

**GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
INFORMATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT
DISPUR, GUWAHATI-6**

No.IPRD.62/2015/111

Dated Dispur, the 21st October, 2016.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: - Guidelines for regulating the administration of Assam Journalists' Family Benefit Fund and the procedure to be adopted for providing financial assistance under Assam Journalists' Family Benefit Fund Scheme.

Consequent upon the notification issued vide No.IPRD.62/2015/110, dtd.29/02/2016. Notifying the scheme "Assam Journalists' Family Benefit Fund", the following guidelines have been formulated to regulate the administration of the said Fund and the procedure that is to be adopted for providing Financial Assistance under the aforesaid scheme.

Background Concept: The Assam Journalists' Family Benefit Fund is a onetime exgratia relief fund provided as Financial Assistance to the bereaved families of the working journalists upon their untimely death while conducting journalistic pursuits.

"Untimely death" means unnatural death of a journalist occurring as a result of a crime or extremist act or any accident natural or manmade disaster. The families of the journalists who get killed while performing the duties of a journalist as assigned by their respective Media Houses, are to be included in the scheme.

Eligibility:

- (i) A "journalist" as defined should be citizen of India. He/She should be accredited/ recognized journalists as identified by Director of Information & Public Relations (DIPR), Assam under the Rules of the "Assam Press Correspondents (Accreditation/ Recognition) Rules, 1989".
- (ii) Age coverage would be upto 60 years.
- (iii) "Family" for the purpose of this scheme will mean Widow or Widower, Unemployed son below the age of 28 years, Unmarried and Unemployed daughter below the age of 28 years, Dependent Father and Dependent Mother.
- (iv) Assistance will be given to the next-of-kin of the deceased journalist. Financial Assistance to the dependants of deceased journalists will be in the following order of priority:
 - a) Widow or Widower
 - b) Unemployed son, below the age of 28 years
 - c) Unmarried and unemployed daughter below the age of 28 years
 - d) Dependent Father
 - e) Dependent Mother
- (v) The Superintendent of Police shall furnish report about untimely death on duty in respect of the deceased journalist and the I&PR Department shall ensure the claim of the family members on the basis of the report of the Superintendent of Police in respective district.

1. Constitution and Administration of the Fund

The Fund shall be constituted under the Information & Public Relations Department (I&PR) of the Govt. of Assam and shall be administered by the Committee comprising:

- | | | |
|----|---|------------------------------|
| a) | The Minister-in-Charge of Information and Public Relations or his nominee | Chairman |
| b) | The senior-most Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, I&PR Dept. | Vice-Chairman |
| c) | One Representative of the Home Dept., of the rank of Deputy Secy./ Jt. Secy. to the Govt. | Member |
| d) | The Joint Secy. to the Govt., Finance Dept. | Member |
| e) | The Director of Information & Public Relations Department, Assam | Member
Secretary/Convener |
| f) | Two senior journalists to be nominated by Govt. | Member |
| g) | Finance & Accounts Officer of the Directorate, Information & Public Relations, Assam | Treasurer
(Non-voting) |

No TA, DA will be allowed to the members. The Committee shall meet as and when necessary.

2. Procedure for sanction from the scheme :

- (i) Application for grant of financial assistance under these rules shall be submitted to the Convener of the Committee (Director, DIPR) in the form prescribed in Schedule-I, which shall be accompanied by a report in the form prescribed in Schedule-II. Proposals for assistance from the Fund will be initiated by the DIPR, with specific recommendations and supporting documents which shall be placed before the Committee. However in case of urgency/ emergency decision may be taken with the approval of the Chairperson and submit report in the next meeting of the Committee for its approval.
- (ii) The Convener of the Committee (Director, DIPR) may also suo motu put up deserving cases for grant of financial assistance provided that all particulars as per prescribed form in schedule I and II are obtained from the intended beneficiaries.
- (iii) All the applications shall be scrutinized by the committee. In sanctioning the assistance the committee shall take into consideration the financial condition of the applicant (widow/ widower/son/unmarried daughter/ father/ mother) and the assistance likely to be received by him/ her through his/her employer or from other sources. The committee may also decide as to the certificates and other evidences which shall be called for from the applicant before sanction of assistance.
- (iv) Financial assistance shall be provided on the date of issue of the order sanctioning the assistance, unless otherwise specified therein.
- (v) Matters incidental to the scheme covered by these rules which are not specifically provided for in these rules shall be regulated in such manner as may be decided by the Committee.
- (vi) In addition to the conditions prescribed for the consideration of applications for assistance, the Committee may also with prior approval of Government lay down any other condition or guidelines for sanction of assistance subject to the condition that such condition or guidelines are not inconsistent with these guidelines.

