

EC: Address change laws amended to prevent fraud
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The Election Commission (EC) has clarified that it is not acting contrary to election laws in disallowing political parties assistant registering officers (ARO) from processing voters who want to change their addresses.

Perak state Election Commission director Ahmad Adli Abdullah said that on the contrary, it was in line with an amendment to Section 13 (1) of the Election (Registration of Electors) Regulations 1971.

voter registration campaign 110707 line upThe amendment, aimed at preventing political parties from abusing rules pertaining to the registration of voters, was made in 2002, said Ahmad.

Whereas Section 13 (1) had stated that either EC officials or political party representatives appointed by the EC can register voters' change of addresses, the amended law disallows political parties from doing so unilaterally.

This is because there have been cases of political parties registering voters' change of home addresses without the consent or knowledge of the voters in order to boost the numbers of voters in the respective constituencies, said Ahmad.

Presently, Ahmad added, AROs can only register new voters.

For changes of addresses, the voter now has to go personally to either the state election commission office or to any post office.

Willing to extend service

The amended law also stipulates that voters who change their place of residence must first register the change within three months of moving into their new homes with the National Registration Department.

NONEThey subsequently have to go to the respective EC offices to make the changes in the electoral poll list.

Ahmad was clarifying DAP Tronoh assemblyperson V Sivakumar's claim last week that the EC was contravening election laws by barring political parties from registering change of address of registered voters.

Sivakumar (left) had also complained that registered voters who are working do not have the time to go to either the EC office or post offices during working hours to make the changes in their addresses.

The former Pakatan state assembly speaker said as a result, there is a large number of voters in Perak who are displaced and cannot make the necessary changes to make them eligible to vote in coming general elections.

However, according to Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM) national coordinator K Kunasekaran, who attended a briefing with the EC today, Perak EC officials had also said they were willing to process changes of addresses outside office hours if the political parties could arrange it.

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