

Notification of secrecy requirements – the poll

Section 66 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended)

(1) The following persons –

- (a) every returning officer and every presiding officer or clerk attending at a polling station,
- (b) every candidate or election agent or polling agent so attending
- (c) every person so attending by virtue of any of sections 6A to 6D of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000

shall maintain and aid in maintaining the secrecy of voting and shall not, except for some purpose authorised by law, communicate to any person before the poll is closed any information as to –

- (i) the name of any elector or proxy for an elector who has or has not applied for a ballot paper or voted at a polling station;
- (ii) the number on the register of electors of any elector who, or whose proxy, has or has not applied for a ballot paper or voted at a polling station; or
- (iii) the official mark.

[...]

(3) No person shall –

- (a) interfere with or attempt to interfere with a voter when recording his vote;
- (b) otherwise obtain or attempt to obtain in a polling station information as to the candidate for whom a voter in that station is about to vote or has voted;
- (c) communicate at any time to any person any information obtained in a polling station as to the candidate for whom a voter in that station is about to vote or has voted, or as to the number or other unique identifying mark on the back of the ballot paper given to a voter at that station;
- (d) directly or indirectly induce a voter to display his ballot paper after he has marked it so as to make known to any person the name of the candidate for whom he has or has not voted.

[...]

(3F) A person voting as proxy for an elector at a relevant election—

- (a) must not communicate at any time to any person other than that elector any information as to the candidate for whom the person is about to vote, or has voted, as proxy for that elector;

(b) except for some purpose authorised by law, must not communicate at any time to any person other than that elector the number or other unique identifying mark on the back of a ballot paper sent or delivered to the person for voting as proxy for that elector.

[...]

(4A) No person having undertaken to assist a relevant voter to vote at a relevant election may communicate at any time to any person except that voter any information as to—

(a) the candidate for whom the voter intends to vote or has voted, or

(b) the number or other unique identifying mark on the back of the ballot paper given for the use of the voter.

(4B) In subsection (4A) “relevant voter” means a voter who is blind, has another disability, or is unable to read.

(5) No person having undertaken to assist a blind voter to vote [at an election in Scotland or Wales under the local government Act] shall communicate at any time to any person any information as to the candidate for whom that voter intends to vote or has voted, or as to the number or other unique identifying mark on the back of the ballot paper given for the use of that voter.

(6) If a person acts in contravention of this section he shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months.