(vii) The Chairman of the Committee may sanction interim financial assistance from the fund to meet emergent needs in most deserving cases in anticipation of the approval of the Committee. The Committee may however prescribe the maximum limit that can be sanctioned by the Chairman in such emergent cases.

(viii) The fund shall be jointly operated by the Vice-Chairman and Member Secretary/Convener of the Committee who shall maintain a separate account for the same.

(ix) The account of the fund shall be maintained by the Accounts Branch of the DIPR, under the supervision of the Finance & Accounts Officer of the DIPR, with return to be sent to Financial Adviser, I& PRD periodically.

(x) Periodic Audit may be conducted by the Auditor of AG (Audit).

3. Assistance available under the scheme :

The assistance will be given from the Assam Journalists' Family Benefit Fund as per the following:

No. of years served as accredited/recognized journalist	Eligible amount
3-5	Rs. 1,00,000.00
6-10	Rs. 1, 50,000.00
11-15	Rs. 2, 50,000.00
16-20	Rs. 3, 00,000.00

For any enhancement of financial assistance in future, the I&PR Department will obtain prior approval of the Financial Department.

4. Corpus Fund :

There shall be constituted a Fund called the Assam Journalists' Family Benefit Fund which shall consist of contributions made by the Government of Assam.

5. Financial assistance to the beneficiaries will be made out of the interest income earned against the Corpus Fund of the Assam Journalists' Family Benefit Fund. The savings A/C will be jointly operated by DIPR and FAO of the Directorate of Information & Public Relations. Financial assistance under these rules shall be paid out of the interest accruing to the corpus of the Assam Journalist's Family Benefit Fund. The Committee shall be competent to decide whether any part of the interest remaining unutilised shall be transferred to the corpus of the Fund.

6. The Committee may sanction financial assistance out of the interest accruing to the corpus of the fund in the following cases:

6. (a) In the event of death of a working journalist, a fixed sum of money as determined by the Committee may be paid to the widow and in the event of the deceased not being survived by his widow, equally among the children. (b) In the event the deceased was not married or is not survived by his widow or children, such ex-gratia payment may be sanctioned in favour of his father or mother.

Assistance will be given to only one person in a family as a onetime benefit. The financial assistance will be given to widow/ widower/ an unemployed son below 28 years of age/ unmarried and unemployed daughter below the age of 28 years/ dependant father/ dependant mother.

7. The Committee shall keep in view the amount available as interest on the corpus of the Fund while sanctioning assistance to the deceased family.

8. Financial assistance sanctioned is liable to be cancelled if it is found at any time that the assistance was sanctioned on the basis of incorrect facts or that the financial assistance was obtained by suppression or misrepresentation of facts. Provided that the Committee shall give an opportunity to the beneficiary to present his or her case against the proposed action before withdrawing or cancelling any assistance.

9. Investment of Fund and Mode of Payment :

The Corpus can be invested in fixed deposit in full or part in the Nationalized Banks to earn interest. Assistance provided to the beneficiaries will be made out of the interest accrued against the Corpus Fund. Assistance will be in the form of one-time financial benefit as per admissibility mentioned in Point 6 "Assistance available under the scheme". The savings A/C will be jointly operated by DIPR and FAO of the Directorate of Information & Public Relations.

10. Budget Head :

2220-Info&Publicity 60 Others-103-Press Information Service-0805-Press Research and Reference Section-000-32-Grants-in-Aid (Non-Salary) – 99- Others

11. All the applications will be scrutinized by the State Committee for the Assam Journalists' Family Benefit Fund. The Committee, after satisfying itself of the eligibility or otherwise of the application, may make specific recommendation to the Director, Information and Public Relations, who shall make an order on each application either sanctioning or rejecting the request for financial assistance on the basis of the Committee's recommendation.

12. Application for the grant of financial assistance shall be submitted to the Director, Information & Public Relations, in the form prescribed in Schedule-I, which shall be accompanied by a report in the form prescribed in Schedule-II from:

- a) Superintendent of Police's report in respective district as in Rule 1 (e).
- b) A Revenue Officer not below the rank of a Revenue Circle Officer of the place of residence of the applicant
- c) The President of Working Journalists Association to which Association he/she belonged.
- d) The District Information and Public Relations Officer concerned.

12. (a) The fund shall be jointly operated by the Vice-Chairman and Member Secretary/ Convener of the Committee who shall maintain a separate account for the same.

(b) The Chairman of the Committee may sanction interim financial assistance from the fund to meet emergent needs in most deserving cases in anticipation of the approval of the Committee. The Committee may however prescribe the maximum limit that can be sanctioned by the Chairman in such emergent cases.

(c) The accounts of the fund shall be subjected to annual audit by the Local Fund Audit Organization of the Finance Department, Government of Assam and the audit report shall be placed before the Committee.

