
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2023 No. 1225

The Representation of the People (Postal Vote Handling and Secrecy) (Amendment) Regulations 2023

The Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016

10.—(1) The Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016(1) are amended as follows.

(2) In regulation 2 (application)—

(a) in paragraph (2)—

(i) after sub-paragraph (m) insert—

“(ma) regulation 99B (rejection of postal petition documents handed in at a petition signing place);

(mb) regulation 99C (procedure for dealing with rejected postal petition documents handed in at a petition signing place);

(mc) regulation 99D (postal petition documents left behind at a petition signing place);”;

(ii) in sub-paragraphs (p) and (q), for “signing sheets” substituted “petition documents”;

(iii) in sub-paragraph (r), for “statement” substitute “document”;

(b) in paragraph (5), after sub-paragraph (m) insert—

“(ma) regulation 110A (list of rejected postal petition documents: Northern Ireland);

(mb) regulation 115A (notification of a rejected postal petition document: Northern Ireland).”.

(3) In regulation 3 (interpretation), in paragraph (1), in the appropriate places, insert—

““left behind postal petition document” is a postal petition document that is left behind at a signing place or left for the petition officer without being handed in and for which no return of postal petition documents form has been completed;”;

““postal petition document” means a postal signing sheet, postal petition statement, declaration of identity or other document that has been issued to a person for the purpose of enabling the person to sign by post at a recall petition;”;

““relevant officer” means—

(a) where a postal petition document is handed in at a petition signing place—

(i) the petition clerk, or

(ii) an assistant appointed to assist the petition clerk;

(b) where a postal petition document is handed in to the petition officer, a person acting under the authority of that officer;”;

““return of postal petition documents form” has the meaning given in regulation 99A;”.

(4) In regulation 22 (admission to petition signing place) in paragraph (1) after sub-paragraph (b) insert—

“(ba) in England, Wales and Scotland, persons aged 18 or over returning a postal petition document by hand in accordance with regulation 99(1)(a)(i);”.

(5) In regulation 39 (the count)—

(a) in paragraph (3)—

(i) at the end of sub-paragraph (c), omit “and”;

(ii) after sub-paragraph (d) insert—

“and

(e) the postal signing sheet is not one that falls to be rejected in accordance with regulation 99B or 102B.”;

(b) in paragraph (5)—

(i) at the end of sub-paragraph (b), omit “and”;

(ii) after sub-paragraph (c) insert—

“and

(d) the postal signing sheet is not one that falls to be rejected in accordance with regulation 102B.”.

(6) In regulation 46(2) (retention and disposal of documents: England and Wales and Northern Ireland) after “Ireland)” insert “and 110A (list of rejected postal petition documents: Northern Ireland)”.

(7) In regulation 99 (alternative means of returning postal signing sheets, postal petition statements and declarations of identity)—

(a) for paragraph (1) substitute—

“(1) For the purposes of regulation 39(3) and (5) (the count)—

(a) for a recall petition held in England, Wales or Scotland—

(i) the manner in which a postal signing sheet and postal petition statement may be returned to any petition signing place is by hand;

(ii) the manner in which such a sheet and statement may be returned to the petition officer is by hand or by post;

(b) for a recall petition held in Northern Ireland, the manner in which a postal signing sheet and declaration of identity may be returned to the petition officer is by hand or by post.”;

(b) in paragraph (2)—

(i) for “Subject to paragraph (3),” substitute “Where paragraph (1)(a) applies, subject to paragraphs (2A) and (3)”;

(ii) for “, postal petition statement or declaration of identity” substitute “or postal petition statement”;

(iii) after “signing place” insert “and any return of postal petition documents form”;

(c) after paragraph (2) insert—

“(2A) A petition signing sheet or postal petition statement may only be delivered to the petition officer in accordance with paragraph (2) if the requirements of regulation 99A are met and the sheet and statement are not rejected in accordance with regulation 99B or 99D.”;

