

Equal Opportunity Policy for Persons with Disabilities



**HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
HEAD OFFICE, NABARD**

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Equal Opportunity Policy for Persons with Disabilities

1. Introduction

“The Rights of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016” was enacted by the Parliament in the Sixty Sixth Year of the Republic of India and the said Act came into effect from 19 April 2017. Further, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017 was notified on 15 June 2017.

Section 21 of the said Act requires every establishment to notify an Equal Opportunity Policy detailing measures proposed to be taken by it in pursuance of the provisions contained in Chapter IV of the Act and to register a copy of the said Policy with the Chief Commissioner or the State Commissioner, as the case may be.

Accordingly, the Equal Opportunity Policy has been formulated for implementation in the Bank of the various provisions of ‘The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017.

2. Short Title

The Policy will be called be as Equal Opportunity Policy of the National Bank for Persons with Disabilities.

3. Objectives

With a commitment to foster Equal Employment Opportunities and Non- Discrimination, NABARD has been practicing the provisions of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) Act 2016 in spirit through its various interventions.

The policy formulated in accordance with the provisions of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) Act 2016 will ensure following objectives :-

- a) To safeguard the interests of the Persons with Disabilities (PwD).
- b) To provide an environment of equal opportunity and non-discrimination to the Persons with Disabilities (PwD).
- c) To build an inclusive and equitable workforce in the Bank.
- d) To implement the explicit provisions of Right of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act 2016 in letter and in spirit.

4. Applicability

- a) Applicable to “person with disability” and “person with benchmark disability”
- b) As per section 2(s) of the Act, “person with disability” means a person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with barriers, hinders his full and effective participation in society equally with others.
- c) As per Section 2 (r) of the act “person with benchmark disability” means a person with not less than forty percent of a specified disability where specified disability has not been

defined in measurable terms and includes a person with disability where specified disability has been defined in measurable terms, as certified by the certifying authority

- d) This policy shall cover all employees with Benchmark Disabilities including those employees who acquire disability (PwDs) during their tenure with the National Bank.
- e) This policy shall apply to all aspects of employment including recruitment, training, working conditions, transfers, posting, promotion and employee benefits and allowances.

5. Equal Opportunity for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities

Consistent with the provisions of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 and NABARD (Staff) Rules 1982, the Bank focuses on the implementation of the following interventions:-

5.1 Employment opportunities for PwBDs

- a) The Persons with Benchmark Disabilities (PwBDs) enjoy the right to equality, life with dignity and respect for his or her integrity equally with others.
- b) The Bank follows the applicable reservation guidelines in respect of Persons with Benchmark Disabilities (PwBD) issued by GoI from time to time.
- c) The Bank ensures appointment of, not less than four percent of the total number of vacancies in the cadre strength in each group of posts, to be filled with Persons with Benchmark Disabilities (PwBD).
- d) The manner of selection of Persons with Benchmark Disabilities (PwBDs) for various posts, is as per the prescribed GoI guidelines.
- e) While issuing advertisements to fill up vacancies, Bank indicates the number of vacancies reserved for each class of Persons with Benchmark Disabilities (RwPD).
- f) The Bank maintains a reservation rosters for the purpose of calculation of vacancies for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities (PwBD) as per the instructions issued by Government of India (GoI) from time to time.
- g) The Bank does not dispense with or reduce in rank, an employee who acquires a disability during his or her service:
 - i. provided that, if an employee after acquiring disability is not suitable for the post he was holding, shall be shifted to some other post with the same pay scale and service benefits.
 - ii. provided further that if it is not possible to adjust the employee against any post, he may be kept on a supernumerary post until a suitable post is available or he attains the age of superannuation, whichever is earlier.
- h) The Bank does not deny any opportunity to Persons with Benchmark Disabilities (PwBDs), merely on the ground of disability.

5.2 Identification of posts suitable for PwDs and the manner of implementation of reservation for persons with benchmark disabilities

- a) NABARD has identified the posts suitable for persons with benchmark disabilities and the same are published on its official website i.e. www.nabard.org. The posts have been identified in conformity with DEPwD notification dated 04 January 2021.
- b) The vacancies are filled through open market competition, wherein 4% reservation to PwBDs is provided. If vacancies of particular category of PwBD remain unfilled, the interchange of such vacancies is done as per the procedure set out in Section 34 of PWD Act and subsequent instructions issued by DoPT vide OM No.36035/02/2017-Estt (Res) dated 15th January 2018.

