

PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM NETWORK IN WEST BENGAL – AN OVERVIEW.

1. Public Distribution System(PDS) :

It means a system for distribution of public distribution commodities and certain other specified articles of daily use to the holders of valid ration documents through the Fair Price Shops.

2. Objective: To provide food security to the people, particularly, the poor and vulnerable sections of the society.

3. The Acts/Rules which guide the Public Distribution System(PDS) :

- a) The Essential Commodities Act,1955,
- b) The West Bengal Urban Public Distribution System(Maintenance and Control) Order,2013,
- c) The West Bengal Public Distribution System(Maintenance and Control) Order,2013,
- d) The National Food Security Act, 2013.

4. Demarcation of areas of the State for the purpose of operation of Public Distribution System :-

For maintaining supplies and securing availability and distribution of essential commodities under the Public Distribution System, the State of West Bengal has been divided into two separate broad areas.

- a) The urban areas and certain other areas which are urban in nature as specified in Schedule A of the West Bengal Urban Public Distribution System (Maintenance and Control) Order, 2013. It includes areas, viz, (i) Kolkata South , (ii)Kolkata North, (iii) Howrah (Mainly, Howrah Municipal Corporation and Bally-Belur Municipality area , and partly ,some adjacent Anchal Panchayat areas) , (iv) Barrackpore (16 Municipalities, Barrackpore Cantonment Board and Ichapur Defence Estate, Bidhannagar Municipality, Portion of South Dumdum and Rajarhat Gopalpur Municipality, (v) Asansol (Specified wards of Asansol Municipai Corporation,Kulti Municipality and Durgapur Municipality and entire protected area of Chittaranjan Locomotive Works) and (vi)Hooghly (entire areas of 10 municipalities starting from Uttarpara-Kotrang to Bansberia).
- b) The areas , other than above, of the State of West Bengal ,where the West Bengal Public Distribution System (Maintenance and Control) Order, 2013 is applicable.

5. Organisational set up for administration of Public Distribution System in West Bengal.

Director Rationing(D.R) / Director, District Distribution, Procurement & Supply(D.DDPS)
(Urban area/ Other area)



Sub-Control/District

Joint or Deputy Director (JDR or DDR)/District Controller, F&S(D.C.F.S.)



Rationing Office/Sub-Division

Rationing Officer (R.O.), Assistant Director (ADR)/Sub-Divisional Controller, F&S(S.C.F.S)

