

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
Panchayats & Rural Development Department
Joint Administrative Building
Block HC-7, Sector -III, Salt Lake
Kolkata-700 106

Memo. No. 1864(21)-RD/O/NREGA/18S-07/06

Dated: 31/03/2017

From: Dibyendu Sarkar, IAS
Commissioner, P&RD Department

To: The Principal Secretary, GTA
The District Magistrate and District Programme Coordinator (all),
The Additional Executive Officer, Siliguri Mahakuma Parishad

Sub: Working of Skilled Technical Personnel (STP) in Mahatma
Gandhi NREGA set up

Madam/Sir,

In West Bengal there is the position of a qualified technical person in the Gram Panchayat to look after the works implemented under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. Designated as Nirman Sahayak, this Diploma Engineer is the authority in preparing plans and estimates, taking measurement in the field, taking check measurements as and when required, assigning specific work to the GRS, making entries in the measurement books and certifying closure of a master roll, taking measurement against the material procured for implementation of the programme after ensuring quality, as per specification, and processing the bills submitted by the suppliers for measurement based payment.

Mahatma Gandhi NREGA having been a programme with a large spread, it was often found difficult by the lone Nirman Sahayak to keep tab on all the works implemented in the field. The GRS had certain limitations as they lack in required technical qualifications. It is in this prospective to address the gap between the requirement of works in the field and the capability of a single technical person the concept of Skilled Technical Person (STP) was introduced. Initially the STP was engaged against specific work and the paid the wages of a skilled worker under

Mahatma Gandhi NREGA from out of the material component. However, overtime the requirement of technical manpower in the GP for supervising Mahatma Gandhi NREGA increased. It was also realized that payment out of material component is fully dependent on implementation of works at a specific time and payment of wages to the STPs was often not released in time. This proved to be detrimental to programme implementation as lack of regular payment discouraged the STPs in properly discharging their functions. Moreover it is the responsibility of the authority to ensure that the workers in the programme are paid in time. With approval of the State Employment Guarantee Council (SEGC), the State Government decided to pay their monthly remuneration to the tune of Rs.13200.00 per month and out of the administrative expenses category. Since this has become a monthly remuneration, the STPs are now governed by specific terms of contract as applicable to other contractual employees under the programme following other broad contours of the engagement. Naturally, in the modified scheme of things there is the need to delineate the functions of the STPs as well as provide certain specific directions as to the eligibility to the employee privileges vis-à-vis other contractual employees.

Under the circumstances the following broad clarifications are provided:

1. Henceforth all existing STPs will have to enter into an annual contract with the GP for rendering their services for implementation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. The annual contract will continue to be renewed till the programme demands. In case the STP does not want to continue she/he will be at liberty to quit, subject to a notice of at least one month. In case the GP is not satisfied with the services provided by the STP, a correspondence will be made to the District Programme Coordinator through the concerned Programme Officer. In the said correspondence specific observation as to why the GP proposes not to renew the contract will have to be given. Only when the DPC approves, the GP can go for either termination of a contract within the year or non-renewal of contract beyond a year. The District

Programme Coordinator should give the incumbent an opportunity of being heard before communicating his decision.

2. Since there is specific provision for monthly remuneration to the STPs under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA with leave and the facilities as applicable to the contractual employees under the programme, the STP will not receive any additional payment from the GP for providing services.

3. In the GP the STP will be responsible for providing the following services:
 - a. Being part of the planning process and preparation of the shelf of schemes for implementation in a financial year
 - b. Preparation of the rough cost estimate of the works proposed to be included in the Annual Action Plan for obtaining approval of the DPC
 - c. Taking pre-work measurement in the field, with photographs in respect of different works proposed to be taken up for implementation
 - d. Coordinating meetings with the recipients of IBS support to explain the technicalities of the works to be implemented at the household level and the schedule of release of wages/ material payments
 - e. Giving initial mark up/ lay out for the community works implemented in the field and explaining to the Supervisors and wage seekers as to the technicalities of work implementation
 - f. Taking measurement of ongoing works, especially on closure of a muster roll (closure of the muster rolls will be on the last day as marked in the muster- T day) and measurement will be completed positively within the 3 days from the T day
 - g. Taking measurement of works on completion of a scheme and preparing scheme completion report
 - h. Writing Measurement Books (MB) on the basis of field measurement, in case where the measurements are taken by the STP and recommend labour payments only on the basis of measurement

- i. Measuring the quality and quantity of materials supplied for implementation of works under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA, ensuring stock entries and entering the same in the MB in respect of specific works assigned to the STP concerned

4. There should not be any confusion as to the distribution of functions between the Nirman Sahayak (NS) and the STP. The NS is the regular engineering staff in the Gram Panchayat and over all responsibility in respect of the technical matters in Mahatma Gandhi NREGA lies on him. The STP is supposed to support the NS in discharging technical functions. However, for speedier implementation of the programme, there should be distribution of functions between the two. All major constructions like construction of AWC, RGBNSK, common infrastructure for the NRLM complaint SHGs, Check Dams and other investment heavy watershed interventions will be directly supervised by the NS. On the other hand, all wage intensive works like excavation, earthwork, plantation will be distributed among the NS and the STP. There will also be further distribution the responsibility of taking measurements for earthwork, plantation related work and works in the IBS category to the GRS and the BFT (where the BFTS are engaged). It is also possible to distribute Gram Sansads between the NS and the STPs so that there is clear distribution of works. Moreover, the NS will also be responsible to do check measurement on 25 (twenty five) percent of the works measured by the STP. Records of all such measurements will have to be maintained in the MB and payments will be released only after modifications, wherever required, based on such findings of the NS. All MBs will be issued by the PO and appropriate records will be kept in the GP. On complete utilization of a MB, this will be preserved in the work file.

5. In terms of reporting, the STP will report to the Executive Assistant/Secretary to the GP and will work under the overall superintendence and control of the Pradhan of the GP.

6. The STP will also be eligible for inclusion in the State Government notified Health Insurance Scheme namely 'Swastha Sathi'. Necessary entries into the Swastha Sathi portal will be made by the district Mahatma Gandhi NREGA Cell or the officer authorized by the District Magistrate.
7. The STP will be entitled to Casual Leave and Earned Leave for 30 days as applicable to other contractual employees engaged in MGNREGA. However, Earned Leave for a year on contract will not be carried forward to the next year of contract. Moreover, leave cannot be claimed as a matter of right and except Casual Leave all other leaves will have to be supported by appropriate intimation to the authority and the authority will be at liberty to sanction or not sanction leave during a specific period with appropriate reasons.
8. Before releasing payments to the STPs, the Programme Officer will obtain a working certificate for the STPs from the concerned Gram Panchayats. If the STP is found to be absent beyond admissible leave, there will be deductions in contractual remunerations on pro-rate basis.
9. Women STPs will also be entitled to maternity leave for a period not exceeding 180 days for the first two pregnancies. Maternity leave too will have to be sanctioned beforehand so that the GP can make alternative arrangements during the period of prolonged absence.
11. Although the STPs are engaged in specific Gram Panchayats, the Programme Officer will be authorized to reallocate STPs within the Block, based on requirement of the programme. It is advisable to make inter-GP transfer of the STPs at least once in five years. The DPC is authorized to go for inter-block relocation of STPs in case of surplus in a block or in exigency. Such relocation will be, as far as practicable, closer to the residence of the concerned STP.

10. The entire arrangements in case of STPs are made only to streamline the process of utilization of existing STPs and there will be no new engagement of STPs in the State.

Yours faithfully,

(Dibyendu Sarkar)

Commissioner, Panchayats & Rural Development Department

31.03.2017