

THE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 1995

The Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995.

This is an act to give effect to the proclamation and equality of the people with disability in the Asian & Pacific region. This PWD act 1995 was implemented in the State of Punjab in February 1996.

Disability:- means

- a) Blindness
- b) Low vision
- c) Leprosy cured
- d) Hearing impairment
- e) Locomotor disability
- f) Mental Retardation
- g) Mental illness

Persons with Disability:- means a person suffering from not less than 40% of any disability as certified by a Medical Authority. Under PWD Act 1995, the disabilities mentioned above have been included in order to enable the persons suffering from disabilities to derive certain benefits/ concessions provided by the State Govt./ U.T. Administration/ Central Ministries/ Department and Local Authorities.

The concessions are such as 3% reservation in jobs, reservation in admission to educational institutions, preference in allotment of land, house sites, place of business, concession in bus, rail and airline fares, income tax exemptions for the handicapped. All these concession/ facilities can only be availed if the persons who wishes to avail these, has a disability certificate. In order to be eligible for any concession/ benefits, the minimum degree of disability should be 40%.

The authorised certifying authority will be a medical board at the district level, sub-divisional level and block level. The board will consist of the Chief Medical Officer/ Senior Medical Officer at sub divisional level civil hospital and another specialist in specified field viz. Eye Surgeon, ENT Surgeon, Orthopaedic Surgeon and Psychiatrist.

IMPLEMENTATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACT 1995

Section 25 of PWD Act

a) Survey of disabled

As per 2001 census, data released by Directorate of Census Operations, Punjab, total population of Punjab is 24358999. Total disabled population of Punjab is 4,24,523(1.74%). No survey of disabled population has been conducted in Punjab after 2001.

The category wise detail is as follows:-

Sr. No.	Category	Number	%age
i)	Hearing impairment(Deaf)	17,348	4.1
ii)	Speech Disabled(Dumb)	22,756	5.4
iii)	Visually Disabled(Blind)	170,853	40.2
iv)	Locomotor Disabled(Physically Handicapped)	149,758	35.3
v)	Mentally Disabled	63,808	15
	Total	424,523	

IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE

In the National Policy the main action related to health department is issue of Disability Certificates. The persons with disabilities obtain the disability certificates without any difficulty in the shortest possible time. The total number of disability certificates issued in Punjab from 1.1.96 till 31.10.2009 are 2,81,113. These certificates are issued on every Monday and Wednesday in all the districts, sub divisional level hospitals and block level health centres. In addition to these medical camps in rural and urban areas are arranged to issue disability certificates. In year 2008-09 upto 31.10.2009, 336 medical camps were held in the State.

b) Promote various methods of preventing disability:

To prevent disability, various National Programmes which are programmes of Govt. of India are going on in the Health Department of State i.e.

1. National Programme for Control of Blindness

2. National Pulse Polio Eradication Programme
3. National Leprosy Elimination Programme
4. National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme

Similarly, to control the incidence of mental retardation in new born children, there is increased focus on Maternal and Child Health through early registration of pregnancy, three Ante-Natal check ups of mothers for early detection of avoidable risks during pregnancy to ensure normal and healthy delivery. The programmes also impress upon Institutional Deliveries to decrease the incidence of birth asphyxia in new born to control mental retardation.

c) Screen Children every year to identify at risk cases :-

In school health programme, school children are regularly examined for health check up. Disabled children are identified and referred to hospitals for further management. According to reports sent on disability certificates of the children upto 14 yrs. of age issued by Civil Surgeons of districts, the numbers of disabled children from year 2001 till 31.10.2009 are 30856. By organising special campaign, in the months of September and October of 2008 & 2009, disability certificates have been issued to school children in Punjab.

d) Provide Facilities to Train PHC staff

668 PHC Medical Officers and 9 Master Trainers have been imparted training in disability at vocational Rehabilitation Training Centre Ludhiana, which is a recognised Centre by Rehabilitation Council of India, New Delhi.

e) Sponsor awareness campaign

Special Medical & Health Education Camps are organised from time to time in which people are educated about general hygiene, sanitation and preventive measures such as role of vaccines in preventing diseases, role of nutrition, iron & folic acid in pregnancy, role of iodised salt, Vitamin A etc.

f) Measure for mother and child care

Family Welfare department provides ante-natal, natal and postnatal services. All the pregnant mothers are registered in the first trimester and given Iron and Folic Acid Tablets to prevent anaemia. Inj. Tetanus Toxoid is also given to pregnant mothers to prevent Tetanus. Women are also advised about diet during pregnancy

and lactation. Efforts are made to promote Institutional deliveries. From the year 2005-06 under National Rural Health Mission, Govt. of India has emphasised on institutional deliveries and care of new born. Govt. is laying main stress to reduce maternal mortality rate and infant mortality rate. 2.41Lakh institutional deliveries (Government and Private) were conducted out of total 4lakh deliveries in the state during year 2008-09.

g) Educate the Public through the Pre-schools, Schools, PHCs, Village Level Workers and Anganwadi and Anganwadi workers: -

During block level meetings, Health education is provided to the community. Similarly during school health programme, children are educated about hygiene and nutrition.

h) Create awareness amongst the masses through Television, Radio and other media

Awareness is created from time to time through print and electronic media.

Performance under PWD Act (Year 2008-09)

		<u>2006-07</u>	<u>2007-08</u>	<u>2008-09 upto 31.03.09</u>
1	No. of Disability Certificates issued	30768	20338	22094
2	No. of Disabled children	4660	3757	4634
3	No. of Camps held in the year	161	131	312
4	No. of Persons examined in Camps	3477	14343	10356
5	No. of Hearing Aids and No. of Assistive Devices distributed	1097	679	765
6	IEC Activities regarding prevention of disability for the year	240	453	504
7	Staff trained in disability prevention at vocational rehabilitation training center Ludhiana	175	342	250