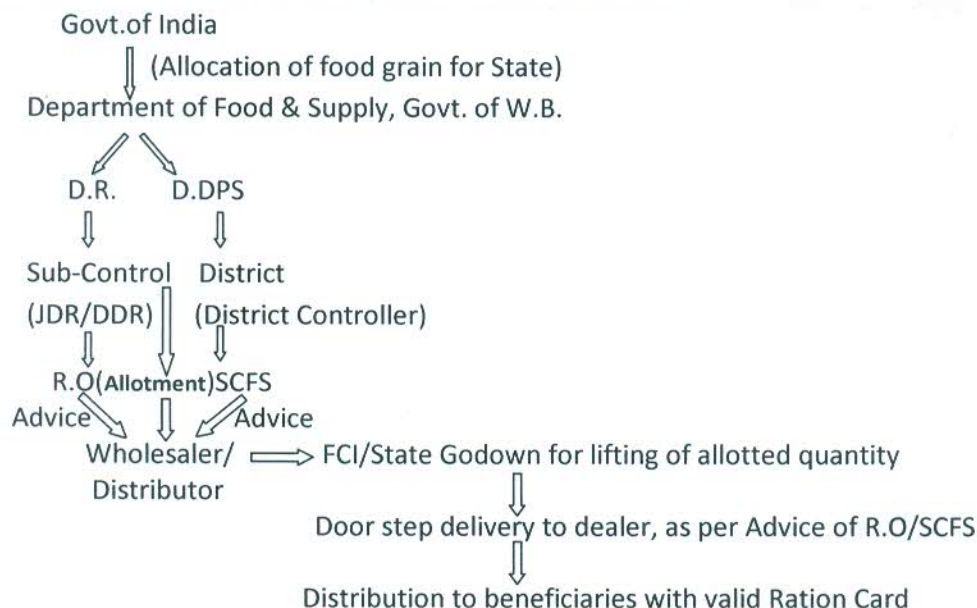
6. Classification of beneficiaries, as per scheme of Public Distribution System continued up to 31.01.2016 :
- "Above Poverty Line Families "means those families who have been issued Above Poverty Line (APL) ration cards by the Department of Food & supplies, Government of west Bengal, for issue of public distribution commodities and certain other specified items of daily use under the Public Distribution System.
 - "Below Poverty Line Families " means those families who have been identified as such by the concerned authority under the Government of West Bengal and to whom BPL Ration Cards have been issued for distribution of public distribution commodities under BPL Scheme along with other specified items of daily use under the Public Distribution System.
 - "Antodaya(AAY) Familes" means those poorest families amongst the Below Poverty Line Familes, who have been identified as such by the concerned authority under the Government of West Bengal and to whom Antodaya Anna Yojana Ration Cards have been issued for distribution of public distribution commodities under Antodaya Anna Yojana Scheme along with other specified items of daily use, under the Public Distribution System.
 - "Annapurna Beneficiaries" mean persons identified as such by the concerned authority under the Government of West Bengal and to whom Annapurna Ration Cards have been issued for distribution of food grains of specified quantity on monthly basis under the Annapurna Scheme.
 - But after implementation of the National Food Security Act, 2013 in the State with effect from 01.02.2016 , the classification of beneficiaries has changed as under ,as per provision of the said Act :-**
 - Households under Antodaya Anna Yojana(AAY) and (b) Priority Households(PHH) including Priority Households with Sugar(SPHH)
7. Ration Document: It means a valid Ration Card including a family Ration Card, or a Ration Permit.
8. Entitlement of Ration Card/Ration Permit: As per provision of the Control Orders mentioned above :-
- Every bonafide citizen of India or every family having resided ordinarily in any areas mentioned under the aforesaid Control Orders and having no Ration Cards anywhere, shall be entitled to have Ration Card to be issued or cause to be issued by the Rationing Officer/Sub-Divisional controller.
- However, under the National Food Security Act, the selected beneficiaries under the three categories, viz,(i) Antodaya Anna Yojana(AAY) , (ii) Priority Households(PHH) and (iii) Priority Households with Sugar(SPHH) are eligible to get Ration Cards. Moreover, the State Government has introduced Rajya Khadya Suraksha Yojana (RKSJ) with effect from 01.02,2016 and the beneficiaries selected under this scheme are also eligible to get Ration Cards of two categories, viz, RKSJ-I and RKSJ-II.
- An individual having the Ration Card in his/her name shall be entitled to draw public distribution commodities and certain other specified articles of daily use under

Public Distribution System from a Fair Price Shop as specified on weekly/fortnightly basis on production of valid Ration Card.

In terms of Notification No.70-FS/Sectt/Food/4m-18/2015 dt.07.01.2016, a ration card holder has the option of lifting his allotted quota of food grains for current week, for current week along with the quota of the following week in advance, and in case he fails to lift his quota of food grains for any week or weeks within a period of eight weeks, he has the option of lifting such un-lifted quota of food grains while lifting food grains in any week within such period.

