

**Office of the Special Relief Commissioner, Odisha**  
**Rajiv Bhawan, Ground floor, Unit- 5, Bhubaneswar**

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From

Sri P. K. Mohapatra I.A.S.  
Special Relief Commissioner and  
Ex-officio Special Secretary to Government,  
Revenue and Disaster Management Department

To

All Collectors

**Sub: Procedures / guidelines for maintenance of records relating to the relief operations on account of natural calamities**

Sir,

In the wake of different natural calamities occurring in the State, elaborate arrangements are being made by the State Government for administration of different assistance for the people and animals in the affected areas. Even as speed is the essence of relief administration, it is important to ensure that relief materials are distributed to the right beneficiaries in a transparent manner and all records relating to relief operations are properly maintained.

General guidelines regarding maintenance of accounts of relief expenditure are outlined in Chapter XVI of the Odisha Relief Code (ORC). Para 267 of the said code envisages that the ordinary accounting procedure laid down in the Odisha General Financial Rules, Treasury Code and in other such rules and executive instructions issued by the Finance Department are considered adequate for the purpose of maintenance of relief accounts and checks at different levels and should therefore be followed. Further for the efficient control of relief expenditure, it is advised that there should be prompt scrutiny and check of all returns at different levels.

Despite such provisions in the Relief code and instructions issued from time to time, lapses are sometimes noticed in proper maintenance of records relating to relief measures undertaken in the calamity affected areas. In a

recent second appeal before the State Information Commission under RTI Act, the Honourable Commission have pointed out about the accountability deficit & non-availability of records for supply of information and have directed to issue a comprehensive guideline to all field formations to properly maintain the records relating to the relief operation measures to cater to the information needs of the people in future without any hassle.

In order to streamline the maintenance of records relating to the relief operations on account of natural calamities a uniform procedure is to be followed on the matter by all. The following instructions/ guidelines are issued for compliance scrupulously by all concerned.

1. As provided under para-15 of ORC, the Collectors are responsible for all relief operations in their districts. They have to coordinate the relief activities of the District Level Officers of different Departments. They have been delegated with necessary powers for requisition of the services of both gazetted and non-gazetted officers of all Departments working in the respective Districts for administration of relief operations in the areas affected by natural calamities. Similarly, the Sub-Collectors are responsible for all relief operations in the Sub-division and shall co-ordinate as well as supervise the work of Relief officers, Tahasildars and Block Development Officers in their Sub-division (Para-16).
2. The Block is the Unit of emergency management including relief operations in rural areas and the Block Development Officer is the officer-in-charge of the Unit. In urban areas, the Corporations/ Municipalities and NACs take the place of Block and the Chief Executive/ Executive Officers of the Corporations/ Municipalities/ NACs, the place of Block Development Officer. If the distress is acute and extensive emergency relief measures are to be undertaken, the Collector may divide the Block into two Units, one being kept under the charge of the BDO and the other in the charge of the ABDO/ other designated officer. These Units shall work under the direct supervision of the Sub-Collector. Depending on the requirement, the Collector/ Sub-Collector can deploy more officers to assist the Block Development Officer or other authorised officer in charge of Units in relief

operation. The Block Development Officer may also take the assistance of local Tahasildar/ Additional Tahasildar for the purpose. Similar arrangements can also be made in the ULBs in similar circumstances.

3. As a standard practice, the Block Development Officer or as the case may be the Executive Officer of the ULB or other authorised officer shall keep the Relief Officers notified beforehand for different GPs/ Wards/ small Units. Extension officers/ VLWs/ Executive Officers of GPs in case of Blocks and their counterparts in ULBs should generally be notified as Relief Officers. Revenue Inspectors/ Revenue Supervisors should not normally be Relief Officer as their services may be otherwise required by the Tahasildars for damage assessment of houses, crops, etc. and distribution of financial assistances, polythene, etc. However, they can also be engaged in relief operation when so required under the orders of Tahasildar/ Sub-Collector. If an official notified as Relief Officer for any GP/ Ward/ Unit is transferred, the person joining in his/her place or any other official shall be kept in charge of Relief Officer for that GP/ Ward/ Unit immediately.
4. The Relief Officer will be in charge of relief operation in the concerned GP/ Ward/ Unit as assigned to him. However, more officials can be deployed to assist the Relief Officer in the relief operation, where necessary, under the orders of Block Development Officer/ Executive Officer of the ULB/ other authorised officers or higher officers. The Relief Officers will also be responsible to keep track of occurrence of all disaster events in the area under their charge and report the same to the Block Development Officer/ Executive Officer of the ULB/ other authorised officers /higher quarters expeditiously.
5. The materials which are generally administered as relief for the affected population and animals can be divided into four broad categories namely (1) Cooked food through free kitchen, (2) Emergent food assistance in shape of dry ration including ready-to-eat and other necessities of life, (3) Baby food and (4) Cattle feed.

