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Government of India
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)
5th Floor, Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan,
CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003
Dated: 11 August, 2025

PUBLIC CONSULTATION NOTICE

Subject: Draft Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) Arising out of Road Accidents and Post-Trauma Care of Victims Leading to Disabilities

The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, through its order dated 22.04.2014 in W.P. (C) No. 295 of 2012 — *S. Rajaseekaran vs. Union of India & Ors.* — entrusted the Supreme Court Committee on Road Safety (SCCORS) with the task of ensuring that the stakeholder Ministries and Departments prepare Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for monitoring the road safety situation in India. In this context, the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPWD) has prepared a Draft Standard Operating Procedure addressing the needs of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) arising out of road accidents and outlining measures for post-trauma care of victims leading to disabilities. The draft SOP is hereby placed in the public domain for comments and suggestions from all stakeholders, including individuals, organizations, experts, and the general public. The information is requested to be furnished through email in soft copy (word doc) at policy.depwd@gmail.com/debala.joarder@gov.in by 26.08.2025. It may be noted that suggestions/inputs received after the stipulated date will not be considered.

Encl: as above


11 Aug 2025.

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Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) Arising Out of Road Accidents and Post-Trauma Care of Victims Resulting in Disabilities

1. Introduction

India faces significant challenges in road safety due to its growing population density, increasing vehicle density, rash and negligent behavior on roads, and poor enforcement. Road accidents cause serious medical issues and injuries, many of which lead to temporary or permanent disabilities. As per available Report, road accidents are the leading cause of deaths and disabilities of commuters. Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) are particularly vulnerable due to inadequate infrastructure and lack of inclusive enforcement mechanisms.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act, 2016, mandates equal access to services, rehabilitation, and social integration for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). India's commitment to inclusive road safety aligns with global priorities set by the United Nations and the World Health Organization (WHO) through universal design, accessibility, and inclusive policies. This SOP provides a framework for identifying, responding to, and rehabilitating PwDs resulting from road accidents, various preventive measures, ensuring compliance with the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, the RPWD Act, 2016, and judicial directives from the Supreme Court Committee on Road Safety (SCCoRS).

2. Scope of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

This SOP outlines procedures for the identification, immediate response, medical treatment, rehabilitation, and long-term care of road accident victims who sustain disabilities and also to the victims who acquire disability due to accidents and in some cases are persons with disabilities as defined under RPWD Act 2016. It integrates with the Integrated Road Accident Database (iRAD), Electronic Detailed Accident Report (eDAR), and accessibility standards under the RPWD Act, 2016, to ensure coordinated efforts among police, transport, health, and social welfare agencies.

3. Definitions

1. **Person with Disability (PwD):** As defined under the RPWD Act, 2016, “person with disability” means a person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory

impairment which, in interaction with barriers, hinders his full and effective participation in society equally with others.

2. **Post-Trauma Care:** Medical, psychological, and rehabilitative services provided to road accident victims to address disabilities and promote recovery.
3. **“iRAD”:** Means Integrated Road Accident Database developed as a repository of Road Accident Database
4. **eDAR:** Electronic Detailed Accident Report generated through the iRAD platform, capturing accident and victim data.
5. **Good Samaritan:** An individual who voluntarily assists road accident victims, protected under Section 134A of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.
6. **UDID:** Unique Disability ID, a national identification system for PwDs to access benefits and services, administered under DEPwD, M/o SJE, Government of India.
7. **Adapted Vehicles:** Vehicles modified to accommodate the needs of PwDs, as per relevant instructions of M/o Road Transport and Highways.

4. Accessibility Standards for Roads and Transport

- a. **Compliance with Standards:** All new and retrofitted road and transport infrastructure shall comply with accessibility standards under Sections 40-42 of the RPWD Act, 2016, IRC codes (IRC-SP-37, IRC-37, IRC-103, IRC-SP-84), Harmonized Guidelines for Universal Accessibility in India, 2021 (notified by MoHUA, 18th October 2022), Accessibility Guidelines for Bus terminals and Bus stops issued by M/o Road Transport and Highways, GoI and other relevant Guidelines/provisions in the matter.
- b. **Pedestrian Facilities:** Install tactile paving, ramps, accessible crossings, audible signals , visual and tactile signage and curb cuts for barrier-free movement.
- c. **Monitoring:** States/UTs shall conduct regular audits to ensure adherence to accessibility standards.
- d. **Vehicle Adaptation:** States/UTs shall facilitate the conversion of vehicles into adapted vehicles for PwDs, applicable to public transport and app-based cab services, under relevant rules of M/oRT&H.