- c) Any bonafide establishment, such as, hospitals, sanatoriums, orphanages, educational institutions etc. and non profit making establishment of like nature, situated in any of the areas within the State and having need of any public distribution commodity for its own consumption may apply for a Ration Permit.
- 9. "Fair Price Shop" means a shop licensed under any of the mentioned Control Orders for distribution of public distribution commodities and certain other specified articles of daily use under Public Distribution System.
- 10. "Dealer" or "Fair Price Shop Owner" means and includes a Self Help Group or registered co-operative societies or semi-government bodies or a person/association of persons in whose name a shop has been licensed to distribute public distribution commodities and certain specified articles of daily use under Public Distribution System.
- 11. "Wholesaler"/"Distributor" means a person and includes a co-operative society or a company or a Self Help Group or an association of persons as has been licensed to distribute public distribution commodities to those dealers as may be specified by the licensing authority under the provision of Control Order and certain specified articles of daily use under Public Distribution System.
- 12. Engagement of "Dealer" for urban area :a) Proposal for new vacancy will be initiated by Rationing Officer,
 - b) With the approval of Govt., Director, Rationing will notify the vacancy and invite applications to be submitted to concerned office of Joint/Deputy Director of Rationing,
 - c) Enquiry to be done by Rationing Officer to be forwarded to a committee set up by Director, Rationing,
 - d) Findings of the committee will be placed before the Director, Rationing who will form his opinion and place the case before Govt. for selection of a candidate,
 - e) The final decision of the Govt. will be communicated to the concerned Joint/Deputy Director of Rationing of respective Sub-Control for subsequent issue of offer letter and licence by Rationing Officer concerned.In case of engagement of "Dealer" for areas other than the urban areas, S.C.F.S will forward the proposal to D.DPS through D.C.F.S. On approval by Govt. the vacancy will be notified in Notice Board and widely circulated news paper. The offers received will be forwarded to D.DPS for approval and the S.C.F.S will engage the dealer, as approved.

13. Engagement of "wholesaler: a) Proposal for new vacancy will be initiated by Joint/Deputy Director of Rationing in charge of a Sub-Control ,
- f) With the approval of Govt., Director, Rationing will notify the vacancy and invite applications to be submitted to concerned office of Joint/Deputy Director of Rationing,
 - g) Enquiry to be done by an Officer not below the rank of Assistant Director of Rationing to be forwarded to a committee set up by Director, Rationing,
 - h) Findings of the committee will be placed before the Director, Rationing who will form his opinion and place the case before Govt. for selection of a candidate,
 - i) The final decision of the Govt. will be communicated to the concerned Joint/Deputy Director of Rationing of respective Sub-Control for subsequent issue of offer letter and licence by Joint/Deputy Director of Rationing concerned. In case of engagement of "Distributor" for areas other than the urban areas, D.C.F.S will forward the proposal to D.DPS through the District Magistrate for approval of Govt. On approval by Govt. the vacancy will be notified in Notice Board and widely circulated news paper. The offers received will be forwarded to D.DPS for approval and the D.C.F.S will engage the dealer as approved.
14. List of the commodities distributed under the present scheme of Public Distribution System: Rice, wheat and sugar.
15. Where are the commodities procured from?
- (a) Rice and wheat are normally procured from the godowns of Food Corporation of India Ltd. However, Rice may also be procured from State godowns.
 - (b) Sugar is procured from the designated godowns of WBECSC Ltd.
16. Flow chart from procurement point to distribution point:



- Note: (i) The Wholesaler/Distributor makes required payment against allotment of Public Distribution Commodities made in his favour by JDR/DDR or Dist. Controller.
- (ii) The Dealer makes payment to the Wholesaler/Distributor for the public distribution commodities delivered to him against Advice of R.O./SCFS.
- (iii) The Dealer ultimately receives payment from beneficiaries as per price fixed by Govt. for distribution of food grains as per given scale.

17. The scale and price of public distribution commodities for distribution to different categories of beneficiaries through Public Distribution System:

Scheme	Category	Food Grain	Monthly allotment	Price for distribution to beneficiaries
NFSA	AAY	Rice	15 Kg per family	Rs.2/- per Kg
		Wheat	20 Kg per family	Rs.2/- per Kg
		Sugar	500 Grams per card	Rs.13.50/- per Kg
	SPHH	Rice	2 Kg per head	Rs.2/- per Kg
		Wheat	3 Kg per head	Rs.2/- per Kg
		Sugar	500 Grams per card	Rs.13.50/- per Kg
	PHH	Rice	2 Kg per head	Rs.2/- per Kg
		Wheat	3 Kg per head	Rs.2/- per Kg
RKSY	RKSY-I	Rice	2 Kg per head	Rs.2/- per Kg
		Wheat	3 Kg per head	Rs.2/- per Kg
	RKSY-II	Rice	1 Kg per head	Rs.13/- per Kg
		Wheat	1 Kg per head	Rs.9/- per Kg

