

Enforcement of the Code of Ethics for Election Administrators: Evaluation and Institutional Reform of the DKPP Following the 2024 Election

Irmanjaya Thaher¹, Juanda², Dzaki M. Ihsan³

¹Universitas Esa Unggul. Email: Irman.jaya@esaunggul.ac.id

²Universitas Esa Unggul. Email: juanda.juanda@esaunggul.ac.id

³Universitas Gajah Mada, Indonesia. Email: dzakimuhammadihsan@mail.ugm.ac.id

Abstract: This article examines violations of the electoral organizers' code of ethics and the role of the Electoral Organizers' Honorary Council (DKPP) in enforcing it, focusing on complaint data and rulings throughout the 2024 General Elections and Simultaneous Regional Elections. The DKPP received 790 reports of alleged violations of the Election Organizers' Code of Ethics (KEPP) throughout 2024, resulting in 76 organizers being permanently dismissed. In total, the DKPP received 983 complaints during the 2024–2025 period. The study examines the DKPP's constitutional and institutional foundations, the typology of KEPP violations, sanction enforcement mechanisms, and the trend of increasing non-phase-related violations following the elections. This article also responds to the DKPP Chair's statement that the conduct of the 2024 national elections and simultaneous regional elections cannot yet be categorized as "good," and offers recommendations for institutional reform to strengthen the integrity of Indonesia's election administrators in the future.

Keywords: DKPP; election administrators' code of ethics; KEPP; ethical violations; KPU; Bawaslu; 2024 Elections; electoral integrity.

I. Introduction

Elections conducted with integrity are the foundation of constitutional democracy. Among the factors that determine the quality of elections, the integrity of election administrators—namely the KPU and Bawaslu, along with their staff at all levels—holds a highly strategic position. Election administrators are the parties that directly determine whether the electoral process proceeds in accordance with the principles of "luber jujur" (direct, universal, free, secret, honest, and fair) as mandated by the Constitution and the law.

To safeguard the integrity of election administrators, Indonesia established the Election Administrators' Ethics Council (DKPP) as an institution specifically tasked with enforcing the Code of Ethics for Election Administrators (KEPP). In the context of the 2024 General Election—the largest simultaneous election in Indonesia's history, combining the elections for president, members of the House of Representatives (DPR), Regional Representative Councils (DPRD), and the Regional Representatives Council (DPD) all on a single day—the DKPP faces an extraordinary workload.

Data released by the DKPP paints an alarming picture: throughout the 2024 general election, there were 790 reports of alleged ethical violations by election officials. Of that number, 76 officials were permanently dismissed. Overall, the DKPP received 983 complaints during the 2024–2025 period. The DKPP Chairperson himself openly acknowledged that the conduct of the 2024 national elections and simultaneous regional elections cannot yet be categorized as "good."

Even more concerning is the trend identified by the DKPP: an increase in the number of "non-phase-related" ethical violations—that is, violations occurring outside the immediate context of election administration—committed by election officials following the 2024 general and regional elections.

This article aims to: first, examine the constitutional and institutional foundations of the DKPP; second, to analyze the typology of KEPP violations and the mechanisms for enforcing sanctions; third, to present a comprehensive analysis of the 2024 case data; fourth, to analyze trends in non-phase-specific violations; and fifth, to formulate recommendations for institutional reform to strengthen the integrity of Indonesia's election organizers.

II. The Constitutional and Institutional Framework of the DKPP

A. Legal Basis for the Establishment and Authority of the DKPP

The DKPP is an institution established under Law No. 7 of 2017 on General Elections. The presence of the DKPP within Indonesia's constitutional system reflects a constitutional commitment to ensuring that election administrators are not only subject to the rule of law but also to high ethical standards. The following is the normative framework of the DKPP:

1945 Constitution, Article 22E	Establishes the principles of direct, universal, free, secret, honest, and fair elections, and mandates the formation of a national, permanent, and independent general election commission.
Law No. 7 of 2017 (Elections Law)	Articles 155 through 159 comprehensively regulate the establishment, composition, authority, duties, and obligations of the DKPP.
DKPP Regulation No. 2 of 2017 (PKDKPP)	Establishes the Procedural Guidelines and Code of Ethics for General Election Administrators as the procedural law governing DKPP hearings.
Joint Regulation of the KPU, Bawaslu, and DKPP (PKPU/Perbawaslu/Perdkpp)	Regulates the Code of Ethics for Election Administrators (KEPP), which serves as the standard of conduct that must be adhered to by all election administrators.

