - Persons deprived of the right to vote:

a - Persons sentenced to deprivation of civil rights

b - Persons sentenced to permanent deprivation of public jobs and ranks

c - Persons sentenced to deprivation of public jobs and ranks until the deprivation is over

d - Persons convicted of a felony

e - Persons convicted of one of the following offenses: theft, fraud, bribery, perjury, rape, intimidation, forgery, use of counterfeiting, false testimony, offenses against public morality as set forth in Chapter VII of the Penal Code, crimes related to the cultivation, manufacture and trafficking of narcotic substances

f - Persons who have been imprisoned for the duration of this period

g - Persons whose bankruptcy has been declared fraudulent or who have been sentenced to the penalties provided for in Articles 689 to 698 in the Penal Code

h - Persons sentenced to the penalties provided for in Articles 329 to 334 of the Penal Code.

2 - The above-mentioned persons shall not regain the right to vote until they have been reconsidered

#### Article 5: Voting and nomination of naturalized citizens

A naturalized Lebanese person may not vote or stand for election until ten years after the implementation of a naturalization decree. This law does not apply to women who become Lebanese through marriage with a Lebanese citizen.

#### Article 6: Military Voting

Military persons of all ranks may not participate in voting, whether they are from the Lebanese Army, the Internal Security Forces, General Security and State Security or Customs officers and those active.

#### Article 7: The right of candidacy for member in parliament

A candidate standing to be a member of the Parliament shall be a Lebanese citizen who has attained 25 years of age and maintains their civil and political rights.

#### Article 8: Ineligibility for candidacy as a member of the Parliament

1 - The persons listed below shall not be eligible for candidacy during the period of their duties or functions and the duration following the end of their duties or the acceptance of the resignation letter:

a - Members of the Constitutional Council and judges of all categories and grades, whether they are in the judicial, administrative, financial, legal, religious or spiritual courts, unless they resign and effectively disengage from their jobs, at least two years before the end of the Council's term.

b - Staff from the first and second categories, unless they resign and effectively cease their employment at least six months before the expiry of the mandate of the Parliament.

c - Military personnel may not be nominated for membership of the Parliament at all ranks, whether they are from the Lebanese Army, the Internal Security Forces, General Security, State Security, Customs, the Police Leadership of the House of Representatives and those who are serving, unless they have retired or provide resignations at least six months prior to the end of the mandate of the Parliament.

d - Presidents and members of the boards of directors who work full-time in public institutions, public bodies, mixed-economy companies, public capital companies and public rights institutions and their general managers, unless they resign and effectively cease their duties at least six months prior the end of the term of office of the Parliament.

e - The heads and vice-presidents of municipal councils and heads of municipal federations, unless they submit their resignations in accordance with the provisions of the Municipalities Law and effectively cease their duties before at least six months and two years suspended from the expiry of the mandate of Parliament.

f - President, Vice President and members of the electoral committee.

2 - Contrary to any other provision, the resignation for the above reasons is acceptable from the date of submission to the competent authority, and the person is effectively disqualified from work.

3 - The provisions of this Article shall be not applied to members of the teaching staff of the Lebanese University, full-time employees or contractors.

### Chapter Three: Supervising Elections

#### Article 9: Electoral Commission

1 - A standing body called the "Electoral Supervisory Authority," later known as just the "Commission," is established.

2 - The Commission shall supervise the elections in accordance with the tasks specified in this law, independently and in coordination with the Minister of Interior and Municipalities.

3 - The Minister shall oversee the work of this Commission, determine its headquarters, secure its own independent headquarters and attend its meetings when necessary without participating in voting.

#### Article 10: Composition of the Commission

1 - The Commission consists of eleven members as follows:

a - A retired judge in the judiciary who has served 20 years of judicial duties, chosen from among three names nominated by the Supreme Judicial Court.

b - A retired administrative judge who has served in the judiciary for at least 20 years will be chosen from among three names nominated by the State Consultative Council. c - A retired financial judge who has served in the judiciary for at least 20 years will be chosen from among three names nominated by the Audit Court.

d - A former head of the Bar Association will be chosen from among three former heads nominated by the Beirut Bar Association.

e - A Former head of Bar Association will be chosen from among three former heads nominated by the Bar Association of Tripoli.

f - A representative of the Press Association selected from among three candidates nominated by the Council of the Bar.

g - An information and advertising expert selected from among three candidates nominated by the National Audiovisual Council of Lebanon.

h - A Former head of the Lebanese Association of Certified Public Accountants will be chosen from among three candidates nominated by the union.

i - Two professionals with extensive experience in election-related competencies (including administration, funding or publicity) will be selected from among six names nominated by the interior minister.

j - A representative of the civil society bodies, who meet the conditions stipulated in Article 20 of this law, will be chosen from among three experts in elections nominated by these bodies in accordance with a mechanism established by the interior minister.

2 - Gender shall be considered in the selection of candidates for membership of the Commission.

3 - The highest ranking judge out of the justice and administrative judges will head the Commission and if they are at the same rank, the oldest judge will be the head and one of the eldest Bar Association heads will be the Vice President.

4 - The parties referred to in this Article shall nominate the candidates within one month from the date on which they are notified of the request to select the names.

5 - If there is a delay in nominating a candidate from a particular category, the Cabinet shall be appointed to nominate by a proposal from the Minister of that category.

#### Article 11: Appointment of the Commission and its mandate

1 - The members shall be appointed by a decree in the Council of Ministers upon the proposal of the Interior Minister.

2 - The mandate of the members of the Commission shall commence from the date of the issuance of their decree of appointment on the basis of the decision of the Cabinet and shall terminate after six months from the date of completion of general Parliamentary elections.

3 - The Cabinet shall appoint the members of the Commission one month before the end of the mandate of its term.

4 - The existing Commission will continue to pursue its duties functions until a new body is appointed.

#### Article 12: Vacancy

1 - In the case of a vacancy of a member for any reason, the Commission announces the vacancy and the Chairman of the Commission informs the Minister within a week to take the necessary procedures to appoint an alternative.

2 - The alternate member shall be appointed within a maximum period of 15 days from the date of the notice, in the same manner the prior member was appointed and for the remainder of their term.

#### Article 13: Oath

1 - Members of the Commission shall take an oath before assuming their duties before the President of the Republic, within a maximum period of 15 days from the date of their appointment.

The oath is as follows:

“I swear by God Almighty that I will do my work in the body of supervising the elections with honesty, impartiality, sincerity and independence. I will abide by laws and regulations, especially those regarding elections, in order to ensure their freedom, integrity and transparency.”

#### Article 14: Internal System

1 - The Commission shall amend its rules of procedure, which include the rules that sponsor its work in implementation of the provisions of this law. This amendment shall be ratified by a decision taken by the Council of Ministers within 15 days from the date of its deposit.

#### Article 15: Bans

1 - The membership and presidency of the Commission may not be combined with the presidency or membership of the Ministry or the Parliament, the presidency or membership of the board of directors of a public institution, the presidency or the membership of a municipal council, except for members of the teaching staff of the Lebanese University. In addition to the cases of banning persons from running for elections mentioned in Article 8, paragraphs (e) and (d), of this law and in the second paragraph of Article 108 of this law.

2 - The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and members of the Commission shall not be allowed to run for municipal or elective elections during their term of office and the year following the end of the term.

3 - If a member of the Commission is appointed as one of the persons referred to in paragraph (a) above, he shall choose within two weeks between the membership and his position, and shall not be considered a resigned member of the Commission.

#### Article 16: Prohibited acts

1 - The chairman and members of the Commission, during the period of their term of office, shall not carry out any act contrary to the functions and the impartiality of the Commission.

2 - Throughout the period of the Commission's work, the chairperson and the members shall refrain from giving any lectures or participating in any symposiums or making any statements in a personal manner regarding elections, unless authorized by the Commission.

3 - The Commission shall decide to drop the membership of the member in case of violation of the obligations stipulated in this law, by a two-thirds majority of the members of the Commission, taking into account the principle of character and the right of defense in accordance with the provisions of its rules of procedure.

#### Article 17: In criminal prosecution

1 - It is not allowed, without the authorization of the Commission, to bring a criminal case against a member or take any criminal action against him or arrest him throughout his term of office for acts relating to his work in the Commission. Nor shall any decision of detention be taken against the members of the Commission for actions that are not related to their work in the Commission.

2 - The justice minister shall submit a request for permission to prosecute or to take legal action on the basis of a memorandum of the Attorney-General to the Court of Cassation containing the type, time and place of the act along with the summary of the evidence justifying the prosecution and the needed necessary criminal actions. 3 - The request for permission to prosecute shall be submitted to the minister and the Commission shall be called upon within one week to study the case and to hear it after hearing the member, without participating in the voting. The Commission shall issue its decision of prosecution according to the absolute majority and this decision is submitted to the minister.

#### Article 18: Compensation of the Commission

1 - The chairman of the Commission shall receive compensation monthly, throughout his term, and this is determined in the decree of the formation of the Commission where he has to be cut off from any other work. All the other members of the Commission are cut off from any other work during the electoral process and are paid instead during this period. This shall be specified in the decree of the formation of the Commission.