- (d) in paragraph (3) for “declaration of identity” substitute “return of postal petition documents form”;
- (e) for paragraph (4) substitute—
 - “(4) Where the petition officer collects, or causes to be collected, any postal signing sheet, postal petition statement or return of postal petition documents form in accordance with paragraph (3) the petition clerk must first make up into separate packets sealed with the petition clerk’s own seal with a description of its contents written on each packet—
 - (a) the postal signing sheets and postal petition statements;
 - (b) the return of postal petition documents forms for those postal signing sheets and postal petition statements.”.
- (8) After regulation 99 insert—

“Requirements of return of postal petition documents form

99A.—(1) The requirements of this regulation are—

- (a) the person handing in a postal petition document (“P”) completes a form containing the following information (a “return of postal petition documents form”)—
 - (i) P’s name and address,
 - (ii) whether P is handing in P’s own postal petition documents,
 - (iii) the number of other electors for whom P is handing in postal petition documents,
 - (iv) the total number of envelopes containing postal signing sheets P is handing in, including P’s own,
 - (v) the reason P is handing in postal petition documents for other electors,
 - (vi) a declaration by P that P has not handed in postal petition documents at any signing place or to the petition officer for a total of more than the number of electors other than P set out in regulation 99B(1)(c) or 102B(1)(c), including those being handed in at that time and either—
 - (aa) that to the best of P’s knowledge, P is not a political campaigner for whom it is an offence to handle the postal petition documents concerned in accordance with regulation 122A,
 - (bb) that P is a political campaigner and is only handing in postal petition documents for P and for P’s spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild, or someone for whom P provides regular care or for whom regular care is provided by an organisation which employs or engages P,
- (b) the relevant officer has endorsed the return of postal petition documents form returned by P to confirm the relevant officer’s name and that—
 - (i) the relevant officer is satisfied that the form has been completed properly and provides the information required by paragraph (a),
 - (ii) the relevant officer does not suspect that the number of electors other than P for whom P is handing in postal petition documents exceeds the number of electors specified in regulation 99B(1)(b) or 102B(1)(b),
 - (iii) the relevant officer does not suspect that P is a political campaigner who is committing an offence under regulation 122A, and
 - (iv) the postal petition documents to which the form relates are not rejected.

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1)(a)(vi)(bb), two people living together as if they were a married couple or civil partners are treated as if they were spouses or civil partners of each other.

Rejection of postal petition documents handed in at a petition signing place

99B.—(1) A relevant officer must reject—

- (a) all postal petition documents handed in by P where P fails to fully complete the return of postal petition documents form with the required information;
- (b) all postal petition documents handed in by P other than P’s own postal petition documents where the relevant officer has reasonable cause to suspect that the documents are handed in on behalf of more than five other electors;
- (c) a postal petition document handed in by P or all postal petition documents handed in together by P (other than P’s own postal petition documents) where the relevant officer has reasonable cause to suspect that, taking that document or those documents together with any postal petition documents handed in by P on any previous occasion in respect of the same petition (whether to a signing place or to the petition officer and disregarding any that were rejected), P has handed in postal petition documents on behalf of more than five other electors.

(2) Where P hands in one or more proxy postal signing papers completed by P as proxy for another elector, for “five” in paragraphs (1)(b) and (c), substitute the number that is five minus the number of proxy postal signing papers P hands in.

(3) A relevant officer may reject a postal petition document handed in by P where the relevant officer knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that, in handing in the document, P is committing an offence under regulation 122A.

Procedure for dealing with rejected postal petition documents handed in at a petition signing place

99C.—(1) Where any postal petition document has been rejected in accordance with regulation 99B the relevant officer must indicate this, together with the reason or reasons for the rejection and the relevant officer’s name, on the return of postal petition documents form and attach the form to the postal petition documents concerned.

(2) The petition clerk must make up a packet (or packets) of the rejected postal petition documents and the accompanying return of postal petition documents forms, sealed with the petition clerk’s own seal with a description of its contents written on each packet.

(3) Where a return of postal petition documents form relates to postal petition documents which have not all been rejected, that form must be dealt with as if it related just to rejected postal petition documents, and the postal petition documents which have been rejected must be noted on it.

(4) The petition clerk must deliver, or cause to be delivered, those packets in the same manner and at the same time as the petition clerk delivers, or causes to be delivered, the packets referred to in regulation 37.

