

The Labour Department is one of the major departments of the government, mainly involved in maintaining industrial peace and harmony in the state. The department seeks to facilitate harmonious industrial relations with an aim at ensuring the workers' basic rights at their workplace. There are a number of social security schemes and welfare fund boards for different sections of workers. The department is instrumental in conciliation and conflict resolution between the labour and the management.

The Labour Department seeks to promote welfare of the working class by ensuring safety, security and improved conditions of work, enforcing various labour laws in respect of minimum wages, payment of wages , gratuity etc., facilitating collective bargaining within the framework of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, providing social security for the workers and their family members, legal remedies in exigencies like loss of job, strike, lockout, closure etc., special protection for specific class of workers like women, children, beedi workers, motor transport workers, construction workers, plantation workers etc. It also facilitates employment/placement of job seekers and undertakes skill development programmes for the job seekers.

The diversified activities of the Labour Department, West Bengal are carried out by the different Directorates of the Department viz.

- (i) Labour Commissionerate
- (ii) Directorate of Employment
- (iii) Directorate of Factories
- (iv) Directorate of Boilers
- (v) Directorate of E.S.I. (MB Scheme)
- (vi) Directorate of Industrial Tribunals & Labour Courts.

The Directorate of Shops & Establishments has been merged with the Labour Commissionerate by a notification, issued on 06.06.2013. Besides these, the West Bengal Labour Welfare Board, Commissioner under the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923 and the State Labour Institute are also administered under the aegis of the Labour Department.

The Labour Department is headed by Hon'ble Minister-in-Charge. The major branches and cells of the Labour Department are

- I.R. Branch (Industrial Relation)
- G.E. Branch (General Establishment)
- L.W. Branch (Labour Welfare)
- S.S. Branch (Social Security)
- Employment Cell
- Minimum Wages Cell
- RTI Cell
- Grievance Cell
- Law Cell

There is a Website at URL (wb.gov.in/portal/wblabour) where all important information are available.

Apart from statutory functions, the Department implements the following important Schemes/ Projects:

Plan Scheme:

Central Sector

- f* Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY)
- f* National Child Labour Project (NCLP)

State Sector

- State Assisted Scheme of Provident Fund for Unorganised Workers (SASPFUW)
- West Bengal Transport Workers' Social Security Scheme (WBTWSSS)
- West Bengal Beedi Workers' Welfare Scheme (WBBWWS)
- West Bengal Unorganised Sector Workers' Health Security Scheme (WBUSWHSS)
- UdiyamanSwanirvhar Karmasangsthan Prakalpa (USKP)
- Skill Development of Registered Job-seekers (SDRJ)

Non Plan Scheme:

- Financial Assistance to the Workers in Locked Out Industries (FAWLOI)
- Social Security for Building Workers under Building & Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment & Conditions of Service) Act, 1996

An overview of the Directorates/ bodies under the Labour Department is given below:

Labour Commissionerate

The Labour Commissionerate of the state maintains industrial relations, enforces various labour laws and also administers social security schemes for the workers.

The Labour Commissionerate administers the following Acts:

- The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947

- The Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946
- The Minimum Wages Act, 1948,
- The Payment of Wages Act, 1936;
- The Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970
- The Interstate Migrant Workmen's (Regulation of Employment & Conditions of Service) Act, 1979
- The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
- The Beedi & Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966
- The Motor Transport Workers Act, 1961
- The Plantations Labour Act, 1951
- The Sales Promotion Employees (Conditions of Service) Act, 1976
- The Working Journalists & Other News paper Employees (Conditions of Service & Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1955
- The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972
- The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986
- The Building & Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment & Conditions of Service) Act, 1996
- The Trade Unions Act, 1926
- The Payment of Bonus Act, 1965

Apart from these Central Acts, the Commissionerate also administers the West Bengal Payment of Subsistence Allowance Act, 1969, West Bengal House Rent Allowance Act, 1974, West Bengal Unorganised Sector Workers' Welfare Act, 2007. The Beedi Workers' Welfare Scheme 2007 is also implemented by the Commissionerate.

Besides, the West Bengal Unorganised Sector Workers Welfare Board administers the State Assisted Scheme of Provident Fund for Unorganised Workers (SASPFUW), the West Bengal Building & Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board administers the welfare and social security schemes for construction workers and the West Bengal State Social Security Board administers the welfare scheme for transport workers.

This Commissionerate also administers the West Bengal Shops & Establishments Act, 1963 which regulates the employment and working conditions of the employees working in shops and establishments all over West Bengal.