#### Article 19: Functions of the Commission The Authority is responsible for the following functions and powers:

1- Issuing decisions that fall within the framework of its tasks and submitting the proposals it deems appropriate to the minister

2- Receiving requests from visual, audio, print and electronic media wishing to participate in covering the process of voting and sorting along with handing the necessary permits, and establishing codes of conduct for media coverage.

3- Receive the requests of the visual, audio, print and electronic media wishing to participate in the electoral announcement which is paid in accordance with the provisions of this law.

4 - Monitor the compliance of lists, candidates and the various media with the laws and regulations that regulates the electoral competition in accordance with the provisions of this law.

5- Determining the conditions and principles of conducting the polls as well as disseminating, publishing and distributing the results during the election campaign and observe the obedience to the period of electoral silence.

6- Receive the receipts and the audits of the financial statements of the electoral campaigns within one month from the date of the elections.

7 - Receiving requests for the registration of financial officials for each candidate's electoral campaign along with handing over a permits for this.

8 - Control the electoral expenditure in accordance with the provisions of this law.

9- Accept and study the applications of local and international electoral observers and grant them permits and establish codes of conduct for them.

10 -Spreading electoral culture, guiding voters and promoting democratic practice by all available means.

11- Receiving complaints in matters related to its duties and to decide on it, and it is up to the Commission to decide if it wants to act when any violation has been proven.

12- The Commission may, when necessary, draw upon the experienced experts regarding elections and its affairs. The Commission shall submit a report on its work with the end of its mandate and refer it to the president of the Republic, the parliament speaker, prime minister, the interior minister and the presidency of the constitutional council This report will be published in the Official Gazette.

#### Article 20: Monitoring the Elections

1 - The relevant civil society bodies, under the supervision of the Commission, have the right to accompany the elections and monitor its course but it must meet the following combined conditions:

- a - The Lebanese organization should be non-political, having acquired a statement of notification at least two years before the date of submitting the application to the Commission.
- b - It should not be linked to any political party or group and it must not include in its general and administrative assembly any candidate for the elections.
- c - Its bylaws, at least two years ahead, must state goals linked to democracy, human rights, elections, transparency or training in these issues.
- d - It must show to the Commission its financial sources.
- e - It must present to the Commission its special report on the work of monitoring the elections at the end of the electoral process within one month at the latest.
- f - The number of the organization's members in accordance with the lists presented to the relevant official authorities should at least be 100 by the time of presenting the application.
- g - Its administrative body must abide by a code of honor to be drafted by the Commission.
- h - The Commission shall study the accreditation applications sent to it and will verify the above conditions and it's up to it to accept or reject the application.
- i - The Commission shall outline the rules and mechanisms of accompanying the elections and monitoring its course with decisions it makes at least one month before the date of the elections.
- j - The Commission shall study the applications of the foreign organizations concerned with the elections aimed at participating in accompanying the electoral process under conditions and rules it set at least one month before the date of the elections.
- k - The Commission has the right to cancel the accreditation of any group or any member of this group authorized to accompany the electoral process if there was any breach of the conditions set in laws and regulations.

#### Article 21: On the Commission's decisions

The Commission's meetings will not be legal except with the presence of at least seven members. The Commission's decisions will be taken with an absolute majority by its legally-chosen members. Its decisions shall be subject to an appeal by the State Shura Council within three days of informing it. The State Shura Council shall decide on it within three days after submitting the complaint.

#### Article 22: Authorization of Prerogatives

The Commission is permitted to authorize one or some of its members to carry out a specific mission within its prerogatives. It can also form committees to do such specific

missions. The Commission's head has the right to delegate some of his prerogatives to his deputy or one of its members.

#### Article 23: The Commission's administrative body and its budget

1 - The Commission's financial and administrative systems shall be outlined according to decrees issued by the Council of Ministers at the minister's proposal based on the Commission's proposal.

2 - The Commission is linked to a permanent administrative body and it can contract with any specialized persons it deems appropriate to help it carry out its mission. Also, the Commission shall demand to be joined temporarily by a number of employees working in Category 4 public institutions and departments in exchange for compensations to be decided by the minister. This joining will take place according to a decision by the relevant minister at the minister's request based on the Commission's proposal. This decision shall set the duration of joining.

3 - The Commission shall prepare its draft budget and based on the minister's proposal special allocations shall be made to the Commission's budget in the budget of the Interior Ministry.

#### Chapter Four: Preparatory Work and Electoral Lists

##### Article 24: The electoral lists

It is required for voters to be on the electoral lists and no one shall be restricted except those stated in the provisions of Article 461 of the Penal Code.

##### Article 25: Voters registered in one area and the alteration

The electoral lists are to be considered permanent, but shall be reviewed periodically, in accordance with the provisions of this law.

##### Article 26: Voters in electorates

The General Directorate of Personal Status for each administrative district shall form a list of the names of eligible voters. These lists are to include the names of all voters who registered at least one year prior to the start of the re-examination of the electoral lists on November 20 of each year.

##### Article 27: Voting lists

The voting lists shall include the name of each voter along with the voter's mother's name, registration number as it appears on the national identification card, gender, date of birth and sect. In each list, a special box shall be included in which amendments are written, when necessary, with legal proof. Citizens who are over 100-years-old will be automatically removed from voting lists. Citizens who do not have a registered year of birth will also be

removed from voting lists. Those removed from voting lists can re-register if the concerned party presents official documentation against the above to the ministry within one month from the date of publication of the voting lists.

#### Article 28: Duties of registration centers

The heads of vote polling stations must submit to the Directorate General of Personal Status annually, between December 20 and 22, lists with the names of registered voters who meet the legal requirements for registration on the voting lists and the names of those who will be eligible to vote before the deadline, as well as the names of those deceased, those who neglected their registration, or whose names were removed from personal status records for any other reason.

#### Article 29: Duties of Judicial Records Office

It is the obligation of the Judicial Records Office in each district to send a list between November 20 and December 20 to the Directorate General of Personal Databases citizens who have offenses which would prevent them from exercising their right to vote in accordance with the provisions of Article 4 of this Law.

#### Article 30: Duties of courts

It is the obligation of courts to send the Directorate General of Personal Status, each year between November 20 and December 20, a list of final verdicts issued in respect to crimes provided for in Article 4 of this Law.

#### Article 31: Revising voting lists

It is the obligation of the Director General of Personal Status to revise the voting lists according to the references mentioned in the previous articles, after being reviewed, if necessary. Each voting list should have specified section where explanations for a revision are recorded, and the moving of a voter from one district to another. In the case a voter changes their voting district, the name of the registered district, registration number and the date of transfer are required to be specified. It is impermissible to voluntarily transfer one's voting district, during the year leading up to the date the electoral lists are submitted. It is not considered voluntary if one transfers a voting district because of marriage. A wife has the right to vote if she is transferred during the year mentioned above.

#### Article 32: Publishing voting lists

Before February 1 of each year, the Directorate General for Personal Status is to send copies of the initial electoral lists to municipalities, voters and to district centers, in order to be published to facilitate the final revision. The lists should be received no later than February 1 in order for voters to review and revise any incorrect information.

#### Article 33: Publishing voting lists in the media

The Interior Ministry will publish the voting lists via audio, visual and print media between February 1 and March 10 and it will call voters to review the lists. The Interior Ministry is to also publish the initial voting lists on its website as well in the form of a CD. The CDs are to be made available to any citizen after making an appointment with the ministry.

It is the duty of the Foreign Ministry to publish the initial voting list, during the same period, on its website as well as in the form of a CD.

#### Article 34: Correcting voting lists

1 - Anyone may submit, from February 1 of each year, to the competent registration committee provided for in this law, a request to correct any mistake(s) in name or other information on the voting lists. The correction call shall be submitted to the Registration Committee during the given period which ends March 1 of the same year provided that it is accompanied by documents and evidence supporting the validity of the application. The application shall be exempt from any fee(s). If a voter applies for a corrected application related to the addition of names which have a judicial decision dropped or cleared, the application must include a judicial record no older than one month.

2 - Any registered voter is entitled to request the removal or addition of the name of any person who has registered in the same list in violation of the law.

3 - Voters outside of Lebanon are entitled to the same privileges stipulated in Articles 1 and 2 of this article, at Lebanese embassies and consulates abroad, who in turn shall immediately refer them to the Directorate General of Personal Status by the Foreign Ministry. The Director General of Personal Status will then immediately refer the files to the relevant registration committees to take the proper measures.

#### Article 35: Freezing voting lists

The General Director of Personal Status shall, in preparing the final electoral lists, take into consideration the processes of revision and transfer of registration provided for in this law.

Article 36: Primary registration committees In every electoral district, one or more primary registration committees can be formed. Every registration committee is formed of a judicial judge or administrative employee as the head, and of one mayor or deputy mayor from the electoral district and two employees of the personal status as members. Every committee will include one employee or more from the personal status [department] as per decision from the minister.

#### Article 37: Missions of the primary registration committees

The primary registration committee will have the following missions:

1 - To look into requests to correct the electoral lists based on the provisions on this law and issue decisions regarding them during three working days from the date the correction request was presented. The committee should inform this to the concerned parties and to

the Directorate General of Personal Status. These decisions can be appealed before the higher registration committee that is referred to later on in this law. The appeal can be made up to three days from the date of being informed. The correction and appeal request is free of any fees and the person requesting those two is exempted from assigning a lawyer.