Postal petition documents left behind at a petition signing place

99D.—(1) Where a person leaves a left behind postal petition document at a signing place, the relevant officer must reject that left behind postal petition document.

(2) The relevant officer must—

- (a) write on a return of postal petition documents form to confirm that the postal petition document is a left behind postal petition document,
 - (b) write the relevant officer's name on that form, and
 - (c) attach that form to the left behind postal petition document.
- (3) Left behind postal petition documents and the attached return of postal petition documents forms must be included in the packet of rejected postal petition documents and forms made up in accordance with regulation 99C(2)."
- (9) In regulation 102 (receipt of covering envelopes) for "(whether by hand of post)" substitute "by post".
- (10) After regulation 102 insert—

"Postal petition documents handed in to the petition officer

102A.—(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the relevant officer must deliver to the petition officer—

- (a) any postal petition document handed in under regulation 99(1)(a)(ii) or (b) before the end of the signing period, and
- (b) the return of postal petition documents form completed in respect of it.

(2) A postal petition document may only be delivered to the petition officer in accordance with paragraph (1) if the requirements of regulation 99A are met and the document is not rejected in accordance with regulation 102B or 102D.

(3) Before delivering them to the petition officer in accordance with paragraph (1), the relevant officer must first make up into separate packets with a description of its contents written on each packet which is then sealed up—

- (a) the postal petition documents;
- (b) the return of postal petition documents forms for those postal petition documents.

Rejection of postal petition documents handed in to the petition officer

102B.—(1) The relevant officer must reject—

- (a) all postal petition documents handed in by P where P fails to fully complete the return of postal petition documents form with the required information;
- (b) all postal petition documents handed in by P other than P's own postal petition documents where the relevant officer has reasonable cause to suspect that the documents are handed in on behalf of more than five other electors;
- (c) a postal petition document handed in by P or all postal petition documents handed in together by P (other than P's own postal petition documents) where the relevant officer has reasonable cause to suspect that, taking that document or those documents together with any postal petition documents handed in by P on any previous occasion in respect of the same petition (whether to a signing place or to the petition officer and disregarding any that were rejected), P has handed in postal voting documents on behalf of more than five other electors.

(2) Where P hands in one or more proxy postal petition documents completed by P as proxy for another elector, for "five" in paragraphs (1)(b) and (c), substitute the number that is five minus the number of proxy postal petition documents P hands in.

(3) The relevant officer may reject a postal petition document handed in by P where the relevant officer knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that, in handing in the document, P is committing an offence under regulation 122A.

Procedure for dealing with rejected postal petition documents handed in to the petition officer

102C.—(1) Where any postal petition document has been rejected in accordance with regulation 102B the relevant officer must indicate this, together with the reason or reasons for the rejection and the relevant officer’s name, on the return of postal petition documents form and attach the form to the postal petition documents concerned.

(2) The relevant officer must make up a packet (or packets) of the rejected postal petition documents and the accompanying return of postal petition documents forms which must be sealed up with a description of its contents written on each packet.

(3) Where a return of postal petition documents form relates to postal petition documents which have not all been rejected, that form must be dealt with as if it related just to rejected postal petition documents, and the postal petition documents which have been rejected must be noted on it.

(4) The relevant officer must deliver those packets to the petition officer before the end of the signing period.

Postal petition documents left behind with the petition officer

102D.—(1) This regulation applies to a postal petition document to which regulation 102A(1) applies which is a left behind postal petition document.

(2) The relevant officer must—

- (a) reject that left behind postal petition document,
- (b) write on a return of postal petition documents form to confirm that the postal petition document is a left behind postal petition document,
- (c) write the relevant officer’s name on that form, and
- (d) attach that form to the left behind postal petition document.

(3) Left behind postal petition documents and the attached return of postal petition documents forms must be included in the packet of rejected postal petition documents and forms made up in accordance with regulation 102C(2).

Opening of delivered or collected packets of postal petition documents

102E.—(1) Paragraph (2) applies to the packets of postal petition documents delivered to or collected by the returning officer in accordance with regulation 99(2) or (3) or 102A(1).