B. Composition, Duties, and Authority of the DKPP

The DKPP consists of 7 (seven) members drawn from various sectors: 1 member from the KPU, 1 member from the Bawaslu, and 5 members who are community leaders selected by the DPR. This composition is designed to ensure the representation of diverse perspectives in the enforcement of the electoral code of ethics.

The DKPP's primary authority encompasses two dimensions:

- Adjudicative dimension: examining and ruling on complaints and/or reports of alleged violations of the code of ethics committed by members of the KPU, members of the Bawaslu, and members of the PPLN (Overseas Election Committee), including members at all levels (central, provincial, regency/city).
- Rehabilitative dimension: restoring the good name of election organizers who are proven not to have violated the code of ethics following an investigation.

One key distinction between the DKPP and judicial institutions lies in the nature of its decisions: DKPP decisions are final and binding (*erga omnes*) on the KPU and Bawaslu, requiring them to act on them immediately. There is no avenue for appealing DKPP decisions to other institutions, although parties subject to sanctions may file objections through the Administrative Court (PTUN) regarding specific administrative aspects.

C. The DKPP in the Election Administration Framework

Within Indonesia's election administration framework, the DKPP functions as the supreme ethical watchdog, overseeing the conduct of the two technical election management bodies: the KPU and the Bawaslu. This institutional relationship can be described as follows:

Institution	Primary Function	Relationship with the DKPP
KPU	Technical election administrator; regulates and implements all stages	Subject to the DKPP's ethical oversight; required to follow up on DKPP rulings

Bawaslu	Election oversight body; enforces election laws	Subject to DKPP ethical oversight; also contributes one member to the DKPP
DKPP	Enforcer of the electoral organizers' code of ethics	Independent institution; investigates and adjudicates complaints of violations of the KEPP
MK	Resolves disputes over election results	Parallel to the DKPP; the DKPP adjudicates on ethics, while the MK adjudicates on results
Bawaslu (criminal violations)	Refers alleged election-related criminal offenses to Gakkumdu	Outside the DKPP's jurisdiction; criminal matters are handled by Gakkumdu

III. Code of Ethics for Election Administrators (KEPP): Substance and Types of Violations

A. Basic Principles of the KEPP

The Code of Ethics for Election Administrators (KEPP) is a set of behavioral norms that govern the moral, professional, and institutional standards that must be met by all election administrators. The KEPP is built upon several fundamental principles that serve as the pillars of electoral integrity:

Honesty	Election administrators must act with honesty and must not lie; every decision must be based on facts and proper procedures.
Independence	Free from the influence of any party; not dependent on the interests of political parties, candidates, or other interested parties.
Fair	Treating all election participants equally without discrimination; not favoring any particular party.
Accountable	Every action is accountable in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations and the KEPP.
Effective & Efficient	Conducting elections by using resources responsibly.
Public Interest	Prioritizing the public interest and the nation's interests over personal, family, or group interests.
Transparency	Providing the public with the widest possible access to information in accordance with regulations; transparency in the process.