5.3 Reasonable accommodation in the selection of PwDs for various posts

- a) Direct Recruitment is done on all India basis, through open advertisement. The selection is done based on competitive written test and interview, wherever applicable.
- b) The candidates must fill the online application form for the direct recruitment, wherein they are required to indicate details about the type of disability (temporary/permanent), percentage of disability, category and nature of disability, requisition for compensatory time in the exam, eligibility of candidate under sec 2(s) of the RPwD Act for provision of scribe etc.
- c) Enquiries about disability are made to ascertain the legitimacy of the claim and accordingly secure reasonable accommodation i.e. eligibility for reservation, provision of scribe, provision of compensatory time.
- d) To ensure adequate representation in the workforce, additional concessions like exemption from payment of application fee and relaxation in age & educational qualification criteria are provided to PwBDs.
- e) Bank maintains records of all the employees wherein details such as number of PwD employees, date of joining the services of NABARD, name, gender, address, nature of disability, name of department/regional office etc. are specified.

5.4 Employment-related training facility

- a) Bank imparts special training to Persons with Benchmark Disabilities (PwBD), as required.
- b) Bank provides training to its employees to ensure necessary skills and knowledge for career advancement. Induction training, department specific desk training and field exposure as attachment to District Development Offices of NABARD is provided to PwBDs inducted as Direct Recruits.
- c) All employees are provided with in service trainings on various subjects. Officers are deputed for such trainings based on their need as well as requirement of the respective department.
- d) All employees are provided training for technological adaptation. PwD employees are

also provided technological assistance wherever required.

- e) Pre-promotion training is provided to PwD employees wherever reservation is applicable.
- f) PwBD employees are aided by the experienced employees for effective discharge of duties.

5.5 Facilities and amenities provided to persons with disabilities (PwDs)

- a) NABARD ensures availability of physical infrastructure suitable to the needs of the PwDs.
- b) Ramps with handrails and mid landings have been provided at the building entrance and elevated locations/ level changes inside the building for barrier free movement of wheelchairs.
- c) Visual signage has been installed on all floors for easy access of departments and common areas such as drinking water, canteens etc.
- d) Designated locations near to the entrance have been earmarked for differently abled persons working in the departments for their easy access to passages and other facilities as also evacuation during emergencies.
- e) Specifically designed toilets with grab bars and other features for differently abled persons have been provided in the toilet blocks.
- f) Lifts are provided with accessible features such as Push buttons with braille in lift control panel, voice announcement feature, landing indication panel at all levels with audio signals, Handrails and mirrors in the lift for wheelchair users.
- g) In offices running from rented premises, necessary assistance is provided to PwDs as per requirement.
- h) Digital accessibility is also prioritized, with NABARD ensuring that its website is compliant with accessibility standards and guidelines. Accordingly, NABARD has applied for STQC Certification and has also appointed an accessibility auditor.

5.6 Promotions

- a) Reservation in promotions is provided from Group C to Group B (ACT), Group B to Grade A i.e. lowest rung of Group A, in accordance with the guidelines issued by DoPT vide O.M. No. 36012/1/2020 – Estt (Res.II) dated 17.05.2022.
- b) Compliance to instructions issued by DoPT/CCPD in respect of PwDs is ensured.
- c) The Bank does not deny promotion to a person merely on the ground of disability.

5.7 Preference in transfer and posting

- a) The Bank gives preference in place of posting at the time of transfer/promotion to the persons with disability, subject to administrative constraints.
- b) In the Bank's Annual Transfer policy, clause for consideration of requests for

transfer/retention of officers with disabilities based on GOI guidelines and within the overall administrative convenience of the Bank, is indicated.

5.8 Accommodation for caregivers

- a) Scholarship schemes for ward of employees i.e. NABARD Silver Jubilee Year Scholarship Scheme and National Bank's Bharat Ratna Dr. B R Ambedkar Centenary Year Scholarship Scheme are available for differently abled child/ children of employees.
- b) Requests for transfer/retention of officers having children with disabilities/officers having dependents with critical illness are considered based on GOI guidelines and within the overall administrative convenience of the Bank.