6. For administration of emergent assistance, as per para-165(5) of ORC, the Collector is competent to sanction emergent assistance for a period up to three days (Collector can delegate such power to Sub-Collectors), the Revenue Divisional Commissioner up to seven days and the Special Relief Commissioner up to fifteen days, all cumulatively. In case of calamity of a very devastating nature, emergent assistance can be provided beyond the period of fifteen days with prior orders of the Government. This is also applicable to provision of cooked food through free kitchen. It is advised that the Collectors may immediately delegate their power to sanction emergent assistance for a period up to three days to their Sub-Collectors, if not already done.
7. In view of the provisions mentioned in the foregoing paragraph, the Block Development Officer/ Executive Officer of the ULB/ other authorised officers in charge of the Block/ ULB/ Unit, is required to assess the situation arising out of any natural calamity occurred in his/her area and if satisfied, will immediately obtain written permission from the Sub-Collector/ Collector for distribution of emergent assistance or start free kitchen to provide cooked food to the affected persons. But in some cases, as communication systems also fail in calamity situations, it may not be possible to obtain the written order instantly. In such cases, the concerned officer should appraise the situation to the Sub-Collector/ Collector over phone and get verbal orders, go ahead with the free kitchen/ relief operation and obtain written approval at the earliest opportunity.
8. Once the decision to open free kitchen or to distribute emergent assistance is taken, the Relief Officers of the concerned GPs/ Wards/ Units will take steps to prepare the list of affected persons required to be provided with such assistance (here-in-after called beneficiary list). As a standard practice, the Relief Officers will always keep up-to-date information about the population in the area under their charge village/ Ward and household-wise so that it will be easier to prepare the beneficiary list, when required. Before administration of emergent

assistance, the beneficiary list can be prepared with required addition and alterations in the said list as per the current status. Such list shall be prepared in the village/ ward in presence of the concerned Ward Member/ Corporator/ Councillor/ other known persons.

9. If emergent assistance is to be distributed in a number of villages under a GP simultaneously, the beneficiary list may be prepared by other officials deployed to assist in relief operation under the supervision of the Relief Officer of the GP. The beneficiary list shall be signed by the official(s) who prepare it, the Relief Officer and the Ward Member/ Corporator/ Councillor/ other known persons present. The beneficiary list shall be arranged Household-wise, Ward/ Village-wise & Gram Panchayat-wise in case of rural area and Household-wise & Ward-wise in case of urban area. The list will have a column for signature of the person receiving the assistance for the household and thus serve as acquittance roll also. The Block Development Officer or the Chief Executive/ Executive Officer, as the case may be, shall make tour to as many as distribution centres as possible and make sample checks about correctness of the beneficiary list-cum-acquittance roll and record his/her /her findings on the same after every checking.
10. In emergency situations, it is always found difficult to prepare a concrete list of beneficiaries in advance who are to be provided with cooked food through free kitchen. In such cases, tentative list have to be drawn/ estimate prepared on the basis of which food arrangement may be done. Persons taking their meal in the free kitchen or household heads may put their signature on the acquittance roll. Assistance of the Sarpanch/ PS Member/ Ward Member of the locality/ Non-Governmental Organisations/ Community Based Organisations/ Self Help Groups/ Village leaders/ Community members as considered appropriate may be taken for organising the free kitchen smoothly. However, a Government official may be kept in charge of the free kitchen centre who will be responsible to maintain the records and accounts. He will receive the materials supplied from Block/ Government Organisation/ other Govt. sources under proper

acknowledgement, keep and submit the vouchers of the materials locally procured along with the acquittance roll-cum-beneficiary list to the Block through the Relief Officer of the GP/ Ward/ Unit concerned.

11. Before the monsoon breaks, usually rice is stored at GP/ dealer points in the areas likely to be cut off during flood. Besides, additional stocks are mobilised once the high flood is imminent or during/ immediately after the flood. Usually lifting and transportation of rice/ other relief materials allotted by the District office for relief operation from the warehouse is facilitated by the Marketing Inspector in charge of the concerned Block under the supervision of the Block Development Officer concerned. The said practice will continue. Once the rice / other relief materials are despatched from the District/ State level reaches the Block point or another point fixed by the Block Development Officer, a responsible official kept in charge of the store will receive the same and make entry in stock register. While diverting the stock to GP/ village points, the Relief Officers of the concerned GPs will receive the stock. As far as possible, the same truck carrying relief stock to Block point may be diverted to GP point in order to save time but such stock shall be first entered in the Block's stock register and issued to the GP concerned to be received by the concerned Relief Officer. In case relief operation is to be made in several villages under a GP, the Relief Officer will make arrangement to send stock as per requirement to the concerned village points. The officials given charge of relief distribution in different villages will receive stock from the Relief Officer of the GP.
12. The distribution of emergent assistance shall be done by the Relief Officer or the authorised official in presence of the concerned Ward Member/ Corporator/ Councillor/ other known persons and signature of the person receiving the same on behalf of the house hold shall be taken on the acquittance roll. After the distribution, the officer in charge of distribution shall sign the acquittance roll himself and obtain signature of the concerned Ward Member/ Corporator/ Councillor/ other known persons present during distribution.