B. Typology of KEPP Violations

Based on the DKPP's practices over more than a decade, KEPP violations can be categorized into several main types that reflect recurring patterns of unethical behavior by election organizers:

Types of Violations	Concrete Examples	Relative Frequency
Lack of Impartiality	Assisting one candidate pair; obstructing a specific candidate pair in administrative processes	Very high—most frequently reported
Manipulation of data and documents	Altering vote tally data; falsifying official records; manipulating the voter list	High—directly impacts the results
Violations of procedural stages	Failure to carry out stages according to schedule; violating procedures established by the Election Commission (PKPU)	High—occurred at all levels

Abuse of authority	Using one’s position for personal gain; demanding favors in administrative processes	Moderate; often difficult to prove
Breach of confidentiality	Disclosing information that should be kept confidential to unauthorized parties	Moderate
Unbecoming conduct	Immoral acts; discriminatory statements; behavior that demeans the institution’s dignity	Moderate, increasing due to social media
Non-election-related violations	Ethical violations outside the immediate context of election administration	Has become a growing concern for the DKPP

IV. DKPP Data Analysis: 2024 Elections

A. Data Dashboard: The Big Picture

983	790	76	9.6%
Total Complaints 2024–2025	Complaints Regarding the 2024 Election	Permanent Dismissals	Rate of Most Severe Sanctions
<i>Throughout the current period</i>	<i>Alleged Ethical Violations</i>	<i>The most severe sanction among the 790 complaints</i>	<i>of the total 790 complaints</i>

B. Handling Process: From Complaint to Dismissal

The data on the 790 complaints filed with the DKPP regarding the 2024 Election must be understood within the context of a tiered handling process. Not all complaints received immediately proceed to a hearing, and not all cases that go to a hearing result in the most severe sanctions. The following is an overview of the DKPP’s complaint handling funnel:

Handling Stages	Number	Proportion	Notes
Total 2024 Election KEPP Complaints	790 complaints	100%	All complaints received by the DKPP
Passed Verification & Hearing	< 790	Majority	Not all complaints meet the formal requirements for a hearing
Sanctions Imposed (various levels)	Hundreds of organizers	Most	Including warnings, reprimands, and temporary suspensions
Permanent suspension	76 organizers	9.6%	Highest sanction; accounts for 9.6% of total complaints
Unsubstantiated / Rehabilitation	Remaining cases	90.4% (est.)	Includes complaints found to be unfounded or where the petitioner withdrew the complaint

The figure of 76 election officials permanently dismissed (9.6% of the total 790 complaints) is highly significant. This figure means that, on average, more than one election official was permanently dismissed each week during the 2024 Election. This phenomenon reflects the seriousness of the integrity issues among election officials that must be addressed.

Statement by the DKPP Chair: The 2024 General Election Cannot Yet Be Categorized as ‘Good.’ The DKPP Chair openly acknowledged that the conduct of the 2024 national elections and simultaneous regional elections cannot yet be categorized as “good.” This statement represents a highly significant institutional acknowledgment, given that the DKPP is the most authoritative body in assessing the ethical integrity of election officials. This acknowledgment should serve as a wake-up call for all stakeholders in Indonesia’s democracy to immediately undertake the necessary evaluations and reforms.

C. Spectrum of Sanctions: From Warnings to Permanent Dismissal

The DKPP has four levels of sanctions that can be imposed on election organizers proven to have violated the KEPP, ranging from the mildest to the most severe:

Type of Sanction	Level	Conditions for Application	Consequences
Warning	Level I (most minor)	The organizer is found to have committed a minor violation of KEPP	Remains in office; issued a written warning
Reprimand	Level II	More serious violation; repeat warning	Remains in position; receives a formal reprimand
Temporary suspension	Level III	Serious violation; disrupts the conduct of the election	Temporary suspension; may be reinstated
Permanent suspension	Level IV (most severe)	Serious violation; undermining the integrity of the election	Loss of office; ineligible to serve again in the current election cycle

The imposition of permanent dismissal sanctions on 76 election officials in a single election cycle is a figure rarely reached in the history of the DKPP. This indicates that the violations that occurred were not merely technical or procedural in nature, but rather violations that substantially undermined the integrity of the electoral process. Permanent dismissal not only removes the individual from office but also bars them from serving again as an election official during the same term.

