

DESTITUTE PERSONS ACT  
(CHAPTER 78, SECTION 9)

DESTITUTE PERSONS (WELFARE HOMES) RULES

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[1st May 1989]

**Citation**

1. These Rules may be cited as the Destitute Persons (Welfare Homes) Rules.

## PART I

## BOARD OF VISITORS

**Composition of Board**

2. The number of members of any Board of Visitors appointed by the Minister under these Rules (referred to in these Rules as the Board) shall be at the discretion of the Minister subject to a minimum of 7 members and a maximum of 12 members at any time.

**Functions**

3. The Board shall satisfy itself that the health, maintenance, recreation and management of the residents of welfare homes are satisfactory and that efficiency and a good standard are maintained in each welfare home, but shall not be concerned with the general administration of the welfare homes. The Board shall make such recommendations to the Director-General as it thinks fit.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

**Tenure of office**

4.—(1) Each member of the Board shall hold office for a period of not more than two years from the date of his appointment and shall be eligible for reappointment on completion of that period if he has not

resigned during his period of office or if his appointment has not been revoked by the Minister under paragraph (2).

(2) The Minister may at any time revoke the appointment of any member of the Board.

(3) A person appointed as a member of the Board shall cease to hold the appointment on his resignation or if he is absent from 3 consecutive meetings without reasonable cause.

(4) Any vacancy occurring in the membership of the Board shall be filled by a fresh appointment made by the Minister, and the person appointed to fill such vacancy shall hold office for so long as the member in whose place he is appointed would have held office.

(5) The Board shall not be incapable of acting by reason only of there being any vacancy in the membership of the Board.

### **Chairman**

5.—(1) The chairman of the Board shall be appointed by the Minister from amongst the members of the Board.

(2) The chairman of the Board shall ordinarily preside at all meetings of the Board.

### **Deputy chairman**

6. A deputy chairman shall be elected by the Board from amongst its members and the deputy chairman shall, in the absence of the chairman, preside at meetings of the Board and when so doing may exercise all the powers and functions of the chairman.

### **Secretary**

7.—(1) The Director-General shall appoint a secretary of the Board.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

(2) The secretary shall not be a member of the Board or vote on any question with respect to any of the functions, duties and powers of the Board.

## **Meetings**

**8.**—(1) Subject to these Rules, the Board shall meet at least once in 3 months and at such place and shall make such arrangements as to the transaction and management of its business as it considers proper.

(2) At least 7 days' notice in writing shall be given of meetings of the Board and the notice shall be signed by the secretary or such other person as the chairman may authorise in that behalf.

(3) The quorum at all meetings of the Board shall be 5 members present, including the chairman or in his absence the deputy chairman, and no business shall be transacted or discussed unless there is a quorum.

## **Voting**

**9.** All questions to be determined at any meeting of the Board shall be decided by a majority of votes, and in the event of there being an equality of votes, the chairman or in his absence the deputy chairman shall have a casting vote.

## **Staff members of welfare home may be invited to Board meeting**

**10.** Staff members of a welfare home may attend meetings of the Board at the invitation of the Board.

## **Visits to welfare homes**

**11.**—(1) The Board shall arrange, by roster or otherwise, visits by members of the Board to each welfare home at intervals of not less than once a month.

(2) Members of the Board shall, on every visit, hear any complaint which any resident may wish to make to them.

## PART II

## REVIEW COMMITTEE

**Composition of Review Committee**

12. The number of members of any Review Committee appointed by the Minister (referred to in these Rules as the Committee) shall be at the discretion of the Minister subject to a minimum of 3 members and a maximum of 6 members at any time.

**Functions**

13. The Committee shall —

- (a) review the case of every resident in the welfare home at intervals of not more than 12 months to assess his suitability for discharge from the welfare home;
- (b) ensure that every resident is given the opportunity to rehabilitate and prepare himself for eventual discharge;
- (c) review the progress made by those who have been placed under the general supervision and care of a welfare officer or any person appointed by the Director-General under rule 27; and

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

- (d) when necessary, direct that any information furnished to or obtained by the Committee be given to the Director-General.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

**Tenure of office**

14.—(1) Members of the Committee shall be appointed for a term not exceeding two years and shall be eligible for reappointment.

(2) Members may at any time be removed from office by the Minister, and they may at any time resign from their office after giving notice in writing addressed to the Minister.

### **Quorum**

**15.** No business shall be transacted at any meeting unless 3 or more members of the Committee are present.

### **Chairman**

**16.—(1)** The Committee shall appoint one of its members to be the chairman.

(2) The chairman of the Committee shall ordinarily preside at all meetings of the Committee.

### **Absence of chairman at meetings**

**17.** If the chairman is absent from any meeting of the Committee at the time appointed for the holding of the meeting, the members present shall elect a person from amongst themselves to act as chairman at the meeting.