2 - Receiving the ballot boxes once the polling stations are closed, looking into the minutes and documents and to take the necessary decision regarding them.

3 - Sorting the votes, collecting them and organizing the general schedule with the result that each list and candidate have received and to refer it to the specialized higher registration committees.

#### Article 38: Higher Registration Committees

In every electoral district, one Higher Registration Committee or more will be formed for one electoral round. Every Higher Registration Committee is formed of a head who can be of head of a chamber or an advisor at the Court of Cassation or head of the appeals chamber, chamber head or advisor at the State Shura Council. It is formed of a judicial judge or administrative worker or of an inspector at the Central Inspection Department as two members and from the civil registry or head of department or employee at the Directorate General of Personal Status as a rapporteur.

#### Article 39: Missions of the higher registration committees

The higher registration committees will have the following missions:

a- To look into appealing requests made to the decisions of the registration committee and to decide on them during three working days from the day it receives them.

b- Receiving the results issued by all primary registration committees working within the committee's domain and the schedules attached to these minutes. This is as well as looking into them and collect the votes and organize public schedules with the results that each list and candidate within the list had received and to refer it to the minister either through the governor or a representative.

c - The committee will inform about the result of its works mentioned items 1 and 2 to the Commission supervising the elections.

#### Article 40: Registration committees' term

Heads of the higher and primary registration committees, its members and rapporteurs are appointed for one electoral round before February 1 of the year during which the Parliamentary elections will be held. This will be organized through decrees that will be issued based on the suggestion of the ministers of interior and justice.

#### Article 41: Election date

Parliamentary elections shall be held in one day for all electoral districts within the 60 days preceding the expiry of the term of office of the House of Representatives, except for the case in which the council is dissolved. Elections shall take place within the three months following the publication of the dissolution decree.

#### Article 42: Invitation of the elective bodies

Elected bodies shall be called by a decree published in the Official Gazette and the time limit between the date of publication of this decree and the meeting of elected bodies shall be at least 90 days.

#### Article 43: By-elections

1 - If any seat of the parliament is vacant due to death, resignation, prosecution, or any other cause, elections shall be held to fill the vacancy within two months from the date of vacancy or from the date of publication of the decision of the Constitutional Council in the Official Gazette. No successor shall be elected if vacancy occurs in the last six months before the end of the Parliament's term.

2 - Elected bodies shall be called by a decree published in the Official Gazette. The time limit shall be between the date of publication of this decree and the meeting of the bodies shall be at least 30 days.

3 - The nomination timeframe for the parliamentary elections shall ends at least 15 days before the date of the elections and the timeframe for withdrawing from nomination ends at least 10 days before the date of election.

4 - By-elections shall be held to fill the vacancy at the level of the smaller district of that seat, in accordance with the majority voting system on one session. The polling stations shall be determined within this district by a decision of the minister. However, if the vacancy exceeds two seats in the major district the proportional voting system shall be adopted in accordance with the provisions of this law.

5 - Resident and non-resident voters participate in the voting process on the condition that they exercise their right to vote on the Lebanese land.

6 - It is not allowed to exceed the deputy prosecutor's office in the by-election.

7 - Contrary to the provisions of paragraph (c) of Article 8 of this law, the persons mentioned may be nominated if they resign and were effectively cut off from their jobs within 15 days from the date of the decree to invite the elected bodies.

8 - Exceptionally, the provisions of Law No. 25 of 8/10/2008 concerning parliamentary elections in respect of voting that deal with the majority vote shall be applied in the provisions of this article in a manner not inconsistent with the provisions of this law

#### Article 44: The nomination in Districts

A person who meets the conditions to be a Member of the Parliament may nominate themselves for any electoral district however they are not allowed to nominate themselves in more than one district.

#### Article 45: Candidacy applications

All those who run for parliamentary elections must submit:

1 - A declaration to the Ministry of Interior, General Directorate for Political Affairs and Refugees signed by personally and certified by the signature to the public notary in accordance with a model developed by the latter containing:

a - Their full name including their father's name.

b - Determining the seat, the judiciary and the district for which they wish to nominate themselves. Attach the following documents to the declaration:

- An individual record not exceeding one month - Two photos authenticated by a mukhtar

- A financial receipt from the financial fund confirming the deposit of the nomination fee which is LL 8 million (\$5,292).

- A bank certificate confirming the opening of the electoral campaign account provided for in this law, including the name of the auditor approved by the candidate.

- A copy of the list of final voters confirming the registration of the candidate signed by the personal status officer chosen of the primary registration committee in the concerned district

- A declaration from the candidate organized by the public notary, including the name of the auditor and a certified copy shall be submitted to the Supervisory Commission for Parliamentary Elections. - A declaration by the public notary giving the Commission permission to view and disclose bank accounts related to the electoral campaign of the candidate.

#### Article 46: The closure of the nomination and applications

1 - The nomination time period ends 60 days before the election date.

2- The candidate must submit the declaration of his candidacy to the ministry, accompanied by all the required documents, by the closing date of the nomination time period.

3 - The ministry shall provide the candidate with a notice of receiving his permit and documents.

4 - The ministry shall decide on the nomination permits within a period of five days from the date of receiving them, and, if accepted, shall result in the delivery of a final receipt of the registration of the candidacy and in case of rejection of the nomination permit they must inform the candidate of the reasons for this rejection.

5 - Failure to issue a decision by the ministry after the expiration of five days from the date of registration of the nomination permit shall be regarded as the acceptance of this nomination and this shall result in the delivery of a final receipt of the registration of the candidacy.

6 - If the Ministry rejects the nomination permit, the candidate has the right within a period of three days from the date of notification of the rejection decision may review with the State Consultative Council for the reasons of rejection, without being subject to paying fees.

#### Article 47: Extension of the nomination period

1 - If the nomination deadline expires and no candidate for a particular seat is submitted, the nomination period extends by seven days, the ministry shall decide on the nomination permits within 24 hours from the date of receipt. If the candidate is accepted, the candidate shall be given a final receipt of the candidacy. In the case of rejection of the nomination, a permit is sent to inform the candidate of the reasons of this rejection.

2 - The absence of a decision by the ministry after the expiry of the abovementioned period shall be considered as the registration of the candidate's nomination permit and the acceptance of his nomination. The Ministry must submit the final receipt to the candidate by registering his nomination.

3 - If the Ministry refuses to accept the nomination permit, the candidate has the right, within 48 hours from the date of the rejection of the decision, to review the State Consultative Council for the reasons of rejection, without being subject to paying fees.

#### Article 48: Winning unopposed

1 - If the candidacy period has elapsed and only one candidate has been elected to a particular seat, this candidate shall be considered to have won unopposed and the lists in this case shall consist of the remaining seats in the electoral district.

2 - The electoral lists shall be registered at least 40 days before the date of the elections. If the time limit for the registration of the lists has passed and if no seats of a particular district have been submitted but only one complete list, this list shall be deemed to have been won unopposed.

3 - In both cases, the Ministry immediately sends a letter stating the case to the Speaker of the Parliament and the President of the Constitutional Council.

4 - If the nomination period has elapsed and no candidate has been elected to a particular seat in the electoral district, such candidate shall be considered a winner by acclamation and the electoral list in this case shall consist of the remaining seats in the constituency.

5 - The regulations shall be done at least forty days before the date of the elections. If the time limit for the registration of the electoral list has passed and the seats of a particular constituency have not been submitted, only one and complete electoral list shall be considered by acclamation.

In both cases, the Ministry must immediately send a letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Constitutional Council.

#### Article 49: The nullification of nomination

The nomination permits which are contrary to the provisions of the previous articles shall be invalid, as well as the permits that are submitted, on one date, by one candidate in more than one department. However, if these permits are submitted on different dates, only the latter shall be considered, and the previous permits shall be considered null and void.

Article 50: Withdrawal from nomination The candidate may not withdraw their candidacy except by virtue of a legal declaration certified by the public notary and filed with the ministry at least 45 days before the elections. If the candidate announces his withdrawal after the above mentioned period, the withdrawal shall not be considered conform to the electoral process. If the withdrawal results in the impossibility of having the necessary number of candidates in the Chamber, new nominations for this Chamber may be accepted within seven days from the date of the withdrawal. Applications for nomination and the relative administrative and judicial deadlines are provided in Article 47 of this law.

#### Article 51: Announcing the accepted candidates

After the closure of the nominations, the ministry shall announce the names of the accepted candidates and shall immediately inform the Governors, the qa'imaqam and the Electoral Supervisory Authority and publish them where necessary.

#### Article 52: The lists of candidates

Candidates must be included in the electoral lists at least 40 days before the date of the elections. Each list shall include a minimum of 40 percent of the number of seats in the electoral constituency by not less than three seats and no less one seat in constituencies consisting of more than one district. The list is responsible for not filling a seat which no one was nominated for. The Ministry shall respect the serial arrangement of names according to which the candidates are organized in the electoral list in the smaller constituencies. It shall not withdraw any candidate from the list after its registration. It shall also abide by the order of the electoral list on the ballot papers, which follows the date of registration. The applications of the candidates who are not regulated under this article shall be received.