(2) Regulations 101(6), 103(1) and 104 apply to a packet to which this paragraph applies as if that packet were a postal signers’ ballot box.”.

(11) In regulation 106 (confirming receipt of postal signing statements: England and Wales and Scotland), in paragraph (1)(b)—

- (a) after “either of the” insert “first or second”;
- (b) for “signing sheets” substitute “petition documents”.

(12) In regulation 110 (lists of rejected postal signing sheets: England and Wales and Scotland)—

- (a) in the heading, for “signing sheets” substitute “petition documents”;
- (b) in paragraph (1)—
 - (i) for “three” substitute “four”;
 - (ii) for “signing sheets” in both places substitute “petition documents”;

(c) after paragraph (5) insert—

“(6) In the fourth list, the petition clerk must, subject to paragraph (9), record in relation to any elector whose postal petition documents were rejected in accordance with regulation 99B or 102B, or were left behind postal petition documents—

- (a) the elector’s name and address (and the name and address of the proxy if the elector has a proxy);
- (b) the elector’s number on the register of electors (and that of the proxy if the elector has a proxy),
- (c) the specified reason or reasons for the rejection of the postal petition documents,
- (d) an indication as to whether the postal petition documents included a postal signing sheet the number of which matched the postal signing sheet number marked on the postal petition statement, and
- (e) any other information relating to the rejection that the petition officer considers appropriate, but not the postal signing sheet number.

(7) The specified reasons that may be given under sub-paragraph (6)(c) for the rejection of the postal petition documents are—

- (a) the postal petition documents were handed in at a signing place or to the petition officer but the return of postal petition documents form was not fully completed with the required information;
- (b) the postal petition documents were handed in at a signing place or to the petition officer but the number of postal petition documents handed in exceeded or was suspected to exceed the permitted number;
- (c) the postal petition documents were handed in by a political campaigner who was not permitted to hand in those postal petition documents;
- (d) the postal petition documents were left behind postal petition documents.

(8) In compiling the fourth list the petition officer must open separately each covering envelope (including an envelope described in regulation 102(2)) and each signing sheet envelope.

(9) The obligation in paragraph (6) does not apply where an elector’s rejected postal petition documents do not include a postal petition statement.”.

(13) After regulation 110 insert—

“List of rejected postal petition documents: Northern Ireland

110A.—(1) In respect of any petition, the petition officer must keep a list relating to rejected postal petition documents as required by this regulation.

(2) The petition officer must, subject to paragraph (5), record in relation to any elector whose postal petition documents were rejected in accordance with regulation 102B, or were left behind postal petition documents—

- (a) the elector’s name and address (and the name and address of the proxy if the elector has a proxy),
- (b) the elector’s number on the register of electors (and that of the proxy if the elector has a proxy),
- (c) the specified reason or reasons for the rejection of the postal petition documents,
- (d) an indication as to whether the postal petition documents included a postal signing sheet the number of which matched the postal signing sheet number marked on the postal petition statement, and

