

Inclusion of the Disabled in the National Food Security Act 2013

February 1, 2021

In News: The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution has asked State Governments/UTs to include all eligible disabled persons under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013.

Enabling provisions:

- **Section 38 of the Act** mandates that the Central Government may from time to time give directions to the State Governments for effective implementation of the provisions of the Act.
- **The Section 10 of the National Food Security Act, 2013** provides for coverage of persons under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana in accordance with the guidelines applicable to the said scheme and the remaining households as priority households in accordance with such guidelines as the States Government may specify.

Disability is one of the criteria for inclusion of beneficiaries under AAY households

Key Points

- The disabled persons should get their entitled quota of food grains under NFSA & Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) as per provisions of the Act.
- Those not already covered should be issued fresh ration cards as per the eligibility criteria.
- The disable person should also be covered by States/UTs under the priority households as per the criteria of identification evolved by them.

- PMGKAY is a part of Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP) to help the poor fight the battle against Covid-19.
 - The scheme is aimed at providing each person who is covered under the National Food Security Act with an additional 5 kg grains (wheat or rice) for free, in addition to the 5 kg of subsidised foodgrain already provided through the Public Distribution System (PDS).
 - The beneficiaries are also entitled to 1 kg of pulse for free, according to regional preferences.

National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013

- The objective is to provide for food and nutritional security in the human life cycle approach, by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices to people to live a life with dignity.

Key features

- **Coverage and entitlement under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS):** The TPDS covers 50% of the urban population and 75% of the rural population, with uniform entitlement of 5 kg per person per month. However, the poorest of the poor households will continue to receive 35 kg per household per month under Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY).
- **Subsidised prices under TPDS and their revision:** For a period of three years from the date of commencement of the Act, Food grains under TPDS will be made available at subsidised prices of Rs. 3/2/1 per kg for rice, wheat and coarse grains.
- **Identification of Households:** The identification of eligible households is to be done by States/UTs under TPDS determined for each State.
- **Nutritional Support to women and children:** Children in the age group of 6 months to 14 years and pregnant women

and lactating mothers will be entitled to meals as per prescribed nutritional norms under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Mid-Day Meal (MDM) schemes. Malnourished children up to the age of 6 have been prescribed for higher nutritional norms.

- **Maternity Benefit:** Pregnant women and lactating mothers will also be receiving maternity benefit of Rs. 6,000.
- **Women Empowerment:** For the purpose of issuing of ration cards, eldest woman of the household of age 18 years or above is to be the head of the household.
- **Grievance Redressal Mechanism:** Grievance redressal mechanism available at the District and State levels.
- **Cost of transportation & handling of food grains and FPS Dealers' margin :** the expenditure incurred by the state on transportation of food grains within the State, its handling and FPS dealers' margin as per norms to be devised for this purpose and assistance to states will be provided by the Central Government to meet the above expenditure.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** In order to ensure transparency and accountability, provisions have been made for disclosure of records relating to PDS, social audits and setting up of Vigilance Committees.
- **Food Security Allowance:** In case of non-supply of entitled food grains or meals, there is a provision for food security allowance to entitled beneficiaries.
- **Penalty:** If the public servant or authority fails to comply with the relief recommended by the District Grievance Redressal Officer, penalty will be imposed by the State Food Commission according to the provision.

Antyodaya Anna Yojana

- It was launched in December, 2000.
- It involved identification of one crore poorest of the poor families from amongst the number of Below Poverty Line families covered under TPDS within

the States and providing them food grains at a highly subsidized rate.

▪ **Some target groups identified under AAY are:**

- Landless agricultural labourers, marginal farmers, rural artisans/craftsmen and persons earning their livelihood on a daily basis in the informal sector.
- Households headed by widows/terminally ill persons/disabled persons/senior citizens.
- Widows or terminally ill persons or disabled persons or senior citizens.
- All primitive tribal households