

NATIONAL
MINIMUM
STANDARDS
AND
PROTOCOL
FOR

CRÈCHES

(Operation and Management)



MESSAGES



“ The Government of India has taken several initiatives aimed towards increasing the participation of women in the workforce to ensure Women-led Development during 'Amrit Kaal' for achieving Viksit Bharat@2047. The Ministry is glad to release the National Minimum Standards and Protocol for Crèches (Operation and Management) which provide a comprehensive framework for quality childcare facilities and the standardisation and the institutionalisation of Care services, which will further help towards the realisation of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. This will definitely help to create a new organised Care Services Sector, which will help the women to pursue their careers and also create new job opportunities. ”

SMT. SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI

Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Women and Child Development and Minority Affairs



“ The Ministry of Women and Child Development is committed towards creation of enabling environment for women to take up meaningful employment opportunities. In order to ensure that standardised and quality crèche services are available in all establishment across the country, the Ministry of Women and Child Development is releasing the National Minimum Standards and Protocol for Crèches (Operation and Management) which will help in setting-up and running of Crèches across the country. ”

DR. MUNJPARA MAHENDRABHAI

Hon'ble Minister of State for Ministry of Women & Child Development and AYUSH



“ Transformative Care policies can yield positive economic and gender equality outcomes, leading to better outcomes for women's participation in workforce. The release of National Minimum Standards and Protocol for Crèches (Operation and Management) will provide necessary guidance for setting up of Crèches across the country. ”

SHRI INDEVAR PANDEY

Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development

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INTRODUCTION

The Government acknowledges women-led development as crucial for achieving the vision of 'Viksit Bharat' in Amritkaal. To promote gender equality and empower women, various Acts and Rules mandate crèche facilities. Section 11A of the Maternity Benefit Act (Amendment) Act, 2017, requires establishments with 50 or more employees to have a crèche, extending to both males and females. Additionally, Section 48 of the Factories Act, 1948, mandates crèche facilities for factories with over 30 female workers. The Plantation Labour Act and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005, also stipulate crèche provisions based on the number of employed women. Further, Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013 deals with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Schedule VII of the Companies Act, 2013 specifies that Companies may undertake activities for promoting gender equality and empowering women.

Anganwadi Centres are the world's largest childcare institutions dedicated to providing essential care and support to children ensuring delivery of care facilities till the last mile. In a first of its kind approach, the Ministry of Women & Child Development has extended the services of child care through Anganwadi-cum-Crèche Centres. This will ensure whole day child care support ensuring their well-being in a safe and secure environment. Anganwadi cum Crèche initiative aims to increase the women work force participation in the economy.

It has long been demanded to standardise the procedures for management of Crèches by any individual/ service agencies/ corporations/ companies/ universities/ hospitals/ care service providers/ government organisations /non-governmental organisations etc. Accordingly, this document has been prepared by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in consultation with Ministry of Labour and Employment which prescribes the national minimum standards and protocol for setting up and running of crèches in India, emphasising the institutionalisation of care services to support and promote female labour force participation.

National Minimum Standards and Protocol to Set up Crèche

The active participation and leadership of women are vital for women-led development. Institutionalisation of care services is crucial for enhancing female labour force participation. Suggestive standards and protocol have been formulated for setting up crèches by any individual/ service agencies/ corporations/ companies/universities/ hospitals/ care service providers/ government organisations/ non-governmental organisations etc., addressing the minimum essential requirements. These standards and protocol aim to provide comprehensive childcare in a safe and secure environment, fostering the overall development of children. Additional facilities may be incorporated to further enhance the well-being of children. State Governments and UT Administrations are also advised to adopt these standards and protocol for setting up and management of Crèches.

1. Definition of Crèche

A Crèche is care centre that provides a safe and nurturing environment for children while their parents or guardians are at work. These facilities prioritise the children's health, provide supplementary nutritious meals, and maintain a secure and safe environment. It provides age-appropriate educational activities to boost holistic development of the child.

1.1 Objectives

- i) To provide care facilities for children of parents/guardians who are engaged in any work.
- ii) To offer a secure and safe environment to the children.
- iii) To ensure "women-led development".
- iv) To emerge as a new service sector which provide job opportunity to women.
- v) To encourage women to pursue their career and seek further employment opportunities.
- vi) To promote female labour force participation in the economy.
- vii) To envisage new educational sectors in the form of training institutions with globally recognised certification courses.