- (e) any other information relating to the rejection that the petition officer considers appropriate, but not the postal signing sheet number.
- (3) The specified reasons that may be given under sub-paragraph (2)(c) for the rejection of the postal petition documents are—
- (a) the postal petition documents were handed in to the petition officer but the return of postal petition documents form was not fully completed with the required information;
 - (b) the postal petition documents were handed in to the petition officer but the number of postal petition documents handed in exceeded or was suspected to exceed the permitted number;
 - (c) the postal petition documents were handed in by a political campaigner who was not permitted to hand in those postal petition documents;
 - (d) the postal petition documents were left behind postal petition documents.
- (4) In compiling the list the petition officer must open separately each covering envelope (including an envelope described in regulation 102(2)) and each signing sheet envelope.
- (5) The obligation in paragraph (2) does not apply where an elector’s rejected postal petition documents do not include a postal petition statement.”.
- (14) In regulation 111 (checking lists of rejected postal signing sheets: England and Wales and Scotland), in the heading for “signing sheets” substitute “petition documents”.
- (15) In regulation 112 (sealing of receptacles)—
- (a) in paragraph (1), after sub-paragraph (e) insert—
 - “(f) the packets of rejected postal petition documents and accompanying return of postal petition documents forms made up in accordance with regulation 99C(2) and 102C(2),”;
 - (b) in paragraph (2), after sub-paragraph (c) insert—
 - “(d) the packets of rejected postal petition documents and accompanying return of postal petition documents forms made up in accordance with regulation 102C(2),”.
- (16) In regulation 114 (forwarding of documents)—
- (a) in paragraph (1)(a), after “(cancellation of postal signing sheets),” insert “regulation 99(4) (alternative means of returning postal signing sheets, postal petition statements and declarations of identity), 102A(3)(b) (postal petition documents handed in to the petition officer),”;
 - (b) in paragraph (3)—
 - (i) for “list” in each place it occurs substitute “lists”;
 - (ii) in sub-paragraph (a), for “(lists of rejected postal signing sheets)” substitute “and (6) or regulation 110A(1) (lists of rejected postal petition documents)”;
 - (iii) in sub-paragraph (b), after “110(4)” insert “and (6) or regulation 110A(1)”;
 - (c) in paragraph (4)—
 - (i) for “list” substitute “lists”;
 - (ii) for “(lists of rejected postal signing sheets)” substitute “and (6) or regulation 110A(1) (lists of rejected postal petition documents)”.
- (17) In regulation 115 (notification of a rejected postal petition statement: England and Wales and Scotland)—
- (a) in the heading for “statement” substitute “document”;

- (b) in paragraph (1)—
 - (i) for “(lists of rejected postal signing sheets)” substitute “, or on the list compiled under regulation 110(6) (list of rejected postal petition documents) with an indication in accordance with regulation 110(6)(d) that a postal signing sheet was included in rejected postal petition documents,”;
 - (ii) in sub-paragraph (a)—
 - (aa) the words from “the petition officer” to the end become paragraph (i);
 - (bb) after that paragraph (i) insert—
 - “(ii) the postal signing sheet was handed in and the relevant officer—
 - (aa) was not satisfied that the return of postal petition documents form had been completed properly and provided the required information;
 - (bb) suspected that the person handing it in had handed in postal signing sheets on behalf of more than the permitted number of electors;
 - (cc) suspected that the person handing it in was a political campaigner who was committing an offence under regulation 122A;
 - (iii) the postal signing sheet was a left behind postal petition document;”;
 - (iii) in sub-paragraph (c)—
 - (aa) the words from “in regulation” to the end become paragraph (i);
 - (bb) after that paragraph (i) insert—
 - “(ii) in regulation 110(7) applied to the postal signing sheet.”;
 - (c) in paragraph (2)(b) at the end insert “except where that offence is committed by a political campaigner under regulation 122A”.
- (18) After regulation 115 insert—

“Notification of a rejected postal petition document: Northern Ireland

115A.—(1) Where an absent signer for a petition in Northern Ireland appears on the list compiled under regulation 110A (lists of rejected postal petition documents) with an indication in accordance with regulation 110A(2)(d) that a postal signing sheet was included in the rejected postal petition documents—

- (a) the petition officer must notify the absent signer (and the elector if the absent signer is a proxy) that the signing sheet concerned was rejected because—
 - (i) the postal signing sheet was handed in and the relevant officer—
 - (aa) was not satisfied that the return of postal petition documents form had been completed properly and provided the required information;
 - (bb) suspected that the person handing it in had handed in postal signing sheets on behalf of more than the permitted number of electors;
 - (cc) suspected that the person handing it in was a political campaigner who was committing an offence under regulation 122A;
 - (ii) the postal signing sheet was a left behind postal petition document;
- (b) the petition officer must send the notification as soon as possible, and within the period of three months beginning with the last day of the signing period; and

- (c) the notification must include information as to which of the specified reasons referred to in regulation 110A(3) applied to the postal signing sheet.
- (2) The petition officer is not obliged to send a notification—
 - (a) to any person who is no longer shown as signing the petition by post in the record kept under regulation 52(5) or regulation 58(7) at the time the petition officer proposes to send the notification, or
 - (b) where the petition officer suspects that an offence may have been committed in relation to the postal signing sheet or the absent signer’s entitlement to sign the petition under section 10 of the Act (persons entitled to sign a recall petition) except where that offence is committed by a political campaigner under regulation 112A.
- (3) A notification issued under paragraph (1) may also include any other information that the petition officer considers appropriate, but a notification must not include a date of birth or national insurance number.”.
- (19) After regulation 122 (tampering with signing sheets etc.) insert—

“Handling of postal petition documents by political campaigners

122A.—(1) A person who is a political campaigner in respect of a petition commits an offence if the person handles a postal petition document that has been issued to another person for use in that petition.

