

Model Agriculture Land Leasing Act, 2016

September 10, 2020

The model Act seeks to permit and facilitate leasing of agricultural land to improve access to land by the landless and marginal farmers. It also provides for recognition of farmers cultivating on leased land to enable them to access loans through institutional credit.

Key Provisions of the Model Act

- **Land Lease Agreement:** The lease agreement between the land owner and cultivator will include information pertaining to:
 - . the location and area of leased out land
 - . the duration of lease
 - . the lease amount and the due date by which it has to be paid
 - . terms and conditions for the renewal or extension of lease
- **Enforcement of Lease Agreement:** The tahsildar or a revenue officer of equal rank will be responsible for:
 - . enforcement of terms of lease
 - . facilitating return of the leased out agricultural land to the owner on expiry of the lease period.
- **Termination of Lease:** The lease agreement may be terminated on grounds including:
 - . failure of cultivator to pay the lease amount after a grace period of three months
 - . use of land for purposes other than those specified in the agreement

. subleasing of land or damage caused to it by the cultivator.

- **Dispute resolution:** The cultivator and the owner can settle disputes between them using third party mediation, or gram panchayat, or gram sabha.

If the dispute cannot be settled by third party mediation, either the landowner or the cultivator can file a petition before the tahsildar, or an equal rank revenue officer. He will have to adjudicate within four weeks.

In such cases, an appeal can also be made to the collector or district magistrate.

- **Special Land Tribunal:** State governments will constitute a special land tribunal, which will be the final authority to adjudicate disputes under the model Act. It will be headed by a retired high court or district court judge.

The Act legalises land leasing to promote agricultural efficiency, equity and power reduction. This will also help in much needed productivity improvement in agriculture as well as occupational mobility of the people and rapid rural change.