



Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Intramuros, Manila
EDUCATION AND INFORMATION DEPARTMENT



PRESS STATEMENT

14 January 2025

ATTY. JOHN REX C. LAUDIANGCO

Director IV, Education and Information Department

Spokesperson, Commission on Elections

Re: COMELEC Commits to Fully Comply with Supreme Court TROs in relation to the 2025 elections

The Commission on Elections has been made aware of the Temporary Restraining Orders (TROs) issued on January 14, 2025 by the Supreme Court on various cases in relation to the May 12, 2025 National and Local Elections and BARMM Parliamentary Elections, and assures the High Court and the Filipino people that the poll body has immediately convened on even date to forthwith set in motion contingency measures and fully comply with the subject Orders.

While the COMELEC has yet to officially receive its copies of the subject TROs, we commit to do everything to comply with said Orders in the following cases

1. *Subair Guinthum Mustapha vs. COMELEC* (GR No. 277177)
2. *Charles Savellano vs. Ronald Singson and COMELEC* (GR No. 277514)
3. *Chito Bulatao Balintay vs. COMELEC Provincial Election Supervisor of Zambales and COMELEC En Banc* (GR No. 277540)
4. *Edgar Erice vs. COMELEC and Raymond DC Salipot* (GR No. 277608)
5. *Florendo de Ramos Ritualo Jr vs. COMELEC and Annaliza Ventura Telada* (GR No. 277719)

We have now taken the necessary steps to trigger the said contingency measures, as the COMELEC recognizes that time is of the essence, considering the strict and rigorous timelines of Elections Preparations, including, but not limited to, the following:



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1. **Immediate cessation of printing of Official Ballots** and all attendant activities thereto at the National Printing Office (NPO);
2. **Change/Amendment to the Candidates' Database**, the Election Management System (EMS), the Automated Counting Machine (ACM) and the Consolidation and Canvassing System (CCS), all of which had already been the subject of a Trusted Build;
3. **Generation of 1,667 Ballot Face Templates** and all the serialization of such, as well as effect the necessary changes to the numbering of the candidates;
4. **Inventory of all the printed Ballots**, including Final Testing and Sealing (FTS) Ballots, Local Absentee Voting (LAV) Ballots, Overseas Voting (OV) Ballots, Official Ballots (OB) for BARMM and CARAGA, BARMM Parliamentary Election Ballots, and Mock Election Ballots, totalling to more or less six (6) million pieces of Ballots;
5. **Conduct a study** as to whether or not the change in the EMS and Candidates' Database would necessitate its subject to another Trusted Build;
6. **Reprinting of all the affected Ballots** at the proper time when all the necessary changes in the Candidates' Database and EMS had already been effected, as well as the accounting and auditing of the necessary costs and wastages, including the wages of personnel, supplies and materials inclusive of ballot paper, toners and others;
7. **Cancellation and Rescheduling of the Trusted Build** of the Online Voting and Counting System (OVCS) scheduled on January 15, 2025; and



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8. Cancellation and Rescheduling of the Mock Elections scheduled on January 18, 2025.

While these actions are indeed time consuming and very costly, COMELEC fully respects the decision of the Supreme Court, and we recognize these Orders as part of legal processes.

We likewise inform the public that while delay is also a necessary consequence, please note that there is no cause for alarm, concern or panic, as the COMELEC is fully in control of the situation and will effect the necessary contingency measures to mitigate such.

We hereby respectfully inform and notify the Senate of the Philippines, the House of Representatives, including the Joint Congressional Oversight Committee (JCOC) and the respective Committees on Electoral Reforms and Suffrage, the Supreme Court of the Philippines, deputized Government Offices and Agencies, all National, Local, and BARMM Parliamentary Election Aspirants/Candidates, Stakeholders, Citizens' Arms, Political Parties and Coalitions and the public on these necessary actions of the COMELEC.

This also serves as notice that the inventory of all the Ballots already printed, its transport for safekeeping to the COMELEC Santa Rosa Warehouse, and its destruction to prevent any unauthorized use, will commence on January 15, 2025.

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