In addition to above, there are some special Packages meant for specific areas or particular class of beneficiaries. The details of such Packages as published in Feb'16 issue of 'Sambadnama' is annexed herewith.

Moreover, the "Annapurna Beneficiaries" would continue to get 10 Kgs of Rice per month free of cost.

18. Duties and responsibilities of a FPS dealer:

- The dealer shall arrange for conspicuous display of glowing signboard of prescribed size and format so that the shop's location is easily identifiable,
- The list of beneficiaries of different categories shall be displayed in a conspicuous place of the shop,
- On presentation of a card for **Registration and authentication**, the dealer shall enter particulars in prescribed register and folio No. thereof in the Ration Card and produce the detached counter foil of the card before the Rationing officer for authentication, and he will not refuse distribution of food grains to the holder of such card in the week following such registration;
- A Notice Board shall be displayed at conspicuous place of the shop showing prescribed particulars, such as, Date, Registration position, Opening balance of available commodities, Scale of distribution and retail price of each commodity, working hours of the shop, availability of complaint book, and name of authority for lodging complaint/grievance;
- Display of sample of jar/bottle;
- Adequate stock of all varieties of public distribution commodities and some specified article of daily use shall be maintained. The quality of commodities shall be ensured while taking deliver from the assigned agencies and stocks shall be issued in "first in-first out basis".
- A dealer shall store and sell only public distribution commodities and such other articles, as may be allowed to be stored and sold at such price and in such quantities and in such manner, as may be directed by the Central/State Govt.

- (h) The weighing devices shall be calibrated periodically to ensure correct weight and measure of distribution of commodities;
- (i) To facilitate physical verification of stock as and when required by the authorised officials;
- (j) To issue cash memo in duplicate of every transaction recording the number of units served, quantity and commodity supplied, prices charged for each item and total prices charged ;
- (k) To ensure prompt distribution;
- (l) To maintain and preserve different registers;
- (m) To ensure safe storage of stock;
- (n) To withhold sale of stock of bad or doubtful quality;
- (o) The dealer shall not retain any ration document in his shop except under specified instruction of Rationing officer.
- (p) To serve ration promptly without undue delay and causing inconvenience to Ration Card holders for whom a suitable shed should be arranged for standing.

19. Shop hours and closure of shop to be observed by every dealer:

- (a) 7.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. in the morning session,
- (b) 4 p.m. to 6 p.m in the afternoon session,
- (c) The shop will remain closed for full day on Mondays and second half of the day on Sundays.

20. Duties and responsibilities of a whole-seller:

- (a) The whole-seller shall arrange for conspicuous display of glowing signboard of suitable size as prescribed by Govt.
- (b) There will be a board indicating stock position.
- (c) There will be a rate board indicating date, name of commodities and wholesale price per quintal.
- (d) Adequate stock of all varieties of public distribution commodities shall be maintained.
- (e) The quality of commodities shall be ensured while taking deliver from the assigned agencies and stocks shall be issued in "first in- first out basis".
- (f) A wholeseller shall store and sell only public distribution commodities and such other articles, as may be allowed to be stored and sold at such price and in such quantities and in such manner, as may be directed by the Central/State Govt.
- (g) He will not store public distribution commodities in any place other than the godown(s) as endorsed on the licence without prior written permission of the licensing authority;
- (h) To facilitate physical verification of stock as and when required by the authorised officials;
- (i) The weighing devices shall be calibrated periodically to ensure correct weight and measure of distribution of commodities;
- (j) To issue cash memo in duplicate of every transaction recording the dealer's address, commodity ,quantity , rate i.e.prices charged and total prices charged ;
- (k) To maintain and preserve different registers;
- (l) To ensure safe storage of stock;

- (m) To withhold sale of stock of bad or doubtful quality;
- (n) To abide by the instructions as may be issued by the Director or any officer authorised by him;
- (o) In case of assembly of crowd in front of godown where inspection is in progress, the wholeseller shall lodge an FIR with local Police Station stating his apprehension of breach of peace.