13. After distribution of the relief materials, the empty gunny bags should be disposed off through auction sale on the spot as transporting those back to Block headquarters and storing for disposal at later stage may not be cost effective. The sale proceeds towards disposal of empty gunny bags shall be deposited in the Block along with the record of auction sale.
14. The officer in charge of distribution (if he is not the Relief Officer) shall forthwith submit acquittance roll duly signed as indicated above to the Relief Officer. The Relief Officer must submit the acquittance rolls in respect of the distribution made by him or that received from another authorised person in charge of distribution to the Block Development Officer within 3 days of distribution. In any case, the officers requisitioned for relief operation must deposit all records including acquittance rolls, vouchers, document in support of disposal/ auction sale of empty gunny bags, sales proceeds of empty gunny bags, unspent amount out of cash advance, if any taken, before he/ she is relieved.
15. For distribution of cattle feed, the assessment of requirement shall be made by the CDVO with the help of Veterinary Assistant Surgeons (VAS) and other field officials and placed before the Collector for placing requisition with the F&ARD Department. The list of eligible beneficiaries (cattle owners) shall be prepared by the veterinary field officials and approved by the concerned VAS. The cattle feed supplied from the State level shall be received by the CDVO or his sub-ordinate official and distributed through the field officials. The VAS shall maintain close coordination with the Block Development Officers on the matter and in case sufficient field staffs are not available to cope up with the work, the VAS shall brought the matter to the notice of Block Development Officer who shall render necessary assistance for smooth distribution of the cattle feed. Ideally, food assistance for affected people and cattle feed for the affected cattle population should be distributed simultaneously at the same distribution centres. Same procedure as followed for distribution of emergent assistance for the affected people shall be applied for distribution of cattle feed and similar records maintained. The CDVO shall

be in charge of overall supervision of distribution of cattle feed in the District and shall remain in close coordination with the Collector and his office.

16. In case of administration of relief materials to meet the special needs of the children, pregnant & lactating mothers and other women, the task shall be accomplished by the Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) under the supervision of the District Social Welfare Officer. The list of eligible beneficiaries shall be prepared by the CDPOs through AW supervisors/ workers. The materials supplied from the State level shall be received by the CDPOs or his sub-ordinate official and distributed through AW supervisors/ workers in close coordination with the Block Development Officers.
17. The relief materials received from State Headquarters / PSUs / Donor Agencies / NGOs/ from any other source may be stocked at District Headquarters / Sub Divisions. The officer in charge of relief godown at these places should maintain a stock register indicating the source of receipt, quantity and date-wise issue of materials to Blocks/ Corporations/ Municipalities/ NACs. The safety of the stock shall be ensured. All receipts and issues of the relief materials shall be properly entered in the Stock Register and the Issue Register and duly accounted for by the officer in charge of relief godown.
18. In rural areas relief materials should ordinarily be stored in GP godown. If GP has no godown, a relief centre shall be located by hiring private accommodation on prevailing rate of the locality for the purpose of distribution of relief at the Gram Panchayat. Where the area of a Grama Panchayat is large, it may have more than one centre so that no person should be required to travel for more than about three KM; to receive the relief. In that case the villages of the Grama Panchayat tagged to each centre shall be clearly specified in order to avoid confusion on duplication.

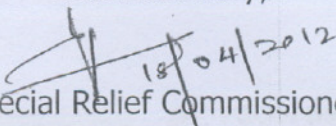
The GP godown/ hired relief centre should be in higher places which are not susceptible to floods. In case the GP godown is in a low



lying area susceptible to inundation during floods or otherwise unsuitable for relief operation, then the nearby Flood/ Cyclone Shelter may be used for the purpose of stocking of the relief materials subject to availability of space and fulfilment of other safety concerns.

19. All other provisions provided in the Odisha Relief Code/ norms and guidelines for administration of SDRF/ NDRF shall mutatis mutandis apply in administration of relief and maintenance of records.

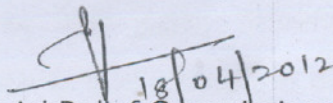
Yours faithfully,



Special Relief Commissioner &  
Ex-officio Special Secretary to Government

Memo No. 769 /SR, Date: 19/04/12

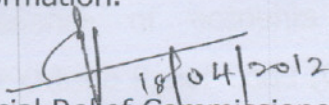
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Special Relief Commissioner &  
Ex-officio Special Secretary to Government

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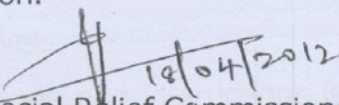
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Special Relief Commissioner &  
Ex-officio Special Secretary to Government

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Special Relief Commissioner &  
Ex-officio Special Secretary to Government