### **Procedure at meetings**

**18.** The Committee may determine its own procedure for the conduct of its meetings.

### **Recommendation to be signed**

**19.** A recommendation of the Committee may be signed by the chairman or a member of the Committee.

## **PART III**

### **SUPERINTENDENT**

#### **Responsibilities of Superintendent**

**20.—(1)** The Superintendent shall be responsible for the supervision and management of the welfare home under his charge, and for the discipline, care and welfare of the residents.

(2) The Superintendent shall, with the approval of the Director-General —

- (a) determine the duties of other members of the staff of the welfare home under his charge;

- (b) draw up programmes for the care, employment and recreation of the residents;
- (c) draw up fire safety measures and fire-drill orders; and
- (d) determine and draw up such other duties, programmes and schedules as the Director-General may, from time to time, decide.

[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]

(3) The Superintendent shall maintain the following records:

- (a) a register of admissions to and discharges from the welfare home;
- (b) a case record on every resident;
- (c) a property book in which shall be recorded particulars of all personal effects handed in for safe-keeping by residents and a brief account of the manner in which all such personal effects are disposed of by the Superintendent on the death or discharge of the resident;
- (d) a discipline book in which shall be recorded every disciplinary action imposed on any resident and its particulars;
- (e) a record book of all articles made in the welfare home and of all sales of such articles;
- (f) a record of all gifts received for use in the welfare home;
- (g) a book for the recording of comments by members of the Board; and
- (h) such other records as are required by these Rules or as may be determined from time to time by the Director-General.

[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]

(4) The Superintendent shall be responsible for submitting such returns, statements and other information relating to the welfare home as may be required from time to time by the Director-General or the Board.

[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]



## PART IV

## ADMISSION

**Persons who shall reside in welfare homes**

**21.—**(1) No person shall reside in a welfare home unless he has been admitted in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

(2) The Superintendent shall admit into the welfare home under his charge any person who is referred to him by the Director-General pursuant to section 3(2) of the Act.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

(3) A warrant by the Director-General under section 3(4) of the Act requiring a person to reside in a welfare home shall be in such form as the Director-General may determine.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

**Procedure in case of person voluntarily seeking admission into welfare home**

**22.—**(1) Every person voluntarily seeking admission into a welfare home shall make an application in writing to the Director-General who shall cause an investigation to be made into the mode of life and antecedents of such person to ascertain whether such person is a destitute person.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

(2) If after making such investigation the Director-General is satisfied that such person is a destitute person within the meaning of the Act, he shall require the person to undertake in writing that, if admitted, he will abide by the conditions of admission imposed under the Act or any rules made thereunder.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

(3) Every written undertaking shall be sufficient authority for the Superintendent to admit the destitute person concerned into the welfare home.

**Personal effects**

**23.—**(1) Every destitute person admitted into a welfare home, whether on his own application or otherwise, shall on admission

declare to the Superintendent all personal effects brought in by him to the welfare home.

(2) The Superintendent may, in his discretion, require such personal effects to be placed in safe-keeping or may allow the person to retain them.

### **Disinfection and medical examination**

**24.**—(1) Every destitute person admitted into a welfare home shall, on admission, be subject to disinfection of his person and medical examination by the medical officer of the welfare home.

(2) Any personal effects of such person shall, where the medical officer of the welfare home is of the opinion that they are infectious, be destroyed.

## PART V DISCHARGE

### **Definition of care-person**

**25.** In this Part, “care-person” means a relative or friend of a destitute person willing and able, in the opinion of the Director-General, to provide care and support for the destitute person.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

### **Discharge from welfare home**

**26.**—(1) The Director-General may on the advice of the Committee order the discharge of a resident from a welfare home either conditionally or unconditionally.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

(2) A discharge under paragraph (1) may be a discharge to the care of a care-person upon the care-person’s execution of a bond in such form as the Director-General may determine.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

**Supervision of discharged persons**

**27.** A person discharged under rule 26, whether or not to the care of a care-person, may, at the discretion of the Director-General, be placed under the general supervision of a welfare officer or any person appointed by the Director-General.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

**Order of discharge**

**28.** An order of discharge shall be in such form as the Director-General may determine.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

**Recall of destitute person to welfare home**

**29.** If it appears to the Director-General that any condition of discharge of a destitute person has been infringed or not complied with, the Director-General may rescind the order of discharge and recall the destitute person to a welfare home to be detained, and shall inform the Committee of the circumstances leading to the recall at its next meeting.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

**Discharge to be in accordance with Act**

**30.** No resident shall be discharged from a welfare home unless the discharge is in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

**PART VI**

**FACILITIES FOR RESIDENTS**

**Provision of bed and personal effects**

**31.** Each resident shall be provided with a separate bed and shall be supplied with personal effects on a scale approved by the Director-General from time to time.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

**Provision of food**

**32.**—(1) Each resident shall be supplied with food on a dietary scale approved by the Director-General from time to time.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

(2) A copy of the approved dietary scale shall be kept in the office of the welfare home and shall be available for inspection by any person at any time.