#### Article 53:

In the case of the death of a candidate after the registration of the electoral list, the list has the right to nominate candidates to replace of the deceased and the delays fall under the dispositions of this article.

#### Article 54: Registration of regulations

Candidates must sign electoral list and nominate one of them, under the power of an attorney, to be registered with the notary in order to submit the electoral list to the ministry within a maximum period of 40 days before the date of the elections. The nominee of the electoral list shall submit at the time of registration:

- The three names of all its members - Receipts of the acceptance of the nomination of its members
- Their serial order according to the administrative district of the list
- Appointment of the constituency in which the list is to be nominated
- Name and color of the list - A colored photograph of each candidate
- The permission to appoint the candidate in accordance with the provisions of this law and his approval of the appointment
- A bank certificate confirming the opening of an account for the list in the name of the delegate

The ministry shall provide a receipt for acceptance of the electoral list (within 24 hours) if the application satisfies all legal requirements. If this request does not comply with all or some of these conditions, the ministry shall give the members of the list 24 hours in order to rectify the application with the authority that issues its refusal. The time limit shall be counted from the date of the notification to the Commissioner of the Regulations referred to in the above item. The decision issued by the ministry to reject the registration shall be subject to appeal before the State Consultative Council within a period of 24 hours from the date of informing the Commissioner of the above-mentioned list. The decision of the State Consultative Council is definitive and cannot be appealed in any way.

#### Article 55: In the declaration of accepted regulations

Immediately after the deadline for registration of the regulations referred to in Article 53 of this law, the ministry shall announce the names of the accepted electoral lists and the names of its members. It shall communicate them to the Governors, the Quaiqamin and the Supervisory Authority for the parliamentary elections.

#### Chapter Five: Financing and Electoral Expenditure

#### Article 56: Financing of the electoral campaign

Subject to the provisions of this law are the financing of election campaigns and the spending of the candidates of the electoral list during the period of the electoral campaign, which starts from the date of opening the nomination and ends with the closure of ballot boxes.

#### Article 57: The electoral contributions

A contribution shall be deemed to be any gift, donation or gift in cash or in kind, loan, advance, financial payment or anything of material value to the list or the candidate.

#### Article 58: The electoral expenses

The expenses of an electoral campaign shall be deemed to be the sum of the expenses paid by the list or the candidate, as well as the expenses paid to either of them for their intended or unintended benefit from the part of physical or legal persons, parties, associations or any other body, provided that they relate directly to the electoral campaign and the voting process. Communication between the list or the candidate and the voter during the election period includes but is not limited to:

1- The establishment of gatherings, festivals, public meetings and banquets with an electoral purpose; expenditures related to the equipment used during the campaign; preparation, publication and distribution of information and propaganda material from books, brochures, leaflets, leaflets and letters in the form of publications, pictures, posters, banners, billboards, compensation and allowances paid in cash or in kind to persons working in the electoral campaign and to delegates, expenses of transport and transport of campaign elements and voters, expenses of the transfer of voters from abroad, the expenses of the polls and any expenses paid for the election campaign to any radio or television broadcasting station or any newspaper or magazine or other means of dissemination, including electronic media.

#### Article 59: The account of the electoral campaign and the appointment of an auditor

1 - Each candidate shall open an account in a bank in Lebanon titled the "electoral campaign account" that shall be accompanied by a statement from the bank confirming the opening of the account mentioned therein and the account number and the name of the owner.

2 - The electoral campaign account shall not be subject to bank secrecy. The candidate shall sign a waiver that deems to have ruled the banking secrecy of this account as soon as it is opened.

3 - All contributions and payment of all electoral expenses must be received exclusively through this account during the entire campaign period.

4 - Each candidate's account shall regulate the procedures adopted for them to receive the funds and contributions allocated to finance the electoral campaign and the authority to pay the electoral expenses, subject to the provisions of this law. No amount exceeding LL 1

million (\$6,600) may be paid and there shall be no amount doubted to be exceeding LL1 million.

5 - Each candidate and list must submit the name of the auditor according to a written letter registered with the public notary and submitted to the Commission.

#### Article 60: Spending and Financing

1 - The candidate may spend amounts of their own funds for their own election campaign. The money of the spouse or any of the assets or branches shall be regarded as the candidate's own money. All expenses incurred or paid by the candidate from their own money for his election campaign shall be subject to the expenditure ceiling.

2 - No contribution shall be made to the electoral campaign of a candidate or a list may except by Lebanese national or legal persons.

3 - It is strictly prohibited for the candidate or the list to accept or receive contributions or assistance issued by a foreign country or by a non-Lebanese person, whether natural or legal, directly or indirectly.

4 - Contribution in the sense of this law shall not be considered as the services of individuals who volunteered without charge.

5 - The contribution made by a single natural or legal Lebanese person to finance the electoral campaign of a candidate or a list shall not exceed 50 percent of the electoral expenditure ceiling specified in Article 60 of this law and shall always be in accordance with a banking process (transfer, Credit card, etc) subject to the fourth paragraph of Article 58 of this law.

6 -The total amount of contributions received by any candidate shall not exceed the electoral expenditure ceiling as specified in Article 60 of this law, nor may contributions be accepted through an intermediary.

#### Article 61: The expenditure ceiling

The ceiling of the maximum amount that each candidate may spend during the campaign period shall be determined according to the following: A fixed section of LL150 million (\$99,240), plus a section subject to change that is linked to the number of voters in a large electoral district in which he is elected to the amount of LL5,000 for each registered voter in the electoral lists in the large constituency. The ceiling of the electoral spending of the list is a fixed amount of LL150 million for each candidate. This ceiling can be reconsidered at the opening of the campaign period in the light of economic conditions, by a decree adopted by the Council of Ministers on the proposal of the Interior Minister and after consultation with the Commission.

#### Article 62: Prohibited acts

1 - During the period of the electoral campaign, the provision of services or the payment of funds including the obligations and expenses of candidates shall be prohibited, including but not limited to: contributions, in-kind and cash assistance to individuals, charitable, social, cultural, family, religious or other organizations, sports clubs and all official institutions.

2 -The abovementioned applications and aid shall not be prohibited if they are submitted by candidates or institutions owned or run by candidates or parties who have submitted them in the same size and quantity on a regular basis for at least three years before the start of the campaign period. The introduction during the election campaign is subject to the electoral ceiling provided for in Article 60 above.

#### Article 63: The auditor's obligations

The accredited auditor of each of the candidates and the regulators shall submit to the Commission periodically and within one week of the expiration of each month of the campaign period a monthly statement showing the receipts, payments and financial obligations of the previous month, accompanied by a statement of the bank account returned to the electoral campaign issued by the approved bank. It is the auditor's responsibility to submit, at the end of their mission, an account statement and a report on the work of his administration to the candidate.

#### Article 64: Comprehensive account statement

1- Each candidate and regulator shall, after the elections, organize a comprehensive account statement approved by the certified auditor. It shall include in detail the total imports received and the contributions in kind, according to their sources and dates and the total expenses paid or due according to their nature and dates.

2- This statement shall be submitted to the Commission within thirty days from the date of announcing the official results of the elections together with the supporting documents relating to all the items of the account such as receipts, bills of exchange and so forth, and a comprehensive bank statement of the return account of the campaign showing all transactions executed on this account from the date of opening until the date of submission.

3 - A statement of position signed by the candidate certified by the public notary shall be attached to the statement of account. "The candidate hereby acknowledges under their responsibility that the attached account is true and comprehensive and includes all the collected revenues and expenses paid or incurred for the campaign and expressly acknowledges that there are no other expenses in cash or in kind or money paid in cash or from other bank accounts or by third persons."

4 - If the account statement does not contain any electoral imports or expenditures, the certified auditor shall organize a certificate.

5 - The Commission shall study the statement of account of each candidate, examine it and carry out the investigations related to its legitimacy or the legitimacy of some of the

elements, and may, for this purpose, be consulted by experts and others, including members of the judicial police, with the approval of the competent public prosecution.

6 - The Commission shall determine the validity of the above statement within 30 days from the

date of its submission. It shall decide whether to approve it or, after taking into consideration the principle of the spirit and the right of defense, not to approve it or to amend it in whole or in part. The Commission shall make its decision in writing accompanied by the Constitutional Statement of the Constitutional Council. If a period of one month has elapsed since the submission of the statement of account without a decision by the Commission, this statement shall be deemed to be in agreement with it.

7 - The Authority shall reject the statement of account if it finds that it is incorrect or that it includes, after rectification or amendment, an excess of the ceiling of expenditure, in such cases the Commission shall notify both the Presidency of the Council of Representatives and the Presidency of the Constitutional Council.

8 - If the Commission finds that the value of one of the electoral expenses declared in the statement of account and its annexes is less than the prevailing value and usually approved for such expenditure, the Commission shall, after taking into account the principle of the face and the right of defense, assess the difference in comparison with many sources. Such difference shall be subject to the expenditure ceiling provided for in this Law.

