

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY <sup>1</sup>

### 1.0 Objective

POWERGRID is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion among the workforce and aims to create a harmonious workplace for employees regardless of their gender, nativity, community, religious beliefs or physical & mental ability, such that all employees can achieve their full potential. We believe in providing equal opportunity to persons from all sections of the society including Persons with Disabilities as detailed in this policy.

### 2.0 Definitions:

- a) **Discrimination** in relation to disability, means any distinction, exclusion, restriction on the basis of disability which is the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field and includes all forms of discrimination and denial of reasonable accommodation;
- b) **Employee** shall mean as defined under the POWERGRID Service Rules
- c) **The Act** shall mean the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016. **The Rules** shall mean Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules 2017.
- d) **Specified Disability** means disabilities mentioned in the Schedule of the RPWD Act 2016. List of such disabilities is enclosed at **Annexure I**.
- e) **Persons with Disability (PWD)** 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.
- f) **Person with Benchmark Disability (PWBD)** means a person with not less than forty per cent 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
- g) **Reasonable accommodation** means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments, without imposing a disproportionate or undue burden in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise of rights equally with others

### 3.0 Policy Statement

POWERGRID is committed towards eliminating all forms of discrimination and harassment, whether direct or indirect, of persons with disabilities.

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<sup>1</sup> Corporate HR Circular 510/2021 dated 14.07.2021

Further, in line with the provisions in the Act and the Rules, we have implemented the following policy provisions in order to provide affirmative action and promote inclusive growth of Persons with Disabilities in POWERGRID.

### 3.1 Identification of Posts and Reservation in Appointment

- (a) POWERGRID shall not discriminate against any person with disability in any matter relating to employment.
- (b) POWERGRID shall identify posts which can be held by respective category of persons with disabilities. The identification of suitable posts and reservation for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities shall be carried out as per the Government of India directives issued from time to time.
- (c) Vacancies earmarked for PWBD mentioning the category of disability will be clearly indicated in Recruitment advertisement. Relaxations in age, other qualifying criteria and selection criteria shall be provided in line with Govt. guidelines issued from time to time.

### 3.2 Manner of Selection

- (a) POWERGRID shall adopt a transparent selection process based on merit and without any bias to the disabilities of the prospective candidates as per the provisions of POWERGRID Recruitment Policy and Procedures.

Candidates with necessary disability certificate issued by the competent authority in accordance with the Rules under the Act shall be considered for appointment in the Company.

- (b) PWBD candidates who are shortlisted and appear for written tests held as a part of selection process for any post in POWERGRID shall be paid to-and-fro journey fare as per provisions under POWERGRID's TA Rules.
- (c) To the extent possible, PwBD candidates shall be provided a barrier free access to the written test center/ interview center.
- (d) PWBD candidates who have limitations in writing including that of speed, and are desirous of using the facility of a scribe, shall be allowed the facility in accordance to the guidelines issued by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

### 3.3 Post-Recruitment and Pre-Promotion Training

- (a) POWERGRID shall impart post-recruitment induction training program and pre-promotion job specific inclusive training programs to employees with disabilities along with other employees.
- (b) Employees with disability shall be placed with experienced employees for at least one month on resuming responsibility of a post so as to help them to pick up skills required to perform the job and also the adaptations that may be required in individual cases.

### 3.4 Preference in Accommodation

POWERGRID shall give preference, to the extent possible, to the requests by employees with specified disabilities for allotment of appropriate reasonable accommodation in company quarters.

### 3.5 **Accessibility**

(a) POWERGRID shall provide appropriate barrier free and conducive environment to employees with disability. To the extent possible, the built-up environment shall be made accessible to PWD and all future establishments shall incorporate accessibility provisions such as ramps, accessible parking, accessible toilets, braille symbols and auditory signals in elevators etc.