5.9 Special Leave, preference in allotment of residential accommodation, other facilities

- a) Subject to exigencies of work, Special Casual Leave for not more than four days in a calendar year is provided to differently abled employees for specific requirements relating to the disability of the employee.
- b) Further, Special Casual Leave for not more than ten days in a calendar year is granted to differently abled employees for participating in the conferences / workshops / seminars / trainings related to Disability and Development organised by specific authorities as mentioned in the circular.
- c) Conveyance Allowance is granted to the blind/orthopedically handicapped employees. This allowance is also extended to deaf and dumb employees of the bank subject to their providing a certificate from the Head of the ENT Department of a Government Civil Hospital indicating the disability.
- d) In terms of NABARD Pension Regulations 1993, if the son or daughter of an employee is suffering from any disorder or disability of mind or is physically crippled or disabled so as to render him or her unable to earn a living, the family pension is made available to such son/daughter for life in accordance with the instructions issued by Bank from time to time.
- e) As a part of Leave Travel Concession, a visually impaired employee can take an escort (not more than one) but the expenditure incurred by him /her on own and escort's travel is to the extent of his / her own entitlement by admissible class of travel for the prescribed distance, within the overall instructions issued by Bank from time to time. Such relaxation is also extended to those orthopedically handicapped employees who are paid conveyance allowance under the Scheme for visually impaired and orthopedically handicapped employees as indicated at 5.8 (c) above.

5.10 Provision for assistive devices, barrier-free accessibility

- a) The Bank ensures a barrier free and conducive environment for employees with disability, with provision for accessible environment and assistive devices.

- b) Appropriate facilities and amenities are provided to Persons with Disabilities (PWD) to enable them to effectively discharge their duties in the Bank.
- c) To assist the visually impaired employees in discharging the functions, JAWS software is used.
- d) The broad guidelines for procurement of IT hardware, software and services cover detailed guidelines for aids for PwDs. The guidelines are reviewed annually based on the feedback obtained. The guidelines entail provision for enhancement/upgradation of the software from time to time.

5.11 Sensitisation

- a) To foster an inclusive workplace culture, rights and accommodations available to employees with disabilities, are secured to them in implementation of policies.
- b) Bank make efforts to provides discrimination free opportunities to all the employees.

5.12 Appointment of liaison officer

- a) NABARD has appointed a Chief Liaison Officer (CLO) for PwDs who ensures that reservation rules are being followed in direct recruitment as well as promotions.
- b) Details of CLO are provided on NABARD's website i.e. www.nabard.org (Path – About Us --> HO Departments --> Human Resources and Management Department --> Important related links/information --> Contact details of CLOs for SC/ST/OBC/PwD/EXS/EWS).

5.13 Procedure for grievance redressal

- a) The Bank has put in place an appropriate Grievance Redressal Mechanism including constitution of a Redressal Committee, appointment of Grievance Officer and maintenance of complaint registers to ensure that grievances of the PwBD are dealt with in a fair manner.
- b) Composition of the Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) for employees with disabilities is as follows :-
 - Chief General Manager, HRMD (Chairperson)
 - General Manager, HRMD-Personnel Administration Division (member)
 - General Manager, HRMD-Personnel Policy Division (member)
 - An officer representing employees with disabilities.
- c) The Committee's mandate includes addressing grievances related to working conditions, denial of eligible facilities, workplace discrimination, and harassment faced by employees with disabilities.
- d) Any person aggrieved with any matter relating to discrimination in employment against any person with disability may file a complaint with the Grievance Redressal Officer.

5.14 Responsibility

- a) Every employee of the Bank is responsible to give effect to this policy.
- b) Each office of the Bank assures compliance with applicable provisions of policy.
- c) The Policy shall be reviewed by the Bank annually.
- d) Any employee who violates this policy, or in any manner discriminates with any person with disability or renders any harassment to such person shall be dealt with under the NABARD (Staff) Rules 1982 read with provisions contained in RPwD Act, 2016.

5.15 Communication of policy:

- a) This Policy shall be available on the Bank's website and Intranet.
- b) The policy shall be available in English and Hindi language. It will also be available in braille format.
- c) All recruitment/employment advertisements shall indicate that the Bank is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
