

**F. No. 9-2/2019-PD.II (E:366891)**

Government of India  
Ministry of Consumer Affairs Food and Public Distribution  
Department of Food & Public Distribution

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R. No. 275, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi - 110001

Dated the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

To

Principal Secretary/Secretary,  
Food & Civil Supplies Department,  
Government/Administration of – All States/UTs

**Subject: Advisory for taking preventive measures for containing the spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) across TPDS operations and distribution of foodgrains under PM-GKAY – reg.**

Sir/Madam,

In continuation to earlier advisory of this Department dated 18/03/2020, the following precautionary measures are re-iterated to all State/UT Governments to contain the spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) across the PDS operations including the distribution of foodgrains at Fair Price Shops (FPSs) through ePoS devices and otherwise.

2. All concerned stakeholders, including FPS dealers, beneficiaries, etc. shall be educated properly to ensure their co-operation for taking all possible preventive measures and avoid creating any panic situation on the ground. The preventive measures suggested here are temporary in order to minimize the impacts of ongoing COVID-19 outbreak in the country.
3. States/UTs may also issue own advisories/orders in this regard, however, they are advised to take all necessary measures which may include the following:
  - a. Ensure social distancing at all places as means of non-pharmaceutical infection prevention and control intervention process. A distance of about 1 (one) meter shall be maintained among the persons (beneficiaries/ officials/ staff/ workers/ etc.) at all times. Queues at the FPSs shall be streamlined by making markings on the ground at a distance of 1 meter each.
  - b. Simple surgical masks/handkerchiefs may be used to cover the face. This is a capable method for preventing the spread of Novel Coronavirus as per the interviews/advisories of various medical experts seen on different media from time to time.
  - c. Proper washing/sanitization of hands/fingers/nails, preferably with soap and water is highly recommended for each beneficiary before performing biometric authentication on ePoS devices. Alcohol based hand-sanitisers may also be used

for this purpose.

- d. All FPS dealers shall also be advised to ensure regular sanitisation of hands as above, while using ePoS devices, from time-to-time.
  - e. States/UTs shall ensure regular supply of Hand Sanitisers, Soaps and running water at all FPSs, Godowns, etc. for the use and benefit of all beneficiaries, FPS dealers, staff, labour, etc.
  - f. Distribution of foodgrains may be done in staggered manner throughout the day to avoid accumulation/queuing up of large number of beneficiaries/persons at the FPSs/one place at any point of time. For this, days for distribution of foodgrains at FPSs may be extended up to maximum period of the month.
  - g. Ensure the opening of FPSs for distribution of PM-GKAY and NFSA foodgrains for all days of the month. FPS dealer promptly display minimum requisite information to beneficiaries regarding opening and closing time of shop, scale and price, type of commodity, etc. for both NFSA and PM-GKAY foodgrains at least two or three locations inside and outside of the shop.
  - h. Immediate awareness generation among the beneficiaries, FPS dealers and other stakeholders about additional quantity and free-of-cost distribution of foodgrains for a period of next three months i.e. April to June 2020 under PM-GKAY.
  - i. Maintain separate transactions through e-POS device of both foodgrain distribution under NFSA and PM-GKAY scheme on Annavitran portal and State/UT portal for each month for future references and settlement
  - j. Information dissemination about available grievance redressal mechanism (i.e. toll-free numbers/online grievance system), contact details of local/district level officers (DFSOs/Inspectors), Vigilance Committees, State Food Commission, etc. for quick and efficient redressal of beneficiaries' grievances
  - k. Setting up of close monitoring mechanism for foodgrains distribution at all FPSs to ensure smooth implementation PM-GKAY scheme and check leakages/ diversions of foodgrains.
  - l. Immediately appoint a Nodal Officer under PM-GKAY for all type of coordination with FCI, NIC, this Department and other stakeholders w.r.t. implementation of the scheme, ensured distribution of foodgrains, etc. (Name, designation and contact details of nodal officer shall be shared with this Department.
4. It is also stated that, as per para 9 (9) of the Targeted Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2015, the State/UT Governments shall allow the sale of commodities other than foodgrains distributed under the TPDS at the FPSs. In this connection, if it is seen that there is need/demand to distribute items like masks, hand sanitisers, soaps, etc. which are required as a preventive strategy to contain the transmission of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), the States/UTs shall make proactive arrangements for their availability and sale at the FPSs.
5. Further, an indicative list of important Do's and Don'ts is also annexed which may be displayed prominently at two-three places inside/outside of each FPS and may also be used for creating wide awareness among beneficiaries, FPS dealers, field staff/functionaries and public at large.

Yours faithfully,

Digitally signed by RAJESH KUM  
PANDEER

Date: Fri Apr 03 17:02:45 IST 2020

Reason: Approved

(Rajesh Kumar Pandeer)  
Under Secretary to the Government of India  
Tel: 011-23389967

Copy to:

- 1.) PPS to Secretary (F&PD), D/o F&PD, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi
- 2.) PS to Joint Secretary (Admn.), D/o F&PD, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi

### Do's

- a) Maintain personal hygiene and physical distancing.
- b) Practice frequent hand washing. Wash hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand rub. Wash hands even if they are visibly clean.
- c) Cover your nose and mouth with handkerchief/tissue while sneezing and coughing.
- d) Safely throw used tissues, masks, etc. into closed bins immediately after use.
- e) Maintain a safe distance from persons during interaction, especially with those having flu-like symptoms.
- f) Sneeze in the inner side of your elbow and not to cough into the palms of your hands.
- g) Regularly take body temperature and check for respiratory symptoms.
- h) See/visit a doctor if you feel unwell (fever, difficulty in breathing and coughing). While visiting doctor, wear a mask/cloth to cover your mouth and nose.
- i) For any fever/flu-like signs/symptoms, please contact/call State Helpline Number(s) or the 24x7 helpline number of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare at 011-23978046.

### Don'ts

- a) Shake hands.
- b) Have a close contact with anyone, if you're experiencing cough and fever.
- c) Touch your eyes, nose and mouth
- d) Sneeze or cough into palms of your hands.
- e) Spit in Public.
- f) Travel unnecessarily, particularly to any affected region.
- g) Participate in large gatherings, including sitting in groups at canteens.
- h) Visit gyms, clubs and crowded places etc.
- i) Spread rumours or panic.