

Press Release



Amendments to the National Registration Act Paves Way for Registration Transactions to be done Continuously - Stiffer Penalties for Registration Offences

10 January 2023, GEORGETOWN - The National Registration (Amendment) Act No. 26 of 2022, which was assented to on 13th December 2022, has paved the way for registration transactions to be facilitated on a continuous basis by the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM).

Previously, eligible persons could have only applied for new registration and changes or corrections to their particulars during specific periods determined by GECOM such as during a Cycle of Continuous Registration or Claims and Objections respectively. However, with the amendments to National Registration Act, Chapter 19:08, GECOM is now mandated to facilitate registration transactions throughout the year with two breaks to facilitate the publication and finalization of a valid Official List of Electors (OLE).

As such, any eligible person can now conduct registration transactions between the periods January to May, provided that they will be 14 years and older by the 30th June, or during the period July to November, provided that they will be 14 years and older by the 31st December, of the given year. Persons are reminded that they must be Guyanese citizens by birth, descent, registration or naturalization, or is a citizen from a Commonwealth country living in Guyana for one year or more, to apply for registration, providing that they was never registered.

Existing registrants who are desirous of updating their records, such as by an application to correct or change their names, date of birth, occupation or to update their addresses, are advised that those transactions would also be facilitated continuously during the periods outlined above.

In view of the foregoing and in compliance with the amendment to the National Registration Act, the Commission is currently facilitating registration transactions at all its Registration Offices countrywide with effect from 3rd January, 2023 – 31st May, 2023.

Further, it is of crucial importance to note that the amendments to the Act have also outlined stiffer penalties for registration offences, with provision for fines of up to **five million dollars (\$5,000,000) and imprisonment for as many as five (5) years**. Registration offences addressed in the Act include where persons:

- 1) Deliberately provide false information;
- 2) Fraudulently obtain an identification card;
- 3) Fraudulently use an identification card;
- 4) Falsely allege the loss or destruction of their identification card and apply for a new card while in the possession of an identification card;

- 5) Present false information or documents containing false information for registration, or withholding information about an existing registration;
- 6) Knowingly applies to be registered more than once;
- 7) Permit or induce another person to use an identification card in order to impersonate a registered person;
- 8) Destroy or deface identification cards or documents;
- 9) Make false objections or statements in relation to any entry on a list;
- 10) Impersonate GECOM registration officials;
- 11) Forge or counterfeit identification cards, and lend or otherwise furnish any identification card for impersonation;
- 12) Sell or attempt to sell, or purchase or attempt to purchase an identification card.

In this regard, the Commission is encouraging persons to ensure that they conduct their transactions in a timely manner, abide by the legal registration provisions and to be cognizant of these amendments to the Act that could have serious consequences. The amended Act can be accessed on GECOM's website at www.gecom.org.gy for further information and perusal.
