

BAR COUNCIL OF WEST BENGAL
GENERAL GUIDELINES OF VOTING IN 12TH ELECTIONS OF
THE BAR COUNCIL OF WEST BENGAL

1. The election of members of the Bar Council of West Bengal shall be only by secret ballot. There shall be no voting by post.
2. An Advocate, unless informed beforehand, is deemed ordinarily to practice at the place given as his address in the Electoral Roll.
3. Any candidate, who by himself or through his agent seeks or attempts to secure from any voter his ballot paper with an intent to prevent him from casting his vote directly or with the intent that the vote be cast for a particular candidate, shall be guilty of election malpractice which shall invalidate his election whether or not the result of the election gets materially affected thereby.
4. The number of members to be elected is 23 (twenty- three) only.
5. Voting is by single transferable preference vote.
6. The election shall be on the basis of a single common ballot paper in accordance with statutory method of election by proportional representation through single transferable vote, and there shall not be two separate ballot papers or any separate voting or separate counting mechanism for women candidates.



7. The names of all contesting candidates are printed on one ballot paper, and against the name of every women candidate a clear identification in the form of letter 'W' in English is printed.
8. The signature of every voter shall be obtained in a separate booklet after verification from the identity card issued by the Bar Council of West Bengal or any other photo identity card issued by any Governmental Authority.
9. The Presiding Officer of each polling booth shall ensure that the voters or any person authorized to access the polling booth during the polling hours shall not carry their mobile phones or cameras or any other video recording devices inside the polling booth.
10. The mark should be so placed to indicate clearly and beyond doubt, to which candidate the voter is casting his vote. If the mark is so placed making it doubtful as to which candidate the vote has been cast, that vote will be considered as invalid.
11. **Method of voting:**
 - (i) A voter while casting his vote: (a) shall write on the Ballot paper the preferential number in words, for example, 'ONE' or 'One' in the space against the name of the candidate whom he chooses for his first preference; and (b) shall thereafter write the subsequent preference numbers in words, 'TWO',



'THREE', 'FOUR', 'FIVE' or 'Two', 'Three', 'Four', 'Five' and so on in the spaces against the names of the candidates in order of his preference.

(ii) A voter shall not sign the Ballot paper nor place any mark thereon by which he can be identified.

12. A voter shall, while casting his vote, bear in mind the direction of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India by the Order dated 08.12.2025 passed in Writ Petition(s) (Civil) no(s). 581/2024 (Yogamaya M. G.-Vs- Union of India and ors.) followed by clarification of the Bar Council of India vide memo no. BCI: D: 9365/2025 dated 23.12.2025, inter alia that the Hon'ble Supreme Court mandated women representation to the extent of thirty percent of the total seats, out of which twenty percent shall be through elections and ten percent through co-option by the Bar Council of India, i.e. 5 members through election and 2 members through co-option by the Bar Council of India.

13. **Ballot paper when invalid:** A voting paper shall be invalid on which- (a) any of the preference number in words from "ONE", "TWO", "THREE" and so on or "One", "Two", "Three" and so on are not written; or (b) the words 'One' or any other number in words is written opposite the name of more than one candidate or is so written as to render it doubtful as to which candidate it is intended to apply; or (c) there is any mark or sign or writing by which the voter can be identified; or (d) the preferences are given by any other marking excepting the marking mentioned hereinbefore; or



(e) if there is effacement, obliteration, erasure or mutilation as to mark any of the preferences ambiguous.

14. **Personal Voting:** A voter shall personally put the ballot paper in the ballot box after voting. The ballot paper shall be folded four times before putting the same into the ballot box.
15. After each ballot box gets filled completely with cast ballot and at the end of each day's poll the last ballot box, whether completely filled or not, should be properly sealed and signed by the Presiding Officer as well as by the independent Polling Officer to be deputed separately by the High-Powered Election Committee/Returning Officer.
16. The sealed ballot box/boxes and the booklet containing the signature or thumb impression of the voters along-with the voters list sent by the Bar Council of West Bengal shall be handed over to the authorised representative(s) of the Bar Council of West Bengal, by the Returning Officer.
17. On receipt of the ballot boxes from all the polling stations, the counting of votes shall commence at a notified place.

Sagar Bandyopadhyay

Date: 16.02.2026

SAGAR BANDYOPADHYAY, Sr. Advocate

&Returning Officer.