9 - The provisions of Paragraph 8 above shall apply to direct or indirect benefits and all in-kind contributions and services to which the candidate has benefited.

10 - The Commission's decisions on the comprehensive statement of account shall not be accepted by the State Consultative Council.

#### Article 65: Complaints and criminal prosecution

1 - The Commission shall refer the violation of the provisions of this chapter to the competent Public Prosecution if it finds that such violation is subject to the description of a criminal offense.

2 - Any person who deliberately commits an offense in accordance with the provisions of the first paragraph shall be liable to imprisonment for a maximum period of six months and a fine of between LL50 million (\$33,000) and LL100 million (\$66,000), or one of these two penalties, without prejudice to the penalties that deal with criminal offenses stipulated in the Penal Code and in the laws Special Penal Code.

3 - The disbursement of the prohibited electoral expenses referred to in Article 61 of this Law shall be considered as a bribery offense provided for in the Penal Code.

4 - The penalties provided for in the second paragraph above shall apply to a legal person in accordance with Article 210 of the Penal Code.

5 - The public prosecution and the civil suit relating to the offenses set out in paragraph 2 above shall be dropped over time by a period of six months from the date of the announcement of the election results.

6 - The decisions of the Constitutional Council issued regarding electoral appeals enjoy the power of the binding case of the judicial courts and all administrative departments of the state so that the fate of the complaint and criminal prosecution will follow the Council's decision.

#### Article 66: Penalties regarding account statements

1 - A candidate who does not submit an account statement within the conditions and the time limit provided for in Article 63 of this law or who exceeds the electoral expenditure ceiling as specified in Article 60 of this Law, shall be punished by discarding his candidacy by the Constitutional Council

The Constitutional Council shall, on the basis of the referral of the file to it by the Commission, declare the concerned individual's election invalid if they won the election.

2 - If the candidate did not organize or present the comprehensive account statement provided for in Article 63 of this law, the financial commissioner and his certified auditor are required within ten days to organize and submit this statement on his behalf and it is under the candidate's responsibility if they are subjected to a fine of one million Lebanese pounds for each day of delay.

This fine shall be imposed by the Ministry at the request of the Commission.

#### Article 67: Fines

In addition to the above penalties, the Ministry shall, upon a report issued by the Commission, impose on each candidate who has not won the elections and did not provide an account statement or proof of not exceeding the ceiling of the electoral spending to pay a fine equivalent to three times the override value in favor of the Treasury.

### Chapter Six: Media and Electoral Advertising

#### Article 68: Terminologies

For the following terms, when they are used for the purposes of this law, whether singular or plural, they mean the following:

a - Electoral Media: Material that deal with media, such as news, analysis, permits, interviews, debates, dialogues, investigations, press conferences and meetings, that is directly or indirectly related to the elections, and is broadcasted free of charge within the regular programs or special media institutions.

b - Election campaigning: Material related to the programs of the candidates, their electoral campaigns, their electoral and political positions, and is registered in the studios of media institutions, and the candidate wants to convey them through their personal accounts within the programs of the media institutions devoted to that end and in return of money.

c - Electoral advertising: Material or promotional leaflet for a candidate that is broadcasted or published in exchange of money within the allocated spaces for commercials in media and advertising institutions

d - Electoral materials: Electoral Media, election campaigning and electoral advertising.

e - Media: Any media means, official or private, visible or audible, printed or electronic, whatever its technology.

Article 69: Explaining the electoral program

It is up to each list or candidate to organize the various legitimate activities in order to explain the electoral program in a style and manner that does not conflict with the laws and regulations.

Article 70: During the electoral campaign period During the election period specified in this law electoral material, which are broadcasted on various media means and advertisement that start from the date of submission of the nomination and end at the closing of the ballot boxes, are subjected to the provisions of this chapter.

Article 71: Paid electoral advertising

Advertising and publicity shall be permitted in media and advertising means, in accordance with the following provisions:

1 - The media and advertising agencies that wish to participate in the electoral advertising shall let the commission know at least ten days before the beginning of the campaign period with a declaration announcing the desire to participate along with a list of prices and the space that they want to allocate for publicity or election announcement

2 - The media and advertising agencies shall abide by the list of prices and spaces provided by it and shall not have the right to reject any electoral declaration requested by a list or a candidate

3 - It is prohibited for media and advertising agencies that did not submit their declaration within the time limit to carry out any advertising activity during the entire campaign period

4 - The media and advertising agencies must clearly state when they broadcast or publish for election ads, that these ads are in exchange for money, and to specify who requested this election ad

5 - It is prohibited for the media and advertising agencies to accept free advertisements or accept a fee that differs from what is included in the price list

6 - The candidate or its legal agent shall submit a copy of the electoral advertising tapes accompanied by a written reservation request to the committee and the media and advertising agencies for its broadcast or publication, at least three days before the chosen date for the publication or broadcast of the electoral ad

7 - Each media or advertising agency shall submit a subsequent weekly report to the commission, including a statement of the electoral advertisements and declarations that have been broadcasted or published in the prior week with the dates of broadcast or publication of each of them and the amount of money paid for it.

8 – [The following provisions apply]

a - No candidate may allocate more than 50% of its total advertising expenditure to one media or advertising agency

b. The Commission shall determine the maximum space specified for each media or advertising agency for the broadcast or publication of media or advertising programs related to the electoral lists or candidates, and it shall also determine the time duration of broadcasting or publishing these ads.

c. The Commission shall take into account the determination and distribution of the maximum media space, the requirements of equity and the right of candidates to equal media appearance within the limits of the law and the legitimate electoral competition in accordance with the criteria set out above.

Article 72: Monitoring authorities over media

1 - The Commission makes sure that the media outlets in Lebanon commit to the provisions that are related to the electoral promotion that is stipulated by this law and the decisions taken to implement these provisions.

2 -The Commission will ensure the respect of the freedom of expression of the various opinions and lines of thoughts in the media programs during the electoral campaign and that is by issuing the necessary recommendations for these outlets regarding ensuring justice, balance and neutrality in treatment between the candidates and the lists.

3 - The first paragraph of the above article will be imposed on all political and general news programs including bulletins, talk shows interview, meetings, discussions and round tables, live coverage of electoral campaigning and they remain free [of monetary charge].

4 - The Commission should maintain a balance in media appearances between the different candidates and lists and if a media outlet when hosting a representative of a candidate or list it must host the competitor in a similar condition regarding timing, length of appearance and the type of show they appear on.

5 - The Commission has the jurisdiction to evaluate whether a candidate's appearance on a satellite media outlet is considered to be part of the specified media and advertising/promotional space that is specified by the Commission for each candidate or list. It also has the jurisdiction to specify how much it deems the weight of this appearance to be.

6 - The Commission will lead an instant investigation in any complaint that is filed by the affected list or candidate and takes its decision on whether the complaint should be referred to the Court of Publications within 24 hours from the date of its submission. All media outlets are asked to preserve a recorded archive of all programs that they broadcast during the electoral campaign for six months after the elections. 7 - Before the electoral process begins, the Commission sets the standards to distinguish between electoral media and electoral promotion. The Commission can at any time check as to whether any program was secretly holding an illicit electoral promotion under the media veil and take all the legal measures to put an end to it.

#### Article 73: State-run media requirements

1 - The list or the candidate has the right to use state-run media as a platform to present their electoral programs for free according to the provisions of this law and the rules that the Commission places.

2 - Each list or candidate willing to use this right will present a written request to the Commission. The Commission will then place a list with the names of the candidates and lists that permitted to use state-run media.

3 - The Commission will set a special schedule in which it specifies the dates and conditions of airing [materials] from the different lists and candidates with the need to commit to fair airing timings in a manner that ensures equality and parity in opportunities between the different candidates and lists.

4 - The state-run media commits to neutrality during all the practical electoral stages and it isn't permitted, or any of its apparatuses or employees, to carry out any activity that can be interpreted as a support for a candidate or a list over the other.

#### Article 74: Private media outlets requirements

1 - No private media outlet can announce its support for any candidate or electoral list.

Taking

into account the principle of independence, the media outlet referred to should distinguish during the electoral campaign between reality and facts on the one hand and between opinions and remarks on the other and that is during its different political news bulletin and political programs.

2 - During the electoral campaign, private media outlets, the lists and candidates need to abide by the following:

- To refrain from defaming and slandering lists and candidates.
- To refrain from broadcasting anything that [encourages] a sectarian or racial sentiment or incitement to carry out acts of violence, riot or that that supports terrorism, crime or acts of vandalism.
- To refrain from broadcasting anything that can act as a mean of pressure, intimidation and treason or hinting at incentives or the promising of financial or moral gains.
- To refrain from distorting, withholding, falsifying, deleting or misrepresenting information.
- To refrain from airing or rerunning any material that includes the above mentioned violations where the media outlet will bear responsibility for violating this law.

#### Article 75: Educational electoral programs

During the electoral campaign, audiovisual media outlets should specify at least three hours a week in order to broadcast educational electoral programs that are produced by the ministries of information and interior in coordination with the relevant media outlets.

#### Article 76: Locations specific for electoral advertisement

1 - The local authorities, under the supervision of the administrative authority, will set in every city or town specific locations to post electoral pictures and adverts during the electoral campaign period.

