

F. No.9(1)/2019-Comp. Cell (e-367771)

Government of India
Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
Department of Food & Public Distribution
(Computerization Cell)

Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi 110001

Dated, the 23rd April 2020

To

Principal Secretary/Secretary,
Food & Civil Supplies Department,
All States/UTs

Subject: Authentication of beneficiaries through ePoS device – reg.

Sir/Madam,

As you are aware, in the wake of Covid-19 outbreak in the country, the Government of India has taken several pro-poor measures to minimize the economic hardships faced by them. Accordingly, under the 'Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana'(PM-GKAY) the Government of India in association with all States/UTs has started the distribution of additional free foodgrains @ 5 Kg per person per to all NFSA ration card holders for a period of 3 months (April to June 2020), to ensure the food security of all 80 Crore poor and needy beneficiaries covered under NFSA apart from regular foodgrain distribution under TPDS as per norms of NFSA, so that they do not suffer on account of non-availability of foodgrains during the ongoing period of crisis.

2. It is highlighted that the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) provides for use of Aadhaar for authentication of beneficiaries with an objective to ensure that the food-security of intended beneficiaries under the Act is met i.e. to ensure the delivery of subsidised foodgrains to right/genuine beneficiary in timely and transparent manner, as the beneficiary himself/herself authenticates the receipt of his/her entitled foodgrains.

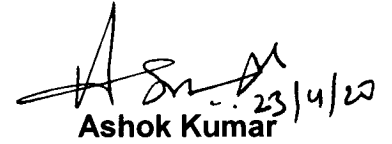
3. Presently, during the ongoing crisis, it is the constant endeavour of the Government to minimise the food-security hardships of the poor and vulnerable/needy beneficiaries by ensuring timely and transparent delivery of foodgrains – (i) under regular NFSA and (ii) additional free foodgrains under PM-GKAY scheme. Thus, it is desirable that all States/UTs continue the use of ePoS devices for the distribution of foodgrains under both NFSA and PM-GKAY for right delivery of foodgrain after following advisories issued by the department vide letter dated 18/03/2020 and 03/04/2020 related to social distancing, hygiene, ect. And after taking all other necessary precautions and preventive measures to contain the spread of Covid-19 in PDS operations.

4. However, some States/UTs have suspended biometric authentication under the provision of the Epidemic Disease Act, 1897 or through executive orders. It has come to the notice of this Department that few States are also allowing distribution of foodgrains under portability transactions without any authentication.

5. However, to ensure food security to all the poor and vulnerable section of society and rightful delivery to intended beneficiaries under NFSA and PM-GKAY, it is advised that Aadhaar authentication of beneficiaries either biometrically or through Aadhaar-OTP (SMS on beneficiary mobile) through ePoS device should be the most preferred mode of authentication. Alternatively, PDS-OTP (SMS on beneficiary mobile), if available, may also be used to authenticate the transaction. If any States/UT devise any other methodology of authentication of beneficiaries during distribution of foodgrains, then, concerned State/UT may ensure that such distribution takes place in the presence of a responsible Govt. Officer/Employee for ensuring the delivery of foodgrains to right persons/beneficiaries. It is also suggested that transaction receipt from ePoS device must be given to all beneficiaries after the transaction including in case of PM-GKAY.

6. It is however clarified that portability transactions may be allowed only after Aadhar based biometric /Aadhar OTP. Further, under no circumstances the transactions/distribution of foodgrains may be authenticated only by FPS dealers.

Yours faithfully,



Ashok Kumar

Under Secretary to the Govt. of India
Tel: 23383942

Copy to:

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2. Sh. Guru Prasad, Sr. Technical Director, NIC AePDS Team, Hyderabad