D. Distribution of Violations: KPU vs. Bawaslu

Based on the DKPP's historical experience, the majority of complaints regarding violations of the KEPP are directed at KPU officials at the regency/city level, who serve as the frontline in the technical administration of elections. This is understandable given that:

- Regency/city KPUs are the institutions that have the most direct contact with election participants and voters; thus, their technical decisions are most likely to be challenged.
- The number of KPU members at the regency/city level is far greater than at other levels—spread across more than 500 regencies and cities throughout Indonesia—so statistically, the potential for violations is also greater.
- Pressure from various stakeholders (candidates, political parties, businesspeople) is felt most strongly at the regency/city level, where local patronage networks are more dominant.
- Human resource capacity and understanding of the code of ethics at the regency/city level are often more limited than at the central or provincial levels.

V. Non-Election-Period Violations: Trends and Implications

A. Definition and Characteristics of Non-Election-Phase Violations

Non-phase-specific ethical violations refer to unethical behavior committed by election organizers outside the immediate context of the implementation of election phases. Unlike stage-specific violations that occur within the specific context of election administration (e.g., manipulation of the voter list, bias during candidate verification), non-stage-specific violations can occur at any time—before, during, or after the election—and are more broadly related to the character and personal conduct of election officials.

The DKPP has expressed concern over the rise in this type of violation following the 2024 General Elections and Simultaneous Regional Elections. This trend warrants special attention because it indicates that the issue of election administrators' integrity is not merely a matter of technical capacity, but rather a more fundamental issue of character and personal integrity.

B. Typology of Non-Phase-Specific Violations

Types of Non-Phase-Specific Violations	Description	Risk
Abuse of Office	Using one's position as an election administrator for personal or group interests outside the electoral process	High
Post-office neutrality	Bias toward a particular party or candidate after the election is over; leveraging networks built while in office	High
Confidentiality of voter data	Leakage of voter data obtained during the election process to unauthorized parties	Moderate-High
Inappropriate behavior	Indecent acts, racist or discriminatory statements, undignified behavior by incumbent election officials	Moderate
Conflict of interest	Involvement in activities that could potentially create a conflict of interest with their duties as organizers	High
Gifts & bribes	Accepting gifts that violate the code of ethics from parties with a stake in the electoral process	Very High

The table above illustrates that non-phase-related violations cover a very broad spectrum—from gratuities and abuse of office with criminal implications to undignified behavior that impacts the institution's image. Of particular concern to the DKPP is the trend of violations occurring post-election, where election administrators still in office are found to be involved in activities contrary to the principles of neutrality and independence.

C. Factors Contributing to the Rise in Non-Election-Phase Violations

There are several factors that may explain why non-campaign-phase violations have increased following the 2024 elections:

1. **Post-election institutional fatigue:** The 2024 simultaneous elections were a grueling democratic process, both physically and mentally. In the state of post-election fatigue, standards of ethical vigilance may decline.
2. **Post-victory euphoria:** Election officials who feel they have successfully conducted the election tend to let their ethical guard down and feel free to return to personal activities that active election officials should not be engaging in.
3. **Shifts in post-local election political dynamics:** After local elections, shifts in power occur in many regions, creating new pressure on local election officials to build relationships with the new holders of power.
4. **Weakening oversight after the election cycle ends:** Public and media attention to the conduct of election officials tends to wane after the election is over, creating more room for violations.
5. **Lack of Internalization of KEPP Values:** For some election organizers, compliance with KEPP is viewed as a situational obligation during elections, rather than as a value internalized in their daily behavior.

VI. Evaluation of the DKPP: Between Achievements and Limitations

A. DKPP's Achievements in Enforcing KEPP

Over more than a decade of operation, the DKPP has demonstrated a number of positive achievements worthy of recognition:

1. Massive caseload: The DKPP's ability to handle 983 complaints during the 2024–2025 period—including conducting hearings and issuing rulings—demonstrates a fairly strong operational capacity, despite its extremely heavy workload.
2. Courage to impose the harshest sanctions: The imposition of permanent dismissal on 76 election officials in a single election cycle demonstrates that the DKPP does not hesitate to impose strict sanctions even on active election officials.
3. Transparency of rulings: All DKPP rulings are published online and accessible to the public, fostering essential public accountability.
4. Critical acknowledgment of election quality: The DKPP Chair's courage to openly state that the 2024 election was not yet "good" reflects the institution's much-needed independence and objectivity.