2 - Posting photos of candidates and lists outside these specific locations is not allowed. Any candidate or list is also prevented from posting photos and adverts in the locations set for others. In any case of the above, the list and the candidate will have to remove the violations.

3 - The local authority will divide the locations of promotion based on paragraph 1 of this Article. The division of locations will be set based on the order of candidacy application. Local authorities and investing companies for the specified locations will cooperate with the Commission in order to better implement the provisions of this Article.

4 - It isn't permitted for any candidate or list to concede the places that were set for them to another candidate or list.

#### Article 77: Prohibitions

1 - Public spaces, governmental departments, universities, faculties, institutes, public schools and places of worship aren't allowed to be used to hold electoral meetings or promotion.

2 - It isn't allowed for government, public institution, municipalities, municipality unions employees and those who are under their rule to promote for any candidate or list and it isn't permitted for them or mukhtars to distribute brochures for the benefit of any list or candidate.

3 - It is prohibited to distribute any brochure or any document that benefits or are against a candidate or a list during Election Day at entrances to ballot centers or any other place that falls within the center under the threat of confiscation with the implementation of the punishments mentioned in this law.

Article 78: During the election pause period

Starting from midnight of the day before the election and until the ballot boxes are closed, media outlets are prohibited to broadcast any direct announcement, advertisement or any electoral call, except for the audio or footage that is hard to be avoided during direct coverage of the electoral process. During Election Day, media coverage will be limited to airing the voting process.

Article 79: Opinion polls

1 - The Commission sets the conditions for carrying out the opinion polls during the electoral campaign as well as setting the standards that need to be followed in order to ensure the credibility, integrity and neutrality of the polling process.

2 - The Commission will set the conditions that any distribution, broadcast or distribution of the opinion polls results will during the electoral process. The Commission will have all the jurisdictions to verify that the opinion polls match laws, systems and the Commission's decision. The Commission can also take all the necessary measures in order to stop or correct violations made by media outlets, opinion polls institutions or any other party.

3 - Announcement, distribution or broadcasting of the opinion polls results need to have at least the following clarifications with a responsibility on the institution that carried out the opinion poll: - The party that carried out the poll - The party that asked for the poll and paid for it - Dates of when the opinion poll was made in the field - The size of the sample who was surveyed, how they were chosen and its distribution - The method used in the poll - The text of the questions asked - Explanation of the results and the margin of error when necessary.

4 - It is prohibited to spread, broadcast or distribute all opinion polls and comments made on them in the 10 days preceding the elections and until the closure of all ballot boxes.

Article 80: Media coverage of the process of casting and sorting votes

Media outlets wishing to cover the voting and sorting of votes process should get written permits based on the provisions of paragraph 2 of Article 18. The media outlets will also have to commit to the Code of Conduct that the Commission sets.

## Article 81: Punishments and fines

1 - Taking into account the provisions of the Penal Code, Publications Law and Audiovisual Law, the Commission can take what it sees suitable of the following two measures against the any media and advertising outlets violating the provisions of this chapter that are related to electoral media and advertising:

a - To issue a warning against the violating media outlet or oblige it to air an apology or oblige it to give the affected candidate a platform to reply on the remarks made.

b - To refer the violating media outlet to the relevant court of publications, that can take what it sees as the best course of action along the following measures:

i - Impose a fine on the violating media outlet that ranges between LL50 million [\$33,080] and LL 100 million [\$66,160].

ii - Requesting the violating media outlet to partially halt its works for three days where this pause will include all programs, news bulletins, interviews and news and political seminars.

iii - In case of repetition, the media outlets' work will be fully halted and all of its programs will be stopped for a maximum three days.

iv - The Public Prosecution will automatically pursue the media outlet in question before the Court of Publications or upon the request of the affected party. The media outlet can present the court with a memo within 24 hours from the time of being reported.

v - The court of publications should issue its decision within 24 hours, at most. Each of the Public Prosecution and the convicted media outlet can appeal the decision before the Court of Cassation. The Public Prosecution has 24 hours starting from the time the decision is issued and the convicted media outlet has 24 hours from the time it was informed.

vi - Appealing the decision will not stop the execution decision unless the Court of Cassation takes a decision to stop execution within 24 hours from the time the appeal was made.

2- Taking into account the provisions of the Penal Code, the Commission can take any of the following measures against opinion polls institutions or any person that violates Article 78 of this law:

a - Issue a warning

b - Commit to air an apology or a correction via media outlets

c - A fine that ranges between LL10 million and LL25 million are imposed by a collection order that is issued by the Interior Ministry based on the Commission's decision. This fine doubles during the election pause period.

## Article 82: Print media

The provisions related to the electoral promotion above won't apply to written media outlets that remain subject to the rules and regulations specific to them.

## Article 83: Correction and preserving the right to respond

Media outlets should broadcast and publish corrections and responses that they get from lists and candidates within 24 hours from the time the news material in question was published. Media outlets have the right to reject airing the response if it is against the law.

## Chapter Seven: In the voting process

### Article 84: Polling centers and stations

The electoral district is divided into a number of polling centers that include several polling stations as per a decision by the interior minister. Each village that has a minimum of 100 voters and maximum of 400 will have one polling station. This number can be increased to more than 400 voters in one polling station if the safety of the electoral operation called for that where it shouldn't exceed 600 voters. The number of polling stations with each center cannot exceed 20. The minister's decision regarding distributing the polling stations will be published in the Official Gazette and on the ministry's website at least 20 days before the Election Day. Amending this distribution in the week that precedes Election Day isn't permitted except for serious reasons and a justified decision.

### Article 85: Polling station officials and their work

1 - The governor and the Qaimaqam, each within their area, will appoint one [or more] polling station heads and a secretary. These are assigned among the government employees based on lists that are sent by the Directorate General for Political Affairs and Refugees a maximum of a week before elections day. The employees will not be informed about their assigned locations in the governorate or district until five days before the mentioned date.

2 - The head of the polling station is assisted by two people, one of them is chosen from the voters present when the polling station is opened. The other voters will choose the second assistant with the condition that both assistants know how to read and write. The head registers the names of the assistants in the record that is stipulated by this law while taking their signature. The governor and the Qaimaqam can assign two backup assistants if and when needed.

3 - The polling station head and the secretary should be present throughout the electoral process.

4 - The polling station head alone enjoys the authority to preserve order within the station. It is not permitted for any members of the security forces to be inside the station except upon the

request of the polling station head. The members can enter the station temporarily and only to ensure the safety of the electoral process.

5- The polling station head can never under any circumstances prevent candidates, their delegates or observers from practicing their right to monitor the electoral process. No delegate for a candidate or list can be expelled from the station except if they disrupt order despite being given a warning that was registered in the record.

6 - If the polling station takes such a measure, the head is asked to record the facts and the reasons that prompted him to do so as well as the timing of the incident. The head along with the present delegates will then sign the record that is instantly referred to the relevant registration committee.

7 - Every employee that doesn't join the polling station they were assigned to without providing a good reason for doing so will be punished by one month imprisonment or a LL 1 million [\$660] fine. In this case, medical reports provided by the official medical committee will be accepted.

8 - Every polling head, or his secretary, can be punished by being imprisoned for between three months and three years or by a fine between LL1 million and LL3 million if they violate the requirements imposed in them and didn't follow the criteria specified by the law. In this case, and contrary to the provisions of Article 61 of the employee's law that was issued in 1959, the public matter case is opened with the personal prosecution of the candidate and or based on the prosecution of the Public Prosecution or based on a request from the head of the registration committee. Prosecution doesn't need the agreement of the administration that the employee belongs to.

#### Article 86: Voting dates

The voting process begins across Lebanon at 7 a.m. and ends at 7 p.m. and lasts one day, always a Sunday.

#### Article 87: The voting of polling stations employees

In each electoral district, the ministry organizes a voting process for the employees that are delegated to manage the polling stations and this happens on the Thursday that falls before elections day. The ballots [will be put back in the] boxes that will be resealed after the ballots in every box are counted. The closed boxes are directly sent to Lebanese Central Bank or one of its branches accompanied by security forces. At the end of the Sunday's electoral process, these boxes are sent to the relevant registration committee to sort and to add them to the results of the rest of the boxes. During this process, the rules stated in the law's chapter 11 are taken into account.

#### Article 88: Voter' lists

1 - The Ministry's Directorate General of Political Affairs and refugees will issue voter lists based on the electoral lists that are to be adopted in all polling stations on Lebanese

territories and abroad. In addition to the information on the electoral lists, the voter's list should include the ID and passport numbers in case they were available on the date of setting this list. The lists should also include three sections: the first is specified for the voter's signature, the second is for the signature of the polling station member who is tasked with verifying the voting and the third is for the remarks that can accompany the electoral process.

2 - All voter lists from each polling station needs to be attached to each other, numbered and have the ministry's signature on it.

3 - No one can vote except if their name is registered at the voter's list belonging to the polling station or if they received a decision from the specific registration committee to register their name after consulting with the ministry before March 25 [in the year of the election].