(2) But a person who handles a postal petition document for use in a petition does not commit the offence if—

- (a) the person is responsible for, or assists with, the conduct of that petition (for example as a petition officer or a person working under the direction of a petition officer),
- (b) the person is engaged in the business of a postal operator, or
- (c) the person is employed or engaged in a role the duties of which include the handling of postal packets on behalf of members of an organisation or the occupants of a communal building,

and the handling is consistent with the person’s duties in that capacity.

(3) Nor does a person commit the offence if the person—

- (a) is the other person’s spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild, or
- (b) provides regular care for, or is employed or engaged by an organisation which provides care for, the other person.

(4) It is a defence for a person charged with the offence to show that the person did not dishonestly handle the postal petition document for the purpose of promoting a particular outcome of a petition.

(5) Where sufficient evidence is adduced to raise an issue with respect to the defence under paragraph (4), the court must assume that the defence is satisfied unless the prosecution proves beyond reasonable doubt that it is not.

(6) A person is guilty of a corrupt practice if the person—

- (a) commits the offence under paragraph (1), or
- (b) aids, abets, counsels or procures the commission of that offence.

(7) For the purposes of this regulation a person is a political campaigner in respect of a petition if any of the following applies—

- (a) the person is the MP who is subject to the petition process;

- (b) the person is employed or engaged by the MP who is subject to the petition process for the purposes of their activities as an MP;
- (c) the person is a member of a registered political party and carries on an activity designed to promote a particular outcome of the petition;
- (d) the person is employed or engaged by a registered political party in connection with the party's political activities;
- (e) the person is employed or engaged by a person within any of sub-paragraphs (a) to (d) to carry on an activity designed to promote a particular outcome of the petition;
- (f) the person is employed or engaged by a person within sub-paragraph (e) to carry on an activity designed to promote a particular outcome of the petition;
- (g) the person is an accredited campaigner within the meaning of Part 5 of Schedule 3 to the Act(2).

(8) In this regulation—

“postal operator” has the same meaning as in Part 3 of the Postal Services Act 2011;

“postal petition document” includes an envelope that has been issued to a person for the purpose of enabling the person to sign a petition by post.

(9) For the purposes of this regulation, an envelope—

- (a) that is not a postal petition document, but
- (b) that contains a postal signing sheet, postal petition statement or declaration of identity that has been issued to a person for the purpose of enabling the person to sign a petition by post,

is to be treated as if it were a postal petition document that has been issued to the person for use in the petition.

(10) In this regulation, any reference to a person who is “engaged” by another person, or to a person who provides care for another person, includes a reference to a person who is engaged or provides care otherwise than for payment or promise of payment.

(11) For the purposes of paragraph (3)(a), two people living together as if they were a married couple or civil partners are treated as if they were spouses or civil partners of each other.”.

(20) In regulation 123 (requirement of secrecy)—

(a) after paragraph (4) insert—

“(4A) No person may—

- (a) except for some purpose authorised by law, obtain or attempt to obtain information, or communicate at any time to any other person any information, as to the number or other unique identifying mark on the back of a postal signing sheet issued to a person for signing a petition by post;
- (b) except for some purpose authorised by law, obtain or attempt to obtain information, or communicate at any time to any other person any information, as to the official mark on a postal signing sheet issued to a person for signing a petition by post;
- (c) obtain or attempt to obtain information, in the circumstances mentioned in paragraph (4B), as to whether a person issued with a postal signing sheet for signing a petition by post (“P”) has or has not signed the petition;

(2) Part 5 was amended by [S.I. 2018/1310](#).