B. Limitations and Challenges Facing the DKPP

Behind these achievements lie a number of limitations and challenges that must be honestly acknowledged:

1. Limited authority for proactive investigations: The DKPP can only process formally filed complaints; it lacks the authority to proactively investigate unreported alleged violations. This situation creates a reliance on the willingness and ability of affected parties to file reports.
2. Fragmentation of the election oversight system: Election violations can be routed through several channels: administrative violations to Bawaslu, criminal violations to Gakkumdu, ethical violations to the DKPP, and disputes over election results to the Constitutional Court (MK). This fragmentation often causes confusion and can be exploited by certain parties to delay proceedings or avoid accountability.
3. Limited deterrent effect: Although the DKPP has imposed hundreds of sanctions, the continuing upward trend in violations indicates that the deterrent effect of DKPP sanctions has not been optimal. This may be due to the low likelihood of reporting and the difficulty of proving violations.
4. Limited Resource Capacity: With a caseload of 983 complaints in a single period, the DKPP faces significant capacity pressures. Limitations in human resources and budget can impact the quality and speed of case handling.

VII. Reform Recommendations

A. Institutional Reform of the DKPP

Proposed Reforms	Substance	Requirements	Urgency
Strengthening the DKPP's Investigative Authority	The DKPP should be granted the authority to proactively investigate alleged violations without waiting for a complaint	The Election Law needs to be revised	High
Early detection system for ethical violations	An AI-based digital platform to detect patterns of unethical behavior by election officials	Technical regulations are needed	Moderate
Inter-agency data integration	Coordination between the DKPP, Bawaslu, and KPU regarding an integrated database of violations	Requires an MoU and regulations	High
Strengthening integrity-based recruitment	Implementation of stricter integrity standards in the selection of regional KPU/Bawaslu members	Revisions to PKPU and Perbawaslu are needed	High

Ongoing ethics education	Mandatory and periodic training on the code of ethics for all election officials	Requires a budget and curriculum	Immediately
Transparency of DKPP decisions	Digital publication of all DKPP decisions; accessible and downloadable by the public	DKPP regulations are needed	Immediately
Protection for complainants	Mechanisms to protect the identity and safety of those reporting violations of the code of ethics	Regulations are needed	In Progress

B. Strengthening the Ethical Culture of Election Administrators

Beyond structural reforms, the most fundamental aspect is the transformation of the ethical culture among election administrators. Institutional reforms will not be effective unless accompanied by a change in mindset and the internalization of KEPP values by every individual administrator. Some steps that can be taken:

1. Comprehensive pre-service ethics training program: Before being sworn in, every candidate for the KPU and Bawaslu at all levels must undergo an intensive ethics training program and be tested on their understanding of the KEPP.
2. Ethics mentoring system: Experienced KPU and Bawaslu members with a proven track record of integrity are paired as ethics mentors for new members at the same or lower levels.
3. Integrity-Based Performance Evaluation: The performance evaluation system for election administrators must include the dimensions of integrity and compliance with the KEPP as components carrying significant weight.
4. Character-Based Recruitment: The selection process for KPU and Bawaslu members must incorporate a more in-depth assessment of character and integrity, rather than being based solely on technical competence.

C. Inter-Institutional Coordination within the Election Oversight Ecosystem

The effectiveness of KEPP enforcement cannot be separated from the quality of the overall election oversight ecosystem. The DKPP, Bawaslu, KPK, and other oversight institutions need to establish more effective coordination mechanisms:

- Information-sharing protocols: Bawaslu and DKPP need to establish systematic mechanisms for sharing information regarding election officials with a history of violations, to prevent such individuals from holding office again at other levels or in other regions.
- Coordination with the KPK for violations involving corruption: KEPP violations that indicate corruption—such as the acceptance of gratuities—need to be coordinated with the KPK so they can be addressed in accordance with their respective legal jurisdictions.
- Integrated reporting mechanism: The public needs a clear, single point of contact for reporting various types of election violations, which are then automatically forwarded to the appropriate authorities.