(b) POWERGRID will endeavor to provide suitable facilities and amenities/assistive devices to persons with disabilities for effective and efficient discharge of their functions, including, but not limited to, high tech/latest technology led assistive devices (including low vision aids, hearing aids with battery), special furniture, wheel chairs (motorised if required by the employee), software scanners, computer and other hardware, etc. in accordance with their requirement. Such devices may either be provided directly by POWERGRID or the cost may be reimbursed with a specific time period in accordance with the price/durability of the device/furniture/software etc. as the case may be.

(c) POWERGRID will endeavor to ensure that persons with disabilities are enabled to participate in meetings in a convenient mode of communication.

### 3.6 **Discrimination Free Work Environment**

POWERGRID will ensure that the work environment is free from any discrimination against persons with disabilities. Promotion to an employee should not be denied merely on the ground of disability.

3.7 POWERGRID shall not dispense with or reduce rank, an employee who acquires a disability during his or her service. Cases shall be treated as per the applicable rules and provisions in POWERGRID Service Rules and Govt. of India guidelines pertaining to the matter.

### 3.8 **Leave**

Employees with disability can avail Special Casual Leave as per provisions in POWERGRID Leave Rules.

### 3.9 **Transfers and Posting**

(a) POWERGRID shall supportively consider, to the extent possible, the transfer requests or preferred place of posting of employees with disabilities or those being caregivers of dependent family members with disabilities residing with the employee, so as to optimally utilize their services.

- (b) As far as possible, disabled employees and those who are care givers of disabled dependent family members shall be exempt from the provisions of rotational transfer subject to the administrative constraints.
- (c) The above provisions shall however be subject to the mode/nature/ terms and conditions of the engagement of the individual and administrative feasibility.

#### **4.0 Governance**

##### **4.1 Liaison Officer:**

Liaison Officer appointed to look after reservation matters for SC/ST shall also act as the Liaison Officer for reservation matters relating to persons with benchmark disabilities and shall ensure compliance of guidelines/instructions issued for PWBD and bring any potential issues to the notice of management.

##### **4.2 Grievance Redressal Officer**

Head of Dept - Reservation Cell at Corporate Center and Heads of HR at Regions/Projects shall also be the Grievance Redressal Officers at their respective Regions/Projects in compliance of Section 23 of the Act. The Grievance Redressal Officer shall maintain a register of complaints of employees with disabilities as per format at **Annexure II**.

#### **5.0 General**

##### **5.1 Compliance**

The responsibility for implementation of the policy shall lie with ED(HR) at Corporate Center and Head of Regions/Projects at Regional/Project level.

##### **5.2 Communication of the policy:**

The policy shall be published on POWERGRID's website as well as on the intranet.

- 5.3 Director (Personnel) is empowered & authorised to interpret, clarify, revise, amend/modify or discontinue any or all the provisions of this Policy in accordance with Govt. of India guidelines issued from time to time.

## Annexure I

List of Specified Disabilities as per the Schedule in the RPWD Act 20161. **Physical disability:**

A. **Locomotor disability** (a person's inability to execute distinctive activities associated with movement of self and objects resulting from affliction of musculoskeletal or nervous system or both), including—

(a) "**leprosy cured person**" means a person who has been cured of leprosy but is suffering from—

(i) loss of sensation in hands or feet as well as loss of sensation and paresis in the eye and eye-lid but with no manifest deformity;

(ii) manifest deformity and paresis but having sufficient mobility in their hands and feet to enable them to engage in normal economic activity;

(iii) extreme physical deformity as well as advanced age which prevents him/her from undertaking any gainful occupation, and the expression "leprosy cured" shall construed accordingly;

(b) "**cerebral palsy**" means a Group of non-progressive neurological condition affecting body movements and muscle coordination, caused by damage to one or more specific areas of the brain, usually occurring before, during or shortly after birth;

(c) "**dwarfism**" means a medical or genetic condition resulting in an adult height of 4 feet 10 inches (147 centimeters) or less;

(d) "**muscular dystrophy**" means a group of hereditary genetic muscle disease that weakens the muscles that move the human body and persons with multiple dystrophy have incorrect and missing information in their genes, which prevents them from making the proteins they need for healthy muscles. It is characterised by progressive skeletal muscle weakness, defects in muscle proteins, and the death of muscle cells and tissue;

(e) "**acid attack victims**" means a person disfigured due to violent assaults by throwing of acid or similar corrosive substance.