- e. **Public Transport:** Public vehicles shall comply with accessibility standards, including ramps, low-floor buses, and priority seating, as mandated by Section 41 of the RPWD Act, 2016 and prevalent Accessibility Guidelines.
- f. **Enforcement:** DRSCs shall ensure compliance by transport authorities and app-based services, with periodic inspections and report for non-compliance to the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities or Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities.
- g. **Disability Inclusive Zones:** DRSCs shall identify areas with high PwD footfall, such as rehabilitation centres, special schools, hospitals etc and ensure specific measures for safe commute of PwDs in these areas.
- h. **Data Integration:** The Integrated Road Accident Database (iRAD) integrates with VAHAN, SARATHI, CCTNS, and other platforms to ensure seamless data sharing. Accessibility data, such as locations of PwD-friendly infrastructure, may be integrated into iRAD for better monitoring and enforcement.

5. **Identification and Immediate Response for PwDs and coordination with emergency services:**

a) **First Responder Assessment:** First responders (police, paramedics, or Good Samaritans) shall conduct a preliminary assessment to identify prevalent disabilities (e.g., blind, locomotor etc) or signs of acquired disabilities (e.g., severe limb injuries, severe head trauma and alike).

b) **Coordination with Health Officials:** First responders shall notify the nearest hospital or trauma center mapped to a National Institute (NI)/Composite Regional Centre (CRC)/ Prosthetic and Orthotic Manufacturing and Distribution Kendra (PMDK), under D/o Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, M/o Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, for disability- assessment, caused by the accident and stabilization. The mapping of hospitals/ trauma centres with nearby NI/CRCs to be done by D/o Health of the concerned State/UTs in coordination with the Social Welfare/Disability Department of the State/UT.

6. **Sensitization/Training:**

- a) First responders (traffic police/ paramedics / road safety professionals etc) shall be sensitized/trained to recognize signs of disabilities, including physical impairments, sensory loss, or neurological issues, with training facilitated by DEPwD's NI/CRC network.
- b) DRSC shall arrange training on safe commute of PwDs to the staff of establishment with high footfall of persons with disabilities.
- c. First responders and medical personnel shall undergo mandatory training on disability identification, safe handling, and initial care to minimize future disabilities, conducted by AIIMS or state health departments in collaboration with NI/CRCs and State Disability Welfare Departments. The training to be held annually to update skills and incorporate new disability care protocols.
- d. Physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and counselors shall be trained in advanced rehabilitation techniques, tailored for road accident victims, at NI/CRCs in collaboration with State Health and State Disability Welfare Departments.

7. Mandatory facilities:

- a. **Safe Handling:** Victims with suspected spinal or limb injuries shall be handled using immobilization techniques (e.g., cervical collars, spine boards) to prevent further damage and minimize future disabilities.
- b. **Priority Evacuation:** Victims with existing/suspected disabilities shall be prioritized for evacuation to hospitals equipped with trauma and rehabilitation facilities linked to NI/CRC/PMDK.
- c. **Ambulance Deployment:** States/UTs shall ensure ambulances are equipped with disability-friendly equipment (e.g., stretchers with adjustable supports, ramps) compliant with relevant accessibility provisions of the RPWD Act, 2016.
- d. **Hospital Linkage:** District Road Safety Committees (DRSCs) shall maintain a directory of hospitals mapped to nearby NI/CRC/PMDK for disability assessment and long-term rehabilitation. **Each Trauma Centre can be mapped to the nearby NI/ CRC/ PMDK**
- e. **Real-Time Alerts:** The Details of confirmed/suspected disabilities shall be recorded in the eDAR system under a dedicated field for "Persons with Disability," integrated with the Unique Disability ID (UDID) portal through API,

to send automated alerts to hospitals, NI/CRC/PMDK, and social welfare departments when a potential PwD road accident victim is identified.