VIII. Conclusion

Based on the analysis conducted, this article draws the following conclusions:

1. DKPP data for 2024—with 790 complaints regarding the 2024 election, 983 total complaints for the 2024–2025 period, and 76 permanent dismissals—provides an honest reflection of the state of integrity among Indonesia's election administrators, which remains far from ideal. These figures are not merely statistics but concrete signs of institutional vulnerabilities that must be addressed immediately.

2. The DKPP Chair's acknowledgment that the 2024 Election "cannot yet be categorized as good" is a statement carrying immense institutional weight. This statement should serve as the basis for a comprehensive evaluation by all stakeholders—not only the DKPP, but also the KPU, Bawaslu, the government, the DPR, and civil society.
3. The rising trend of non-phase-specific ethical violations following the 2024 General Election indicates that issues regarding the integrity of election administrators are structural and cultural in nature, not merely situational. Effective management requires simultaneous intervention at the levels of recruitment, training, oversight, and enforcement of sanctions.
4. The DKPP has demonstrated courage in imposing firm sanctions, including permanent dismissal of 76 election officials. However, the DKPP's effectiveness remains limited by the lack of proactive investigative authority and the fragmentation of the broader election oversight system.
5. The necessary reforms encompass three layers: normative reform (revision of the Election Law and related regulations), institutional reform (strengthening the DKPP's capacity and authority), and cultural reform (transforming the ethical culture of election officials). These three layers must be addressed simultaneously and consistently to bring about meaningful and sustainable change.

Ultimately, the integrity of election administrators is a non-negotiable prerequisite for elections with integrity, and elections with integrity are a non-negotiable prerequisite for a dignified democracy. The DKPP's 2024 data serves as a clear warning: Indonesia still has a great deal of work to do to ensure that its election administrators—at every level and in every corner of the archipelago—are truly trustworthy to carry out the extraordinary constitutional mandate of determining who has the right to govern this country.

ORCID

Irmanjaya Thaher 

References

- Bawaslu RI. (2024). Laporan Hasil Pengawasan Pemilu 2024. Jakarta: Bawaslu RI.
- Birch, Sarah. (2011). Electoral Malpractice. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- DKPP RI. (2024). Himpunan Putusan DKPP Tahun 2024. Jakarta: Sekretariat DKPP RI.
- DKPP RI. (2025). Laporan Kinerja Dewan Kehormatan Penyelenggara Pemilu Tahun 2024. Jakarta: DKPP RI.
- IDEA International. (2014). Electoral Justice: The International IDEA Handbook. Stockholm: International IDEA.
- Katz, Richard S. (1997). Democracy and Elections. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- KPU RI. (2024). Laporan Akhir Penyelenggaraan Pemilu Serentak 2024. Jakarta: KPU RI.
- Lehoucq, Fabrice. (2003). Electoral Fraud: Causes, Types, and Consequences. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 6, 233–256.
- Norris, Pippa. (2015). Why Elections Fail. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Peraturan Bersama KPU, Bawaslu, dan DKPP tentang Kode Etik Penyelenggara Pemilihan Umum.
- Peraturan DKPP Nomor 2 Tahun 2017 tentang Pedoman Beracara Kode Etik Penyelenggara Pemilihan Umum.
- Perdana, Aditya & Hidayat, Syahrul. (2020). Integritas Pemilu Indonesia: Evaluasi Penyelenggaraan Pemilu Serentak 2019. Jakarta: Puskapol UI.
- Rachma, Aulia. (2023). Penegakan Kode Etik Penyelenggara Pemilu oleh DKPP. *Jurnal Hukum Pemilu*, 4(1), 45–67.
- Schedler, Andreas (Ed.). (2006). Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.
- Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945.

Undang-Undang Nomor 10 Tahun 2016 tentang Perubahan Kedua atas UU No. 1 Tahun 2015 tentang Pemilihan Gubernur, Bupati, dan Wali Kota.

Undang-Undang Nomor 7 Tahun 2017 tentang Pemilihan Umum.