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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

2021

**As required under Section 21(1) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016, of
the Government of India**

1. INTRODUCTION

United Nation General assembly has adopted its convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities on the 13th day of December 2016. This convention lays the following principles for empower of persons with disabilities.

- a) *Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices and independence of persons;*
- b) *Non- discrimination;*
- c) *Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;*
- d) *Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;*
- e) *Equality of opportunity;*
- f) *Accessibility;*
- g) *Equality between men and women;*
- h) *Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.*

India, being signatory to the convention, has enacted The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (the “Disabilities Act, 2016”) along with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017.

2. PURPOSE

As per provision 21 of the act, *“every establishment shall notify equal opportunity policy detailing measures proposed to be taken by it in pursuance of the provisions of this act”*.

PDPM, Indian Institute of Information Technology Design and Manufacturing, Jabalpur, an institution of higher learning, is committed to provide equal opportunities to all sections of the community and the Institute pays special attention to the dis-abled persons with regard to accessibility and grant of equal opportunity.

In order to take it forward and also to comply with the provisions of the act, the Institute has formulated an Equal Opportunity Policy.

The EO Policy of PDPM-IIITDM Jabalpur is to fulfill the principles laid down in the UN convention and to follow/implement the applicable provisions. This EO Policy is subject to applicable regulations, qualifications, and merit of the individuals concerned.

3. DEFINITION

The definitions of different terms used in this Policy are consistent with the terms used in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

4. SCOPE

The EO Policy of PDPM-IIITDM Jabalpur shall cover employees (regular, ad hoc, part time, contractual, and temporary) and students along with interns and trainees who are having disability as defined by the Act. Further, the employees and students who acquire disability during their course of their engagement would also be covered under the policy.

5. COMMITMENT

The Institute is duty bound to commit the following:

5.1 RIGHTS AND ENTITLEMENTS

a) Equality & Non-discrimination

- (i) PDPM-IIITDM Jabalpur shall ensure that the persons with disability enjoy the right to equality, life with dignity and respect for his or her integrity with others.
- (ii) The Institute shall take steps to utilize the capacity of persons with disability by providing appropriate environment.
- (iii) It will make sure that no persons with any kind of disabilities shall be discriminated on the ground of disability, unless it is shown that the impugned act or omission is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- (iv) No person shall be deprived of his or her personal liberty on the ground of disability.
- (v) The Institute shall take necessary steps to ensure reasonable accommodation for persons with disability and also ensure their right to live in the community.
- (vi) It shall take measures to protect persons with disability from being subjected to torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.
- (vii) The institute will also ensure that no persons with disability shall be a subject of any research without his/her free and informed consent with prior permission of a committee for research on disability constituted in the prescribed manner.

b) Protection from Abuse, Violence, and Exploitation

PDPM-IIITDM Jabalpur shall take following measures to protect persons with disabilities against abuse, violence, and exploitation and to prevent the same, the institute will take:

- (i) Cognizance of incidents of abuse, violence and exploitation
- (ii) Steps for avoiding such incidents and prescribe the procedure for reporting
- (iii) Creation of awareness and make available information among the public.
- (iv) Steps to ensure equal protection and safety in situations of risk, armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters.

c) Casual Leave

The employee with disabilities may avail extra days of special casual leave in addition to regular eight (08) days of casual leave per year as per the provision of GOI leave rules as notified from time to time.

5.2 EDUCATION

To provide inclusive education to the students with disabilities, the Institute shall-

- (i) Admit the students without discrimination and provide education and opportunities for sports and recreation activities equally with others;
- (ii) Make the entire campus barrier free and accessible;
- (iii) Provide reasonable accommodation taking into account individual requirements;
- (iv) Provide necessary support, individual or otherwise, in creating an environment that would nurture academic and professional development;
- (v) Ensure that the education to persons who are visual and hearing challenges or both is imparted in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication;
- (vi) Assess specific learning disabilities (in terms of course curriculum) at the earliest and take suitable pedagogical and other measures to overcome them;
- (vii) Monitor participation, progress in terms of attainment levels and completion of education in respect of every student with disability;
- (viii) Provide transportation facilities to the students with disabilities and their attendants;
- (ix) Ensure that all the documents are in accessible formats;

5.2.1 Specific Measures to promote and Facilitate Inclusive Education

PDPM-IIITDM Jabalpur shall take the following measures for the purpose of the facilitating inclusive education:

- (i) Train and employ teachers, including teachers with disability, who are qualified in sign language and Braille and also teachers who are trained in teaching students with multiple / intellectual disability;
- (ii) Train professionals and staff to support inclusive education at all levels of education;
- (iii) Establish MoU with the institutions from which adequate number of resources could be drawn for the support of all levels of education;
- (iv) Promote the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes including means and formats of communication, Braille and sign language to supplement the use of one's own speech to fulfil the daily communication needs of persons with speech, communication or language disabilities and enables them to participate and contribute to their community and society;
- (v) Provide books, other learning materials and appropriate assistive devices to students with benchmark disabilities up to the completion of the degree;
- (vi) Assist / facilitate to receive scholarships in appropriate cases to students with benchmark disability;
- (vii) Make suitable modifications in the curriculum and examination system to meet the needs of students with disabilities such as extra time for completion of examination paper, facility of scribe or amanuensis, exemption from second and third language courses, if any;
- (viii) Promote research to improve learning; and
- (ix) Any other measures, as may be required.

5.2.2 Reservation in Higher Educational Institutions

- (i) PDPM-IIITDM Jabalpur shall reserve not less than five percent seats for admission to persons with bench mark disabilities.
- (ii) The persons with benchmark disabilities shall be given an upper age relaxation of five years for admission.

5.3 EMPLOYMENT

5.3.1. Reservation

The institute shall provide reservation not less than four percent of the total number of vacancies in the cadre strength in each group of posts meant to be filled with persons with disabilities of which one percent each shall be reserved for persons with bench mark disabilities:

- a) Blindness and low vision
- b) Deaf and hard of hearing
- c) Locomotor disability including cerebral palsy, leprosy cured, dwarfism, acid attack victims and muscular dystrophy and

Another one percent for persons:

- d) Autism, intellectual disability, specific learning disability and mental illness;
- e) Multiple disabilities from amongst persons under clause (a) to (d) including deaf-blindness in the posts identified for each disability.

Provided that the reservation in promotion shall be in accordance with such instructions as are issued by the Central Government from time to time.

5.3.2. Identification of Posts

Government of India vide its Gazette notification dated 4th January 2021 notified list of posts in Group A, B and C identified suitable for persons with bench mark disabilities and the institute will take necessary action in accordance with the notification.

5.3.3. Non-discrimination in employment

- (i) The Institute shall not discriminate against any persons with disability in any manner in case of employment opportunities.
- (ii) PDPM-IIITDM Jabalpur shall provide reasonable accommodation and appropriate barrier free and conducive environment to the employees with disabilities;
- (iii) No promotion shall be denied to a person on the ground of disability;
- (iv) Institute shall not dispense with or reduce in rank, an employee who acquires a disability during his or her service;

- (a) Provided that, if an employee after acquiring disability is not suitable for the post he/she was holding, shall be shifted to some other post with the same pay scale and service benefits:
- (b) Provided further that if it is not possible to adjust the employee against any post, he/she may be kept on a supernumerary post until a suitable post is available or he/she attains the age of superannuation, whichever is earlier.
- (v) The Institute shall organize various in-house programmes such as orientation, refresher course and other programmes as may be deemed appropriate and suitable for the employees with disabilities.

5.4. MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

The Institute shall maintain records of the persons with disability in relation to the matter of employment and enrolment of students, facilities provided and other necessary information in compliance with the provisions, in such form and manner as may be prescribed by the Central Government / MoE.

Such records maintained by Institute shall be open to inspection at all reasonable hours by such persons as may be authorized in their behalf by the persons himself or by the competent authority.

5.5. GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL CELL AND GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL OFFICER

- (i) The institute will appoint a Grievance Redressal Officer to address any grievances of persons with disabilities.
- (ii) Any person aggrieved with non- compliance of provisions of the act may file a complaint with the Grievance Redressal Officer who shall investigate and take up the matter with establishment for corrective action;
- (iii) The officer shall maintain register of complaints;
- (iv) If the aggrieved person is not satisfied with the action taken, he/she may approach Director for suitable redressal.