#### Article 89: Delegates

1 - Every candidate within a list is permitted to choose delegates of voters from the electoral district to enter the polling station and in every polling station they can have a maximum of one fixed delegate. They can also choose delegates of voters who can visit all the polling stations within the district. They can have one delegate to every two polling stations in villages and a delegate for every three polling stations in cities.

2 - The governor and Qaimaqam will give special permits to the delegates based on the standards that the ministry sets.

#### Article 90: Security

The assigned security forces will maintain order at the entrances of polling centers and around them. Any electoral or promotional activity, especially speakers, loud music, political parties and convoys, are prevented in the vicinity of the electoral centers.

#### Article 91: The needs of polling stations

1 - The ministry will provide polling stations with the stationary that the electoral process requires. The ministry will also provide each polling station with a ballot box that is made of transparent solid material, with one opening.

2 - The ministry provides the polling stations with a number of official ballot papers that are pre-printed as well as envelopes that are exactly equal to the number of registered voters. It also hands them with an additional number of official ballot papers and envelopes equal to 20 percent of the registered voters.

3 - The polling station can have one or more polling booths.

4 - No election process can take place without the presence of the polling booths under the

responsibility of annulling the electoral process in the relevant station.

#### Article 92: Polling ballots

1 - Voting takes place through the official polling ballots that are stated in Article 91 of this law and that are placed by the ministry beforehand for every small district and that are distributed by the electoral material to the polling station employees.

2 -The official polling ballots include the names of all lists and its members as well the as specifications that the ministry sets accordingly: the list's color and name and an empty space that is specified for any one of them. As well as the candidate's three-names, their sect and the small district they are running for. Next to the name of every candidate there will be a photo of them and to next to that there will be an empty space where the voter can place their vote within the list with their preferential vote based on the provisions of this law.

3 - The voter exclusively votes through these papers and nothing else and is not allowed to use others to vote.

#### Article 93: Preparation measures

1 - Before beginning the electoral process, the polling station head confirms with the delegates and the station's officials that the ballot box is empty and then closes it tightly according to the ministry's instructions.

2 - Throughout the electoral process, an official copy of the electoral list belonging to the polling station should be posted at the station's entrance in addition to a copy of the minister's decision to establish the polling station. A copy of the electoral law and the list of names of the candidate's delegates should be placed at a table in the station in addition to the labels and explanatory material on the electoral process where the voters, candidates and their delegates can look at them.

3 - Before the electoral process begins, any picture, symbol, writing or logo should be removed except for the explanatory material that is provided by the ministry under the polling station head's responsibility.

4 - The polling station head should make sure that the number of polling ballots is equal to the number of registered voters before the electoral process begins.

If a deduction in the number of polling ballots occurs due to uncontrolled force that will affect the electoral process, the station's head can substitute these ballots with the additional ones that he had received and that should be stamped with the signature and date as well as stating reason behind this substitution in the record. The additional polling ballots that weren't used will be added to the record.

5 - The fixed and mobile delegates are allows to use laptops, iPads and mobiles inside the polling stations.

#### Article 94: The voting process

1 - When the voter enters the polling station, the station's head needs to verify their identity based on the valid ID or Lebanese passport. If there is a difference between the ID/passport and the voters list, the ID and passport numbers are used.

2 - After the station's officials confirm that the voter's name is on the voters list, the station's head provides the voter with the polling ballot and after signing with the secretary on the back of the paper. He also provides the voter with a stamped envelope after signing on it where the voter is then asked to head to the isolated room to practice his right to vote.

3 - The voter chooses the list or the candidate's names according to Article 96 of this law. The voter then proceeds to the polling station officials and shows his head that he only has one polling ballot that is folded and is stamped. The head makes sure of this without touching it and allows [the voter] to place it in the ballot box.

4 - The polling station head should make sure that the voter was alone in the polling booth under the penalty of preventing them from casting their vote. The voter is prevented from showing their cast ballot after leaving the polling booth.

5 - Voter's voting need to prove that they voted by signing the voter's list and by placing a material on their finger that is provided by the ministry to all polling station heads. This mark can only be removed after 24 hours. Any voter with this mark is prohibited from voting again.

6 - The polling station head should prevent any voter from casting their vote if they didn't take into account the provisions stated in paragraph four of this Article.

7 - The voter can't assign anyone else to cast their vote for them.

#### Article 95: The voting of people with special needs

1 - A voter with special needs - according to the provisions of the rights of the disabled law - as well as those with a disadvantage preventing them from making a choice and from placing the ballot in the envelope and casting it are allowed to seek help from other voters under the official's supervision. This issue should be referred to in the comments section on the voters list.

2 - When organizing the elections, the ministry takes into consideration the needs of people with disabilities and facilitates for them the measures that allow them to practice their right to vote. The ministry will set the minutes of implementing this article after taking the opinion of organizations concerned with people with disabilities.

#### Article 96: Concluding the electoral process

The polling station head announces the end of the electoral process at 7 p.m. unless there are voters in the station and that are yet to cast their vote. In this case, the period will be extended to allow them to vote. This needs to be mentioned in the record.

## Chapter Eight: Election procedure

### Article 97: Voting for a list and the preferential vote

1 - Each voter is to vote for one list from those competing and is entitled to choose a single candidate as their preferential vote in the respective administrative district.

2 - In the case that a voter does not choose a preferential vote, the list voted for will still be counted. In the case that a voter chooses more than one preferential vote, the preferential vote will not be counted and only the list will be counted.

3 - In the case that a voter chooses a preferential vote from a different list than they have voted for or from a list of a different administrative district, the preferential vote will not be counted and only the list will be counted.

4 - In the case that a voter does not vote for a complete list and only chooses a preferential vote, both the list that the preferential vote is from and the preferential vote will be counted.

### Article 98: The proportional representation

1 - The number of MPs taken from each list will be determined by the percentage of votes each list gains.

2 - The percentage of the seats earned by a list will be determined by the number of voters in each electoral district relative to the number of seats.

3 - Lists which do not receive a high enough percentage of votes to earn a seat will be eliminated and votes will be counted again based on the lists that met the threshold percentage to earn a seat.

4 - The remaining seats will be distributed to the eligible lists that gained the largest percentage of votes remaining from the first division. This process shall be repeated in the same manner until all seats are distributed. If one seat remains and two eligible lists have the same percentage, the seat will be awarded to the list that gained the largest number of seats. In the event that the two lists have the same percentage for the available seat, the seat will be given to the list whose candidate received the highest number of preferential votes. In the event that two candidates from two different lists receive the same percentage of votes, the candidate from the list which received more overall preferential votes will earn the seat. And so on.

5 - After it is determined how many seats each list will be assigned, the candidates will be sorted from first to last, based on the percentage of preferential votes each candidate

earned in their respective administrative district. The percentage of preferential votes for each candidate will be determined by the number of overall preferential votes cast in their administrative district. In the event that two candidates receive the same number of preferential votes, the candidate who is older will advance. If the candidates receive the same of preferential votes and are the same age, the winner will be determined by a “coin-toss.”

6 - The distribution of seats for the winning candidates will be determined with the highest vote getters from the top of each list. The first seat will be allocated to the candidate who receives the highest percentage of preferential votes and the second seat to the second-ranked candidate on the list and so on.

7 - The seats will be distributed based on the following:

- Seats in each district will be filled by winning candidates for a certain sect until the quota is complete. Once the quota is complete, the candidates who did not earn a seat will be eliminated.

- If a list has not been completely filled with the specified quota and the distribution process reaches a candidate belonging to a list that has fulfilled its quota of seats, the seat will be passed on to the next eligible candidate.

Article 99: Electronic counting

Electronic counting of votes will be used after a decree is signed by the Cabinet upon a recommendation from the Minister.

Counting of votes by hand, or manually, will be used in the case a decree is not passed for the decree in Article 7.

Chapter Nine: Counting Votes and Declaration of Winners

Article 100: Counting of votes inside voting polls

After voting polls are closed, the door will be closed to everyone except poll observers, campaign correspondents, voting supervisors and media representatives to record inside the polling stations. The polling station head will open the ballot boxes and count the number of votes compared to the registered voters. If the numbers differ, this will be noted in the final report. The polling station head will open each ballot box one-by-one and announce each vote winner and each preferential vote winner. This will be monitored by campaign correspondents, voting supervisors and other authorities.

Article 101: Processing Ballots

It is the responsibility of the ministry to prepare polling stations with surveillance cameras and television equipment to be able to clearly see the ballots on live TV during the final vote counting.

#### Article 102: Invalid Ballots

Each ballot that is unclear or unofficial will be considered invalid and will not be counted.

Invalid ballots must be registered in the final report by polling station head and the invalid ballots must be removed from the number of voters.

#### Article 103: Blank Ballots

Blank ballots that do not have a cast vote are to be counted in the final report and are to be considered valid.

#### Article 104: Poll Results

1 - The polling station head will announce the winner(s) and sign the final results that are to be posted immediately on the polling station's door. Each candidate or campaign correspondent is to be given an original copy of the final results.

2 - The results must have how many votes each list received and how many preferential votes each candidate received.

#### Article 105: Poll Station Reports

After the results are announced, the polling station head must have two copies of the final report with each page signed by the polling station workers. The polling station head must place the voters list with each voter signature, all papers related to the voting poll, the final report and the voting results in an envelope.

