

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

Memo. No. 1860-RD/O/NREGA/18S-03/10

Dated: 31/03/2017

From: DibyenduSarkar, IAS
Commissioner, MGNREGA

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

Sub: Working of Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLE) in the
Mahatma Gandhi NREGA set up

Madam/Sir,

Since bringing the VLEs in the fold of monthly payment of wages, several communications have been received from the districts seeking clarifications on different issues governing their terms of engagement. Keeping all these in mind a comprehensive set of guidelines as to the role and responsibilities and the service conditions of the VLEs is hereby issued.

In the original Mahatma Gandhi NREGA set up we had only Gram RojgarSevak contractually engaged at the level of the Gram Panchayat. To provide data entry support to the GP the concept of VLE was introduced. The VLEs are actually local entrepreneurs providing support to the GP for data entry in Mahatma Gandhi NREGA along with other activities. There were rates prescribed for different types of data entry. Later on the data entry system in NREGSoft became so complicated that it became extremely difficult to prescribe rates for the data entry activities.

It is in this perspective the State Government decided to fix monthly contractual remuneration for the VLEs and thus brought them closer to other contractual employees under the programme. Naturally, in the modified scheme of things there is the need to delineate the functions of the VLEs 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 VLEs 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 VLE does not want to continue she/he will be at liberty to quit with a minimum of a month's notice. In case the GP is not satisfied with the services provided by the VLE, 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 VLEs under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA with leave and the facilities as applicable to the contractual employees under the programme, the VLE will not receive any additional payment from the GP for providing data entry support. However, in specific cases where additional incentive is prescribed by the authority running other rural development programmes for providing different field/ office based support, the VLE will also be eligible for such incentive.
3. In the GP the VLE will be responsible for making data entry in the MIS ranging from registration for job cards to marking works as complete in the MIS for the purpose FTO generation. Moreover, any future requirement of data entry in NREGASoft and related software systems, including any such system introduced by the State Government will be addressed by the VLE. However, no digital signature certificate will be in the custody of the VLE

and the final authority of signing the FTOs will lie on the Executive Assistant/Secretary as 'maker' and the Pradhan as 'checker'.

4. There should not be any confusion as to the distribution of functions between the GRS and VLEs. The GRS will be squarely responsible for maintenance of all records pertaining to Mahatma Gandhi NREGA including records of the job seekers, records of all schemes implemented under the programme, interaction with the supervisors in the field and also checking measurement in respect of work where they are authorized to take measurement. Physical updating of Job Cards, physical updating of the Job Card Registers, Maintaining work file too will be the responsibility of the GRS. The work of VLE on the other hand will start where the work of the GRS ends. She/he will be responsible for making all kinds of data entry into the software system and keeping record of such data. Also, the VLEs will be responsible for all kinds of report/ returns in the GP. In terms of reporting, the VLE 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.
5. The VLE will also be eligible for inclusion in the State Government notified Health Insurance Scheme namely 'SasthaSwathi'. Necessary entries into the SasthaSwathiportal will be made by the district Mahatma Gandhi NREGA Cell or the officer authorized by the District Magistrate.
6. The VLE 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.

7. Women VLEs 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 arrangement during the period of prolonged absence.
8. Before releasing payments to the VLEs, the Programme Officer will obtain a working certificate for the VLEs from the concerned Gram Panchayats. If the VLE is found to be absent beyond admissible leave, there will be deductions in contractual remunerations on pro-rate basis.
9. Although the VLEs are engaged in specific Gram Panchayats, the Programme Officer will be authorized to reallocate VLEs within the Block, based on requirement of the programme. Such relocation will be, as far as practicable, closer to the residence of the concerned VLE. It is advisable to make inter-GP transfer of the VLEs at least once in five years.
10. There will be only one VLE in a Gram Panchayat. If there are multiple VLEs in a GP, those will have to be relocated to GPs having no VLE in position. No new VLE will be engaged, unless there is clear vacancy. In case of clear vacancy in a GP, the PO will engage new VLEs for all the vacant GPs in the Block after observing due process.

Yours faithfully,

(Dibyendu Sarkar)

Commissioner, Panchayats & Rural Development

21/3/2017