- (d) communicate at any time to any other person information obtained in contravention of sub-paragraph (c).
- (4B) The circumstances referred to in paragraph (4A)(c) are where P is about to mark, or is in the process of marking, or has just marked, a postal signing sheet issued to P for signing a petition by post.
- (4C) But—
 - (a) a person (“E”) who is signing a petition by proxy does not contravene paragraph (4A) by obtaining or attempting to obtain from the person entitled to sign the petition as E’s proxy information as to a matter mentioned in sub-paragraph (a) of that paragraph that relates to E’s signing of the petition, and
 - (b) a person who is entitled to sign a petition as E’s proxy does not contravene paragraph (4A) by communicating to E information as to a matter mentioned in sub-paragraph (a) of that paragraph that relates to E’s signing of the petition.
- (4D) Paragraphs (4A)(c) and (d) do not apply where the purpose (or main purpose) for which the information is sought or communicated is its use for the purpose of—
 - (a) a published statement relating to whether people entitled to sign the petition intend to sign it or have signed it, or
 - (b) a published forecast as to the result of that petition which is based on information given by people entitled to sign it.
- (4E) In paragraph (4D)—
 - (a) “forecast” includes estimate;
 - (b) “published” means made available to the public at large or to any section of the public, in whatever form and by whatever means.
- (4F) Where a person (“the proxy”) is entitled to sign a petition as proxy for another person (“E”)—
 - (a) the proxy must not communicate at any time to any person other than E any information as to whether the proxy is about to sign the petition, or has signed the petition, as proxy for E;
 - (b) except for some purpose authorised by law, the proxy must not communicate at any time to any person other than E the number or other unique identifying mark on the back of a signing sheet issued to the proxy for signing the petition as proxy for E.”;
- (b) in paragraph (6)—
 - (i) after “person” insert “who acts in contravention of this regulation is”;
 - (ii) for “under this regulation” substitute “and”.
- (21) In Schedule 2 (forms)—
 - (a) in Part 1 (United Kingdom), for form E (official petition notice for an elector who may sign the petition by post), form G (official petition notice for a proxy who may sign the petition by post), form K (postal petition statement) and form L (statement as to postal petition signing sheets, proxies and additional data) substitute the corresponding forms set out in Part 1 of Schedule 8 to these Regulations;
 - (b) in Part 3 (Northern Ireland), for form E (official petition notice for an elector who may sign the petition by post), form G (official petition notice for a proxy who may sign the petition by post), form L (statement as to postal petition signing sheets, proxies and additional data) and form M (declaration of identity) substitute the corresponding forms set out in Part 2 of Schedule 8 to these Regulations.

(22) In Schedule 3 (access to marked registers after a petition), in paragraph 3 (inspection of documents open to public inspection), in sub-paragraph (1)(b)—

(a) in sub-paragraph (iv), for “(lists of rejected postal signing sheets)” substitute “or (6) or regulation 110A(1) (lists of rejected postal petition documents);

(b) after sub-paragraph (iv) insert—

“(v) return of postal petition documents forms.”.

(23) In Schedule 4 (legal proceedings: application to recall petitions of existing provisions)—

(a) in paragraph 21, in the words substituted by sub-paragraph (b), for “or 120 (offences relating to applications for postal and proxy signing)” substitute “, 120 (offences relating to applications for postal and proxy signing) or 122A (handling of postal petition documents by political campaigners)”;

(b) in paragraph 26, for sub-paragraph (a) substitute—

“(a) in paragraph (a)(i), for the words from “section 60” to “above” substitute “regulation 118 (personation), regulation 120 (offences relating to applications for postal or proxy signing) or regulation 122A (handling of postal petition documents by political campaigners) of the Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016”;

(c) in paragraph 28, for sub-paragraph (b) substitute—

“(b) in subsection (2), for the words from “section 60” to the end, substitute “regulation 118 (personation), regulation 120 (offences relating to applications for postal or proxy signing) or regulation 122A (handling of postal petition documents by political campaigners) of the Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016, or an illegal practice under regulation 119 of those Regulations (other signing offences).”;