14. Govt. Directions :

The State Government may issue policy direction from time to time for proper administration of the scheme.

15. General Information of the scheme :

Grant of financial assistance from the Scheme to the family of any working journalist who meets an untimely death is not a matter of right. Assistance would be extended depending on the Committee's satisfaction regarding the eligibility/merits of the cases and the financial reserves available for the purpose. The Committee reserves the right to reject or accept any application without assigning any reason therefore.

1. Dispute Redressal :

In case of any dispute, the matter would be referred to the State Government for a decision.

The above O.M. will come into force w.e.f. financial year 2016-17 and shall be operative in the subsequent years.

Sd/- (L.S. CHANGSAN, IAS)
Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt. of Assam,
Information & Public Relations Department.
Dispur, Guwahati-6

Schedule-I

Format for Application

To,

The Director
Information and Public Relations
Government of Assam
Dispur, Guwahati-6.

1. Name of the applicant in full (in capital letters) :
2. Age and date of birth of applicant :
3. Full address (proof of residence to be attached) & mobile no. and e-mail id :
4. Name of the deceased journalist :
5. Whether journalist was a citizen of India :
6. Last organization for which the journalist was working :
(indicate Freelance if applicable)¹
7. Details regarding the service of the deceased journalist :
8. The applicant's relationship with the deceased journalist :
(whether widow/widower/ son/ unmarried daughter/father/ mother)²
9. Nature of employment of deceased journalist :
(Full time/ Part time, Regular/ Contractual employee,
Stringer, Retired, Contract for job work)¹
10. Whether deceased journalist was Accredited/Recognized by DIPR :
(Give details along with Card No.)
11. Nature of death (death certificate to be enclosed) :
12. Details of any financial assistance received/
Applied for from other sources (e.g. PM's/
CM's Relief Fund, from Employer,
Journalist Associations, etc.) :

I hereby certify that all the above particulars furnished by me are true to the best of my knowledge and nothing has been concealed which is relevant to this request for financial assistance.

Place :

Date :

Signature of the applicant

1. Attach Appointment Letter or Engagement Letter by concerned media house and Recognized or Accredited Card issued by DIPR.
2. Legal Heir Certificate (LHC)/ Next of Kin Certificate (NOK)/ Succession Certificate by competent authority.

Schedule-II

Report of DIPR/DIPRO/SDIPRO

I have made necessary enquiries regarding the statement in the application form of Shri/Smt.....and submit the following report-

1. The applicant comes under the scheme for giving financial assistance to the deceased journalist's family.
2. The applicant is the widow/ widower/ son/ unmarried daughter/ father/ mother of the Late
3. The age of the applicant (widow/ widower/ son/ unmarried daughter/ father/ mother) as verified from the certificate of date of birth furnished by the applicant or other reliable (to be specified) is.....Years.....
4. No. of years served as accredited/recognized journalist.
5. The particulars furnished by the applicant are correct.
6. Other remarks if any-

Place :

Signature

Date :

Name and Address with

Office

Memo No.IPRD.62/2015/111-A

Dated Dispur, the 21st October, 2016.

Copy to for information: -

- 1) All Additional Chief Secretaries to the Govt. of Assam.
- 2) All Principal Secretaries to the Govt. of Assam.
- 3) All Commissioner & Secretaries to the Govt. of Assam.
- 4) All Secretaries to the Govt. of Assam.
- 5) All Commissioners of Divisions, Assam.
- 6) The Accountant General, Assam Maidamgaon, Beltola, Guwahati29.
- 7) The Staff Officer to Chief Secretary, Assam, Dispur.
- 8) The Principal Private Secretary to the Chief Minister, Assam, Dispur.
- 9) The Director of Information & Public Relations, Assam.`
- 10) The Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Finance (EC-II) Deptt. with reference to his U/O No. FEC (II) 3330/2016 dated 25.1.2016.
- 11) Departments of Assam Secretariat.

- 12) All Heads of Departments.
- 13) All Deputy Commissioners/Sub-Divisional Officers.
- 14) The Secretary to his Excellency, the Governor of Assam, Guwahati-4.
- 15) The Private Secretary to all Ministers/Ministers of State/Parliamentary Secretaries, Dispur, Guwahati-6.
- 16) The P.S. to the Principal Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Assam Administrative Reforms and Training Department, Dispur, Guwahati-6.
- 17) Political (Cabinet Cell) Department, Dispur.
- 18) All Treasury Officers, Assam.
- 19) The Director, Assam Government Press, Bamunimaidam, Guwahati-21 for publication in the Assam Gazette. He is requested to kindly submit fifty copies of this special issue to the office of the undersigned for circulation.

By order etc.

Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of Assam,
Information & Public Relations Department.
Dispur, Guwahati-6