The envelope is to be sealed with red wax and sent to the central registration committee with a security escort. There, the results will be viewed by representatives of the candidates.

The polling station head or writers will be held liable if the envelope arrives opened.

#### Article 106: Work of Registration Committees

1 - The specified committee will be responsible for all the poll stations reports in their respective areas. The registration committee will receive all records from the polling stations. The Ministry will provide the necessary supplies for the work of the registration committee, such as large transparent containers to carry the ballots, a IT technician and a large screen to display the results, in addition to any other equipment that will facilitate the work of the electoral process.

2 - The committees will study and review the final reports and take proper measures were deemed necessary.

They will recount votes based on the following:

- Reviewing the ballots in a clear and transparent manner, under the supervision of campaign correspondents, voting supervisors and registration committees.
- Voting ballots will be counted by a computer program automatically.

If there is controversy or contradictions to the final poll station reports, the votes will be recounted manually, by hand.

After confirming the number of votes each list and candidate earned, two copies will be made of the final results. It will be signed by the registration committee head and workers.

The General Secretary of Political and Refugee Affairs in the Interior Ministry will name the employees who will receive the sealed envelopes with all the relevant paperwork and ballots after the registration committees complete the review of the original envelopes they receive. The designated employees will sign off that they received the proper paperwork and ballots.

#### Article 107: Announcement of the final results

The higher registration committee in each electoral district will receive the results from the registration committee of each administrative district in that district.

The higher registration committee will confirm the results and correct any mistakes noted in the final reports registered by the polling station head.

Votes will be counted and the final results will be signed off for a final time by the concerned employees of the registration committee.

The results will be announced in front of the candidates or representatives as to how many seats each list won and the names of the winning candidates.

The higher registration committee will give the 'Qaimaqam' or the governor of the concerned districts the reports with the final results which are to be signed by the two parties.

The results will then be sent, with a final report, to the Interior Ministry who will announce the official results and the names of the winning candidates. The Interior Minister will then, immediately, relay the results to the Speaker of Parliament and the head of the Constitutional Council.

#### Article 108: Securing the Ballots

The Central Bank of Lebanon will secure the voting ballots in a confidential area for a period of three months following the announcement of the results. After this period of three

months, the results must be destroyed by the Interior Ministry as per a signed order unless the results are the subject of review or appeal before the Constitutional Council.

#### Chapter Ten:

Article 109: It is not permissible to be a Member of Parliament while holding certain posts

1 - It is not permissible to be a Member of Parliament while holding the post of president or board member of a public institution, a public institution employee, municipality mayor, board member of an economic company or a company holding public wealth.

It is also not permissible to be a Member of Parliament while holding the post of religious cleric or leader who receives pension or salary from the government.

Any candidate who is elected to Parliament will automatically be considered resigned from his previous post if they do not reject Parliament membership within one month of the announcement of the results.

2 - It is not permissible to be a Member of Parliament and a member of the judiciary for the state or one of its public institutions or for municipalities or municipal unions or any of the institutions or companies mentioned in the first paragraph of this article.

Anyone who is elected to Parliament from one of these posts is considered to be automatically resigned from his previous post.

#### Article 110: Relevant Professional Activities

A Member of Parliament shall not be given any preference or concessions from the State or municipalities and his/her spouse and children are to be considered the same.

#### Chapter Eleven: Voting for Lebanese Diaspora

##### Article 111: The rights of Lebanese nationals outside of Lebanon

It is the right of every Lebanese citizen not on Lebanese soil to exercise their right to vote at designated areas in embassies, consulates or other specified locations the minister specifies in coordination with the Foreign Minister as long as the voter's name is on the voting registry and they have a clean criminal record and abide by Article 4 of this law.

##### Article 112: Candidates for expatriates

Six parliamentary seats are designated for Lebanese diaspora – three for Christians and three for Muslims. This decree is to be agreed upon by the Cabinet.

##### Article 113: Registering to vote

The ministry, along with the Foreign Ministry, calls citizens outside of Lebanon to register their desire to vote in person or online at Lebanese embassies and consulates outside of Lebanon.

The interior and foreign ministers will call on citizens to register at the above mentioned locations with their national identification number, their religion and sect and their Lebanese passport number, if available.

It is necessary to register before the given deadline of November 20 of the year prior to the parliamentary elections. After this date, the citizen will lose their right to vote outside of Lebanon. The registered voting list is to be sent to Lebanon via the Foreign Ministry by December 20 prior to the elections.

#### Article 114: Independent Voting Lists

The General Directory for Personal Affairs will confirm the names of registered, eligible voters after the deadline passes for registration at embassies and consulates outside of Lebanon. The number of registered voters must be a minimum of 200 at each polling station.

#### Article 115: Announcement and revision of independent voting lists

1 - It is the responsibility of the ministry, before February 1 of each year, to send, via the Foreign Ministry to each embassy and consulate, the list of registered voters in the diaspora in the form of a CD.

2 - It is the responsibility of the Foreign Ministry to publish the lists of registered voters and send them to each embassy and consulate outside of Lebanon. The embassy and/or consulates must then publish these lists on their websites, if possible.

3 - It is the right of any voter to correct a mistake made on the list of registered voters and it must be sent via the Foreign Ministry to Lebanon before February 20 of each year.

#### Article 116: Determining the polling stations

The ministry, via the Foreign Ministry, is to announce how many registered voters are eligible at each embassy or consulate in order for the embassy or consulate to determine one or more polling station locations. If there are more than 400 registered voters, more than one station must be used.

The polling stations will be designated by a decree passed in Cabinet upon recommendation from the Interior Minister after consulting with the Foreign Minister. This is to be done at least 20 days prior to the date set for elections and the location may not be changed within one week of the set date and it must be done through a justified decree.

The location(s) of the polling stations will be published in the Official Gazette as well as on the websites of the Interior and Foreign Ministry.

#### Article 117: Polling Stations

The ambassador or consul will determine, in cooperation with the Foreign Minister, the supervisors for each voting station and the head and writers must be Lebanese nationals and be subject to Lebanese law.

Representatives of candidates are allowed to be present at the embassies or consulates after receiving permission from the location(s).

#### Article 118: The voting process

Voting will be conducted based on proportional representation on one single electoral district, 15 days prior to the date elections will take place in Lebanon, using preprinted ballots with a seal of the ministry.

Voting poll stations will be opened from 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Once the voter enters the polling station, the polling station head will confirm the identity of the voter using the national identification card or Lebanese passport compared to the voting list.

In the event that there is a conflict between the voting list and a voter's national identification card or passport, the voter will be named by his/her passport or national identification number.

After confirming the validity of the voter, the head of the polling station will give the voter a ballot and stamped envelope.

The general provisions governing the voting of Lebanese diaspora do not conflict with the provisions of the voting process of Lebanese nationals residing on Lebanese soil.

#### Article 119: Counting and distributing results

Upon the completion of the voting process, the polling station head will open the ballot box in the presence of the ambassador or consul or another designated representative in the event neither can be present. The head of the polling station will open the ballot box in the presence of media and campaign representatives if they are available, and the results will be sealed with red wax inside an envelope.

#### Article 120: Filing of envelopes and other documents

Two copies of each report from the different polling stations, consisting of the number of voters and the voting lists are to be completed. The report will be signed by the supervisors and candidates' representatives if they are present. One copy will remain with the embassy or consulate and the second copy, along with the other documents, will be sent to the Lebanese Central Bank via the Foreign Ministry. At the completion of the voting process on

the Sunday designated for elections in Lebanon, the abovementioned documents will be sent to the higher registration committee in Beirut to be sorted before the results are announced in the same process mentioned in this law.

#### Article 121: Vacancy of seats allocated for diaspora

In the event that one of the seats allocated for the diaspora is vacated due to death or resignation or any other reason, the seat will be filled by a candidate from the same sect one month after the seat is vacated or from the date decided by the Constitutional Council published in the Official Gazette.

The seat will not be filled if the vacancy occurs six months prior to the end of the Parliament's term.

#### Article 122: The six Parliamentary seats allocated for Lebanese diaspora

The six seats allocated for Lebanese nationals residing outside of Lebanon will be in addition to the current number of MPs, making it 134 seats during the first elections that expatriates vote in. After that first election, the number of MPs is to be 128 including the six seats for expatriates.

The six seats that will be transferred to the non-resident constituency shall be determined by a decree of the Cabinet upon a recommendation of the minister during the first year of the second session, in which non-residents shall be represented by the addition of the six seats, with the seats being taken away where the sect is least represented and by consensus.

#### Article 123: Applying the articles of this chapter

A joint committee is to be formed by the Interior and Foreign Minister based on a decree which is meant to implement the articles of this chapter.

#### Article 124: Implementing this law

The application of this law shall be determined by decrees to be adopted by the Cabinet upon the recommendation of the Interior Minister.

#### Article 125: Repealing violating provisions

All previous laws contrary to the provisions of this law shall be repealed, in particular Law No. 25 2008/10/8, except for the provisions of the articles relating to bi-parliamentary elections in respect to the cases in which the winner-takes-all system is used.