B. **Visual impairment—**

(a) "blindness" means a condition where a person has any of the following conditions, after best correction—

(i) total absence of sight; or

(ii) visual acuity less than 3/60 or less than 10/200 (Snellen) in the better eye with best possible correction; or

(iii) limitation of the field of vision subtending an angle of less than 10 degree.

(b) "low-vision" means a condition where a person has any of the following conditons, namely:—

- (i) visual acuity not exceeding 6/18 or less than 20/60 upto 3/60 or upto 10/200 (Snellen) in the better eye with best possible corrections; or
- (ii) limitation of the field of vision subtending an angle of less than 40 degree up to 10 degree.

**C. Hearing impairment—**

- (a) "deaf" means persons having 70 DB hearing loss in speech frequencies in both ears;
- (b) "hard of hearing" means person having 60 DB to 70 DB hearing loss in speech frequencies in both ears;

**D. "speech and language disability"** means a permanent disability arising out of conditions such as laryngectomy or aphasia affecting one or more components of speech and language due to organic or neurological causes.

2. **Intellectual disability**, a condition characterised by significant limitation both in intellectual functioning (reasoning, learning, problem solving) and in adaptive behaviour which covers a range of every day, social and practical skills, including—

- (a) "**specific learning disabilities**" means a heterogeneous group of conditions wherein there is a deficit in processing language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself as a difficulty to comprehend, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations and includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia and developmental aphasia;
- (b) "**autism spectrum disorder**" means a neuro-developmental condition typically appearing in the first three years of life that significantly affects a person's ability to communicate, understand relationships and relate to others, and is frequently associated with unusual or stereotypical rituals or behaviours.

3. **Mental behaviour**,—

"**mental illness**" means a substantial disorder of thinking, mood, perception, orientation or memory that grossly impairs judgment, behaviour, capacity to recognise reality or ability to meet the ordinary demands of life, but does not include retardation which is a condition of arrested or incomplete development of mind of a person, specially characterised by subnormality of intelligence.

4. **Disability caused due to—**

- (a) **chronic neurological conditions**, such as—

- (i) "multiple sclerosis" means an inflammatory, nervous system disease in which the myelin sheaths around the axons of nerve cells of the brain and spinal cord are damaged, leading to demyelination and affecting the ability of nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord to communicate with each other;
  - (ii) "parkinson's disease" means a progressive disease of the nervous system marked by tremor, muscular rigidity, and slow, imprecise movement, chiefly affecting middle-aged and elderly people associated with degeneration of the basal ganglia of the brain and a deficiency of the neurotransmitter dopamine.
- (b) **Blood disorder—**
- (i) "haemophilia" means an inheritable disease, usually affecting only male but transmitted by women to their male children, characterised by loss or impairment of the normal clotting ability of blood so that a minor wound may result in fatal bleeding;
  - (ii) "thalassemia" means a group of inherited disorders characterised by reduced or absent amounts of haemoglobin.
  - (iii) "sickle cell disease" means a hemolytic disorder characterised by chronic anemia, painful events, and various complications due to associated tissue and organ damage; "hemolytic" refers to the destruction of the cell membrane of red blood cells resulting in the release of hemoglobin.
5. **Multiple Disabilities** (more than one of the above specified disabilities) including deaf blindness which means a condition in which a person may have combination of hearing and visual impairments causing severe communication, developmental, and educational problems.
6. Any other category as may be notified by the Central Government.

**Format for Maintaining Register of Complaints of Persons with Disabilities  
(As per 10(2) of the RPWD Rules, 2017)**

Region: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of complaint	Name of complainant	Name of the person who is enquiring the complaint	Place of incident	The name of establishment or person against whom the complaint is made	Gist of the complaint	Documentary evidence, if any	Date of disposal by the grievance redressal officer	Details of disposal of the appeal by the district level committee	Any other information