

STATE ELECTION COMMISSION (SEC): ROLE AND FUNCTIONING

1. Introduction:

The **State Election Commission (SEC)** is a **constitutional authority** responsible for conducting elections to the **local self-governments** – the **Panchayats** and **Municipalities** – within a state.

It is established under **Article 243K** of the Indian Constitution (Part IX – Panchayati Raj) and **Article 243ZA** (Part IXA – Municipalities).

2. Composition:

- Headed by the **State Election Commissioner**.
- Appointed by the **Governor of the State**.
- The number of members in the Commission is determined by the respective **State Government**.

3. Tenure and Conditions:

- **Tenure:** As decided by the Governor (usually 5–6 years or up to 65 years of age).
- **Removal:** Can be removed only in the same manner and on the same grounds as a High Court judge, ensuring independence.

4. Role and Responsibilities:

The SEC conducts and supervises:

- Elections to:
 - **Gram Panchayats**
 - **Panchayat Samitis**
 - **Zila Parishads**
 - **Municipal Corporations**
 - **Municipalities and Nagar Panchayats**
- **Preparation and revision** of electoral rolls for local body elections.
- **Delimitation of constituencies** for local bodies (in consultation with the state).
- **Model Code of Conduct** implementation at the local level.
- **Declaration of results** and **adjudication of disputes** related to local elections.
- Ensures **free, fair, and unbiased elections** at the grassroots level.

5. Powers and Autonomy:

- Operates **independently** of the Election Commission of India (ECI).
- Has the power to **postpone or cancel elections** in case of malpractice or law-and-order issues.

- Exercises **quasi-judicial powers** in matters of electoral disputes for local bodies.

6. Difference from Election Commission of India:

Feature	Election Commission of India (ECI)	State Election Commission (SEC)
Jurisdiction	National and State-level elections	Local body elections (Panchayats, Municipalities)
Established under	Article 324	Article 243K & 243ZA
Appointed by	President of India	Governor of the State
Conducts elections for	Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State Legislatures, President, Vice President	Gram Panchayats, Municipalities, Zila Parishads, etc.