21. Power to enter and inspect premises and to require information, accounts etc:

With a view to securing the equitable distribution of food grains and other public distribution commodities and for the purpose of securing compliance with the provisions of the Control Orders mentioned hereinbefore and any regulation made there-under or any direction issued under such order, any official not below the rank of Sub-Inspector of Food and Supplies Department having jurisdiction in the area or a vigilance squad having been duly constituted or any police officer not below the rank of Sub-Inspector of police with prior intimation to the licensing authority and accompanied by an officer not below the rank of Sub-Inspector of Food and Supplies Department may:-

- (a) enter any premises used or believed to be used for the sale, storage or distribution of public distribution commodities and inspect any such premises and public distribution commodities therein;
- (b) require any person to make statement, furnish information, produce any document, books of accounts or article in his possession or under his control relating to purchase, distribution or storage of any public distribution commodity and every person so required shall comply with the requirement;
- (c) take or cause to be taken extracts from copies of documents mentioned at (b);
- (d) test or cause to be tested the correctness of weight or measures used or believed to be used for transaction relating to distribution of public distribution commodities;
- (e) take or cause to be taken weight of all or any of the public distribution commodities found in any such premises, prepare weighment chart of physical verification of stock;
- (f) inspect and seize any stock of public distribution commodities or any document relating to purchase, sale, distribution of public distribution commodities in respect of which the official concerned has reason to suspect that a contravention of the provisions of control Order or of any direction issued under such Order has been, is being or about to be committed.

22. Powers to take action against a licensee for committing irregularities:

- (i) The licensing authority shall issue notice to the licensee for showing cause, if the licensee or his/her agent or any person acting on his/her behalf is found to have contravened any of the provisions of the said Control Orders and any regulation made there-under or any of the conditions of his/her licence.
- (ii) The licensing authority himself or under the direction of the Director may forthwith suspend the licensee if in the opinion of the said authority, it is necessary in the interest of general public. In that case, the Ration Cards/dealers tagged with the dealer/wholesaler shall be delinked and relinked with the nearest Fair Price shop (s)/Wholesaler(s), as the case may be.
- (iii) The licensing authority after giving the licensee an opportunity of being heard and recording reasons thereof may terminate the licence or reduce the

volume of business through reduction of tagged Ration cards or tagged dealers as the case may be and/or impose fine according to the gravity of the offence, as per prescription.

23. Measures taken for ensuring smooth and transparent Public Distribution System(PDS):

- (a) With the use of Information Technology at every stage commencing from allocation, indenting, lifting and distribution, it has been possible to have a better and effective monitoring of the different stages of Public Distribution System.
- (b) An effective vigilance mechanism has been set up by allowing the beneficiaries to lodge their complaints/grievances online alongside the conventional manual procedure and by taking effective measures to redress such complaints/grievances by taking necessary actions against the errant dealers/distributors or the govt. employee, as the case may be, after having necessary inquiries by the vigilance squads formed.

24. Conclusion:

- (a) The scenario of Public Distribution System in our State has undergone a lot of change after introduction of National Food Security Act with effect from 01.02.2016. In all around 7.49 crore people of the State have been brought under the ambit of NFSA and RKS, and most of them are getting food grains at only Rs.2/- per kg.
Moreover, by an order dt.10.02.2016, the State Govt. also decided to extend the benefit of getting food grains at the subsidised rate of Rs.2/- per kg to those having old paper ration cards but not brought either under NFSA or RKS, on furnishing of certain prescribed Forms, as prescribed for this purpose, at the FPS or to the designated authorities.
- (b) The required quantity of rice for maintaining the Public Distribution System in the State is being supplied out of procurement of paddy from the farmers at Minimum Support Price.