5.6. SOCIAL SECURITY, HEALTH, CLUTURE & RECREATION & SPORTS ACTIVITIES

- (i) The institute shall safeguard and promote the right of persons with disabilities for adequate standard of living to enable them to live independently or in the community;
- (ii) **Health** care services/ facilities will be provided as per the rules of Government of India, applicable to the Institute.
- (iii) The institute will provide **Culture and Recreation** services that would include facilities, support and sponsorship to pursue their interest and talents. The Institute, within the limit of its economic capacity, would work to develop technology, assistive devices, equipment to facilitate, and inclusion of persons with disabilities in recreational activities.
- (iv) In case of **Sports and other Activities**, the Institute, within the limit of its economic capacity, shall take following steps:
 - a) Institute shall take measures to ensure effective participation of persons with disabilities in sports activities;
 - b) Institute shall accord due recognition to the rights of persons with disabilities and shall make due provisions for promotion and development of their sporting talents;
 - c) without prejudice to the provisions mentioned under (a) & (b) above, the competent authority and the sport's authority shall take measures to-
 - i. restructure courses and programmes to ensure access, inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in all sporting activities;
 - ii. redesign and support infrastructure facilities of all sports activities for persons with disabilities;
 - iii. develop technology to enhance potential, talent, capacity and ability in sports activities of all persons with disabilities;
 - iv. provide multi-sensory essentials and features in all sporting activities to ensure effective participation of all persons with disabilities;
 - v. allocate funds for development of sport facilities for training of persons with disabilities;
 - vi. promote and organise disability specific sport events for persons with disabilities and also facilitate awards to the winners and other participants of such sporting events.

5.7 DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Institute shall follow the Standards for Information and Communication Technology as given in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017, such as-

- a) Website Standards: Guidelines for Indian Government Websites (GIGW), as adopted by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India.
- b) Documents Standards: Electronic Publication (ePUB) or Optical Character Reader (OCR) based pdf formats.

5.8 OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT/ASSISTIVE AIDS REQUIRED

5.8.1 For persons with Locomotor disability

- a) Ramps with railings/ lifts in all buildings up to the top floor including public utility areas.
- b) Wheelchair facilities in all buildings.
- c) Special furniture.
- d) Availability of barrier free wash/ rest rooms facilities (at least one in every buildings preferably ground floor).

5.8.2 For Visually Impaired (VI) Persons:

- a) Braille books and software (JAWS) and other reading assistive devices.
- b) Tactile pavers on corridors and other passages.
- c) Special ATMs for the Visually Impaired
- d) Availability of White Canes

5.9. GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING WRITTEN EXAMINATION FOR PERSONS WITH BENCHMARK DISABILITIES

Institute shall follow the guidelines applicable to all PwD Candidates as issued by Department of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, GOI, OM, dated 29th Aug, 2018.

5.10. Special Provisions for Persons with Disabilities with High Support Needs

- (i) Institute shall seek appropriate request from person with benchmark disability who considers himself/herself to be in need of high support;

- (ii) On receipt of such request, the Institute shall refer it to an Assessment Board consisting of such members as may be prescribed by the concerned authority.
- (iii) On receipt of a report from the assessment Board, the Institute shall take steps to provide support in accordance with the report subject to relevant schemes and orders of the appropriate Government in this behalf.

6.0. MEASURES TO BE UNDERTAKEN

6.1. Awareness Campaign

- (a) Institute shall conduct, encourage, support, or promote awareness campaigns and sensitization programmes to ensure that the rights of the persons with disabilities provided under this Act are protected.
- (b) The programmes and campaigns specified shall also:
 - (i) Promote values of inclusion, tolerance, empathy and respect for diversity;
 - (ii) Advance recognition of the skills, merits and abilities of persons with disabilities and of their contributions to academic/research work;
 - (iii) Provide orientation and sensitization drive at the Institute on the human condition of disability and the rights of persons with disabilities;
 - (iv) Provide orientation and sensitization on disabling conditions and rights of persons with disabilities to employers, administrators, co-workers and among the students;
 - (v) Make efforts to include the rights of persons with disabilities as part of course curriculum.

6.2 Access to Information and Communication Technology

Institute shall take measures to ensure that —

- (i) All contents available in audio, print and electronic media are in accessible format;
- (ii) Persons with disabilities have access to electronic media by providing audio description, sign language interpretation and close captioning;
- (iii) Electronic goods and equipment which are meant for everyday use are available in universal design.

7.0. MANDATORY OBSERVANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY NORMS

Institute shall ensure that all physical infrastructures including buildings, furniture, facilities and services in the building/campus are as per the accessibility Standards given in the

Harmonized Guidelines and Space Standards for Barrier Free Environment for Persons with Disabilities and Elderly Persons, 2016 and the National Building Code, 2016.

8.0. SOCIAL AUDIT

PDPM-IIITDM Jabalpur Shall undertake social audit from the beneficiaries' involving the persons with disabilities to ensure that its facilities are not having an adverse impact upon the persons with disabilities and need the requirements and concerns of persons with disabilities.

Sd/-
Registrar
PDPM-IIITDM Jabalpur