**Arrangements for religious observance**

**33.** So far as is practicable, arrangements shall be made for religious observance according to the religious persuasion of each resident.

**Rehabilitative training**

**34.**—(1) Residents may, subject to the recommendation of the medical officer, be encouraged to undergo a suitable form of rehabilitative training within the welfare home.

(2) Residents undergoing rehabilitative training may be paid remuneration in respect of the training at such rate as may from time to time be determined by the Director-General.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

**Production of goods by residents**

**35.** Arrangements shall be made for the sale of the goods produced by residents and remuneration may be paid to residents in respect of the goods at such rate as may from time to time be determined by the Director-General.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

**Granting of leave for employment**

**36.**—(1) The Director-General may grant a resident leave for employment with such employers as the Director-General may approve.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

- (2) A resident who has been granted leave under paragraph (1) —
- (a) shall not leave the welfare home without the approval of the officer on duty;
  - (b) shall not be absent from his work without good cause;
  - (c) shall return to the welfare home immediately after completing his work for the day and report to the officer on duty;
  - (d) shall not consume, or have in his possession, any drug or alcoholic drinks; and
  - (e) shall not behave in a disorderly manner at his work-place.

**Resident may be required to contribute towards his maintenance**

**37.** Any resident who receives remuneration from rehabilitative training or employment may be required by the Director-General to contribute such amount as the Director-General may determine towards his maintenance in the welfare home.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

**PART VII**

**MANAGEMENT OF RESIDENTS**

**Residents to obey lawful orders**

**38.** Every resident shall obey the lawful orders of the welfare home staff.

**Residents not to solicit for food, clothing, money, etc.**

**39.** Residents shall not be allowed to solicit food, clothing or money, either within or outside the welfare home.

**Superintendent's orders**

**40.** The Superintendent shall from time to time issue orders for the purpose of managing the residents in a welfare home under his charge.

### **Residents not to leave welfare home**

**41.** Residents shall not be allowed to leave the welfare home except for purposes approved by the Superintendent.

### **Absence for more than 24 hours**

**42.** Where a resident has been absent from a welfare home without authority for more than 24 hours, the Superintendent shall report the absence to the nearest police station and to the Director-General.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

### **Discipline**

**43.** The discipline of a welfare home shall be maintained by the Superintendent and the staff and shall be promoted by a system of rewards and privileges.

### **Punishment for indiscipline**

**44.—(1)** Where punishment is necessary for the maintenance of discipline, it should be instituted at the discretion of the Superintendent who shall record his decision in the discipline book.

(2) The Superintendent shall adopt one of the following measures of punishment for the maintenance of discipline:

- (a) forfeiture or curtailment, for a specified period, of rewards or privileges or deprivation of recreation for a specified period;
- (b) suspension of pocket money or payment for work for a specified period; or
- (c) separation from other residents, except that any such separation shall only be imposed in exceptional cases and subject to the following conditions:
  - (i) the reasons and circumstances for such separation shall be recorded in the punishment book by the Superintendent himself;
  - (ii) the room used for the purpose shall have natural light and be airy and kept lighted after dark;

- (iii) the person being punished shall be kept occupied with a pastime;
- (iv) means of communication with a member of the staff shall be provided; and
- (v) if the separation is to be continued for more than 24 hours, the circumstances shall be reported immediately to the Director-General and his approval in writing obtained.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

### **Corporal punishment not to be administered**

**45.—**(1) No corporal punishment shall be administered in a welfare home and any member of the staff who commits a breach of this rule shall be liable to disciplinary action.

(2) In paragraph (1), “corporal punishment” includes striking, cuffing, shaking or any other form of physical violence.

## **PART VIII**

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

#### **Reports of death, serious disease and accident**

**46.** The Superintendent shall report the death of any resident and any case of serious disease or accident affecting any resident to the medical officer of the welfare home and to the Director-General and, in the case of any death, the Superintendent shall forthwith inform the nearest police station.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

#### **Director-General to ensure welfare homes are managed in accordance with Rules**

**47.—**(1) The Director-General shall ensure by visits and inspections that each welfare home is managed in accordance with these Rules.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

(2) The Director-General shall consider every recommendation made by the Board under rule 3 and may in his discretion implement or cause to be implemented any such recommendation if he is of the opinion that the circumstances so warrant.

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

*[S 522/2020 wef 01/07/2020]*

*[G.N. No. S 179/89]*



LEGISLATIVE HISTORY  
DESTITUTE PERSONS (WELFARE HOMES) RULES  
(CHAPTER 78, R 1)

This Legislative History is provided for the convenience of users of the Destitute Persons (Welfare Homes) Rules. It is not part of these Rules.

**1. G. N. No. S 179/1989 — Destitute Persons (Welfare Homes) Rules 1989**

Date of commencement : 1 May 1989

**2. G.N. No. S 522/2020 — Destitute Persons (Welfare Homes) (Amendment) Rules 2020**

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