



**CHANDIGARH
POLICE**

**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE UT CHANDIGARH
ADDL. DELUXE BUILDING, SECTOR-9, CHANDIGARH-160009**

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP) REGARDING
PROTECTION OF RUNAWAY COUPLE**

In compliance with the directions of the Hon'ble High Court to deal with the issue of safety and security of runaway couples as provided in the order dated 14.06.2024 of the Hon'ble High Court in CRWP No. 12562 of 2023, in case titled as Kajal Vs. State of Haryana and others, the following guidelines are hereby framed which shall be a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to be followed from the stage of receipt of a representation made by an individual or a runaway couple alleging threat to their life and liberty. The Chandigarh police has setup a Special Cell i.e. Anti Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) for the protection of runaway couples, at Home Guards Building, Sector-17, Chandigarh vide order No. 9132-77/UT/HAC dated 09.12.2021. The guidelines are as follows:

1. NODAL OFFICER APPOINTMENT:

The **Superintendent of Police/City**, UT, Chandigarh has been appointed as the State **Nodal Officer**, who shall be accountable for ensuring strict compliance with the guidelines as per the time frame stipulated herein.

2. POLICE OFFICER APPOINTMENT:

The **Station House officer (SHO)** of each Police Station of UT, Chandigarh has been appointed at police station level to inquire into and address the representation in accordance with law received from the runaway couples/individuals. The SHO shall report to the **Nodal Officer** and shall work under the supervision of the Nodal Officer in dealing with the representation. The proceedings shall be conducted in the presence of a lady police officer to ensure that the grievance is addressed effectively, without any violation of the time frame set forth in these guidelines.

3. **REPRESENTATION FORWARDING:**

The officer to whom the representation is addressed shall forward the same to the **Nodal Officer**, who shall then forward the representation to the concerned police officer at the relevant police station on the same day for inquiry and appropriate action.

4. **INQUIRY AND ACTION:**

- I. The Station House Officer shall decide the representation after providing an opportunity for a hearing to both the applicants and the persons against whom the threat allegations have been made. This inquiry shall be completed within **three days** from the receipt of the representation.
- II. The Station House Officer shall have the authority to take immediate steps to provide shelter and protection to the applicant, especially if it is prima facie deemed that harm may occur during the proceedings.

5. **ASSESSMENT OF THREAT:**

- I. Station House Officers/AHTU shall ensure that a threat assessment is made for the runaway couple and appropriate security measures are provided.
- II. In case of refusal to provide protection, Station House Officer shall issue a well-reasoned order, and the decision shall be communicated to the parties involved free of cost. The order must be communicated on the same day, along with a copy to the **Nodal Office as well as to the concerned SDPO/DSP**.

6. **SHELTER ARRANGEMENT:**

Based on the threat assessment, the Station House Officer shall issue orders to provide suitable shelter for the runaway couple Protection Home/Safe House, Sector-19-B, Chandigarh as per the guidelines of protection home/safe house. In case of minor girl she will be sent to Aashiana, Sector-15, Chandigarh.

7. APPELLATE AUTHORITY:

The Sub Divisional Police Officer (SDPO)/Deputy Superintendent of Police concerned has been designated as the **Appellate Authority** to hear appeals of the aggrieved persons, arising from the orders issued by Station House Officer.

- I. Any aggrieved person may appeal to the Appellate Authority, and the appeal shall be decided within **seven days** of filing. The Appellate Authority will pass a detailed order with reasons in case of appeal rejection and issue directions to protect the life and liberty of the aggrieved if necessary.
- II. A copy of the order passed by the Appellate Authority shall be provided to the parties free of cost within one day and the copy thereof shall also be supplied to the SDPO/DSP/SHO concerned.

8. HELP DESK/REPORTING BY THE RUNAWAY COUPLES.:

The runaway couples may use the following facilities against the threat/crime against them.

- I. Dial 112 Emergency Response Service Scheme (ERSS).
- II. Dedicated help desk number 112.
- III. Chandigarh Police has created a link on website as "Special Cell for Protection of the Run Away Couples" to raise their grievance without the necessity of being physically presence or going to a Police Station.
- IV. After receiving a call, PCR Vehicle will be moved to the spot and the Duty Officer along with Officials of AHTU will rush to the spot immediately after making proper entry in the register of Crime & Criminal Tracking Network System (CCTNS). The Duty Officer will make assessment of threat to the newly married Run-away Couples and provide them security if required. Immediate steps will be taken to shift them to a safe house. Accordingly, the Run-away Couple will be admitted in Protection Home/Safe House, Sector-19 B, Chandigarh as per the guidelines of Protection home/safe house. In case of minor girl, she will be sent to Aashiana, Sector-15, Chandigarh.

9. **TO COLLECT AND MAINTAIN DATA:**

The Special Cell/AHTU, SHO and the Control Room No. 112 shall collect and maintain the information and prepare the data for one year in respect of newly married Run-away Couples who have approached to Hon'ble High Court or District and Sessions Judge or Chandigarh Police for protection of their life and safety.

10. **QUARTERLY REVIEW:**

The **Senior Superintendent of Police, UT, Chandigarh** shall conduct a **quarterly review meeting** on these matters. A report of the meeting shall be forwarded to the **Director General of Police, UT, Chandigarh for information.**

11. **COMPLIANCE REVIEW:**

An electronic record will be maintained by the **office of the Director General of Police, UT, Chandigarh**, to track compliance with the guidelines issued by the Hon'ble High Court.

12. **LEGAL AID:**

The Station House Officer shall make all efforts to provide free legal aid to the runaway couples as and when required through **State Legal Services Authority/District Legal Services Authority, UT, Chandigarh.**

13. **PUBLICITY OF HELPLINE AND SOP:**

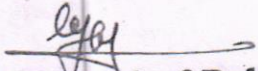
Wide publicity regarding the designated help line number, Protection Home/Safe Houses and the Standard Operating Procedure shall be made by **Public Relation Officer, Chandigarh Police and social media, Branch of Chandigarh police.**

14. **COMPLIANCE:**

All concerned officials are directed to ensure meticulous compliance with the directions and guidelines issued by the **Hon'ble High Court** and the aforementioned SOP to effectively address the issue

of runaway couples. Any failure by the entrusted officer shall be considered as an act of misconduct for which strict departmental action shall be taken as per rules.

This SOP is being issued in suppression of SOP issued vide No. 9478-9529/UT/HAC dated 22.12.2021.


Inspector General of Police
U.T., Chandigarh.

No. 9385-9450/UT/HAC, dated, Chandigarh the: 27-02-2025.

A copy is forwarded to the following for information and necessary action:-

1. The Home Secretary, Chandigarh Administration, Chandigarh.
2. The Director, Social Welfare, Chandigarh Administration.
3. All SSPs.
4. All SPs, SP/W&CSU
5. All SDPOs & DSP/W&CSU
6. All DSPs
7. All SHOs, I/C AHTU & All I/C Units
- ✓ 8. I/C Computer Section (To upload the same on the official website of Chandigarh Police).
9. Reader to W/DGP & IGP/UT.