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২৭ জানুয়ারী, ২০১৬ থেকে সারা রাজ্যে চালু হয়েছে জাতীয় খাদ্য সুরক্ষা আইন ও রাজ্য খাদ্য সুরক্ষা योजना খাদ্য সাথী

এরই পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে বর্তমানে গণবন্টনে বিতরণের মাত্রা ও দাম বিস্তৃতভাবে নীচে দেওয়া হল :-

স্কীম	ক্যাটাগরি	খাদ্যশস্য	মাসিক বরাদ্দ	গ্রাহক মূল্য
জাতীয় খাদ্য সুরক্ষা আইন (NFSA)	অল্পপূর্ণা অন্ত্যোদয় योजना (AAY)	চাল	১৫ কেজি পরিবারপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
		গম/আটা	২০ কেজি পরিবারপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
		চিনি	৫০০ গ্রাম কার্ড পিছু	১৩.৫০ টাকা/কেজি
	বিশেষ অগ্রাধিকারপ্রাপ্ত পরিবার (SPHH)	চাল	২ কেজি মাথাপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
		গম/আটা	৩ কেজি মাথাপিছু	৩.৫০ টাকা/কেজি (আটা) ২ টাকা/কেজি (গম)
		চিনি	৫০০ গ্রাম মাথাপিছু	১৩.৫০ টাকা/কেজি
	অগ্রাধিকারপ্রাপ্ত পরিবার (PHH)	চাল	২ কেজি মাথাপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
		গম/আটা	৩ কেজি মাথাপিছু	৩.৫০ টাকা/কেজি (আটা) ২ টাকা/কেজি (গম)
রাজ্য খাদ্য সুরক্ষা योजना (RKSY)	রাজ্য খাদ্য সুরক্ষা योजना-১ (RKSY-I)	চাল	২ কেজি মাথাপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
		গম	৩ কেজি মাথাপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
	রাজ্য খাদ্য সুরক্ষা योजना-২ (RKSY-II)	চাল	১ কেজি মাথাপিছু	১৩ টাকা/কেজি
		গম	১ কেজি মাথাপিছু	৯ টাকা/কেজি
বিশেষ প্যাকেজ	সিঙ্গুর	চাল	১৬ কেজি পরিবারপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
	আইলা	চাল	১৬ কেজি পরিবারপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
	বন্ধ চা-বাগান	চাল	৫ কেজি প্রাপ্তবয়স্কপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
		গম	৩ কেজি প্রাপ্তবয়স্কপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
	জঙ্গলমহল	চাল	৮ কেজি প্রাপ্তবয়স্কপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
		গম/আটা	৩ কেজি প্রাপ্তবয়স্কপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
	দার্জিলিং পার্বত্য এলাকা	চাল	৬ কেজি মাথাপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
		গম	৫ কেজি মাথাপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
	পুরুলিয়া থরা কবলিত এলাকা	চাল	৪ কেজি প্রাপ্তবয়স্কপিছু	২ টাকা/কেজি
		চাল	৮ কেজি প্রাপ্তবয়স্কপিছু	বিনামূল্যে
	টোটো	আটা	৩ কেজি প্রাপ্তবয়স্কপিছু	বিনামূল্যে
		চাল	৫ কেজি মাথাপিছু	বিনামূল্যে
	স্যাংম শিশু (SAM)	গম	২.৫ কেজি মাথাপিছু	বিনামূল্যে
		চাল	৫ কেজি মাথাপিছু	বিনামূল্যে
	এইডস আক্রান্ত, ভবঘুরে, গৃহহীন মানুষ প্রভৃতি	চাল	৫ কেজি মাথাপিছু	বিনামূল্যে
		গম	২.৫ কেজি মাথাপিছু	বিনামূল্যে