Rehab Service: Rehabilitation services to the persons acquiring disabilities or with existing disability will come into play only after the acute distress of road-accident is stabilized.

8. Post-Trauma Care, Rehabilitation and integration with Social Welfare Scheme:

a) **Initial Assessment:** Hospitals shall immediately commence comprehensive assessments to determine the nature and extent of disabilities using standardized tools. Treatment may involve orthopedic surgeons, neurologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, as per need, with referrals to mapped NI/CRC/PMDK for specialized care post-stabilization.

b) **Rehabilitation Plan:** The rehabilitation plan for every PwD road accident victim shall include physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and vocational training, facilitated by NI/CRC/PMDK for long-term care.

c) **Assistive Devices:** States/UTs shall ensure access to assistive devices (e.g., wheelchairs, prosthetic limbs, hearing aids) through the Assistance to Disabled Persons (ADIP) Scheme, DEPwD and relevant schemes of the State/UT Government.

d) **Rehabilitation Services:** Victims shall have access to psychological counseling to address expression of trauma, provided by NI/CRC or empaneled NGOs. States/UTs may collaborate with NGOs specializing in disability support for long-term counseling.

e) **Disability Certification:** The concerned Medical Authority shall issue disability certificate as per RPWD Act, 2016 and existing UDID guidelines

f) **Linkage with Schemes:** PwD victims to be informed about various schemes of the Central Government and State Governments for the empowerment of Persons with Disabilities and facilitate enrolment to such scheme as desired by the PwDs.

g) **Legal Support:** DRSCs shall coordinate with State Legal Services Authorities (SLSA) to ensure PwDs receive compensation under the Motor Vehicles Act and other relevant rules/provisions. The eDAR application is to be integrated with UDID database through API to verify authenticity of disability in r/o processing of claims by Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, thus ensuring legitimacy of higher compensation. In case of any suspicion, tests from some empanelled reputed hospitals may also be mandated to confirm the type and extent of disability to prevent misuse of benefits intended for PwDs.

h) **Insurance Coverage for Rehabilitation:** States/UTs shall collaborate with the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) to formulate policies mandating health and accident insurance packages to cover assistive technologies and rehabilitation services for road accident victims.

i) **Insurance cover:** Health insurance packages need to provide cover for assistive technology or rehabilitation services, to road accident victims, along with hospital expenses, in consultation with IRDAI.

j) **Prevention of Misuse:** To prevent the misuse of facilities intended for PwDs, through fake disability certificates, the SOP may incorporate a provision for obtaining data from a person's UDID card via API-sharing when filing a petition in the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, thus ensuring legitimacy of higher compensation. In case of any suspicion, tests from some empaneled and reputed hospital may also be mandated to confirm the type and extent of disability.

9. **Miscellaneous.**

A programs undertaken utilizing the Road Safety Fund should include disability-specific initiatives and awareness campaigns.

- a. The e-Challan system shall ensure transparency and efficiency in traffic law enforcement, with provisions for accessible communication for PwDs.
- b. The VAHAN and SARATHI portal are to be updated with PwD-specific vehicle and license data.
- c. The dedicated wing on Road Safety in State Road Transport Departments shall include a PwD liaison officer to coordinate accessibility initiatives, handling related grievances, etc. This wing is mandated to ensure that road safety policies are aligned with national standards, programmes /policies and continuously evolve to address new challenges, such as emerging technologies and shifting traffic patterns. It may be ensured that policies must prioritize PwD safety in road safety programs.

References:

1. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 and corresponding rules made thereunder
2. Harmonized Guidelines for Universal Accessibility in India, 2021
3. The Accessibility Guidelines For Bus Terminals And Bus Stops issued by M/o RT&H, GoI
4. Indian Roads Congress (IRC) Codes:
 - IRC-SP-37: Guidelines for Evaluation of Load Carrying Capacity of Bridges" and relates to bridge assessment, not pedestrian facilities or tactile paving
 - IRC-37: standards for the design of flexible pavements (road layers/structural pavement design)
 - IRC-103: Specifications for pedestrian infrastructure, including curb cuts and ramps.
 - IRC-SP-84: Manual of Specifications and Standards for Four Laning of Highways" and addresses requirements for road safety features (crash barriers, pedestrian/cattle underpasses, footpaths, etc.).