1.2 Key points to be considered prior to opening of a Crèche:

- i) Facility of crèche may be provided from the age group of 6 months onwards.
- ii) The crèche may also be set up in any office space, in a residential apartment/society, school, hospitals, cooperative office or any other place as per requirements.
- iii) It is ideal to have crèche near the homes of children or near the place of work of the parents/guardians so that parents/guardians can be contacted in case of emergencies.
- iv) The provision of care services at home may also be provided on regular/day/hour basis.
- v) It's preferable for crèches to be set upon the ground floor for ease of access and convenience. However, if it's on other floor all necessary safety measures must be adhered to.
- vi) The crèche timings may be demand based and mutually decided by crèche administration and parents/guardian.
- vii) Number of rooms may be as per the requirement depending on the number of children. However, rooms should have sufficient space with facilities for resting and study for the children with ventilation and light arrangements.
- viii) The windows in the crèche should be positioned at an appropriate height and should be properly fenced to prioritise safety of the children.
- ix) Crèche must have a child friendly toilet with running water facilities, a urinal. Toilets/wash basins must have soaps/hand wash liquid. The needs of specially-abled children should also be kept in mind.
- x) Hygiene inside and outside of crèches should be maintained properly.
- xi) The centre must have safe drinking water facility preferably with water purifier.
- xii) Food provided to the children can be mutually decided by crèche administrator and the parents/guardian.
- xiii) Play materials and toys (essential ECCE Study material and play materials, sports materials, blocks etc.) should be provided to the children. Audio-visual equipment may be provided where appropriate and feasible to stimulate age-appropriate learning and cognitive development.
- xiv) The crèche should have child friendly spaces that are designed and tailored specifically to cater to the needs, safety of the children.
- xv) Important and Emergency contact numbers (helplines like 112, 1098, fire-services, Child Protection Officer, Nearest Police Station etc.) should be displayed on essential information boards for easy access and reference.
- xvi) Regular inspection for food safety and hygiene are crucial to ensure the quality of the food.
- xvii) It is mandatory that CCTV cameras are installed for ensuring security and supervision at the crèche. Parents/Guardians may preferably be provided with access to CCTV cameras, wherever possible, enabling them to monitor the crèche remotely from their workplace.
- xviii) The local police stations, the Women and Child Development/Social Welfare Department, and the Labour Department should invariably have the information about the location and details of the crèche for safety purposes and information to be maintained by these offices.
- xix) Services for crèche facilities to be set up based on demand. User Charges may be collected by service provider based on services offered.
- xx) If any dispute arises between service provider and the parents/guardian, the crèche administrative committee will settle the matter. If any matter comes to the notice of government and if an intervention is required, it may be taken up as appropriate.
- xxi) Crèches should strictly follow all the rules/acts related to child protection.

1.3 Crèche Administrative Committee

The Indicative composition of Crèche Administrative Committee is as follows –

- i) Crèche Administrator – To be nominated by institution/organisation operating the crèche
- ii) Crèche supervisor
- iii) Parents/ Guardians (preferably 3) of beneficiary children

1.4 Staff or Resource person requirements

1.4.1 Number of staff

There should be at least 1 crèche supervisor and one crèche helper for handling 20-25 children. Additional care staff can also be engaged in case the children require personal care.

1.4.2 Qualification of the staff

- i) The Crèche supervisor should be minimum 12th Pass and Crèche Helper should be 10th Pass
- ii) The staff should preferably have 2 years' experience of working in the childcare sector, either in a professional setting or as volunteer. Persons holding a diploma in Childcare or Nursing may be preferred.
- iii) Only women staff to be recruited as caregivers for the children.

1.4.3 Prerequisites for hiring

- i) Police Verification Certificate
- ii) Character certificate
- iii) Medical certificate

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Crèche Supervisor

- i) The crèche Supervisor will be the overall in charge of the crèche.
- ii) Planning and implementing age-appropriate educational activities to foster holistic development of the children.
- iii) To maintain/monitor records of children's attendance and other statutory records.
- iv) To liaise with Crèche committee, parents for their support and incorporate their suggestions and recommendations in the functioning of the Crèches.
- v) Establishing open communication with parents or guardians about their child's development and any concerns or events at the crèche.
- vi) Crèche supervisor should actively promote daily stimulation- based activities on Early Childhood Care & Development (ECCD) to promote physical, mental and cognitive development of children.
- vii) Any other responsibilities as decided by crèche administration.

2.2 Crèche Helper (s)

- i. Crèche Helper would be responsible for providing assistance to the crèche worker.
- ii. The Crèche Helper will assist the crèche supervisors in daily tasks.
- iii. Helper should have a passion for children and exercise patience with them.
- iv. Helper should constantly monitor and supervise the children to ensure their safety.
- v. Ensuring the facility is clean, safe and well-maintained.
- vi. Any other responsibilities as decided by crèche administration.

3. Services provided in the Crèche

3.1 Parent/Guardian and Administration meeting

Crèche administration should organise at least one parents/guardian meeting every month and review the performance and process of children. Feedback from parents/guardian may also be recorded for further improvement.

3.2 Engagement and training of crèche workers

- i) Trained crèche worker is a prerequisite for operating the crèche. Well trained staff with prior experience related to childcare, nursing, early childhood care and education can play a crucial role in the efficient operation of a crèche.
- ii) Crèche Administrators may ensure continuous training for crèche workers and helpers, in areas such as Nutrition, Childcare, ECCE, Child Rights, Child Protection, and Child Legislations. Seminars/ workshops may also be organised by with the help of experts from Government Institutions or Other Organisations etc. for the capacity building and enhancement of the skills and knowledge of Crèche staffs.

- iii) Engaging a private training institute or providing Personalised Kits for crèche workers during training ensures comprehensive preparation and safety measures are in place for their education and well-being.

3.3 Health, Medicine and First Aid Kits

- i) The centre should be well equipped with basic First Aid & Medical Kit.
- ii) The centre should have a fire extinguisher.
- iii) The crèche should have working arrangements with nearest available health facility to provide immediate assistance in case of emergency.

3.4 Record maintenance

The Crèche worker and helper are required to maintain the following basic records and registers:

- i. Admission/ Enrolment register for recording profile of children and their guardians including profession of parents/ guardians.
- ii. Attendance registers of children
- iii. The medical record of children.
- iv. Guardian's meeting register.
- v. Visitors register
- vi. Inspection register

4. Safety Inspection

- i) Safety inspections should be conducted by an administrative committee dedicated to overseeing safety standards within the crèche.
- ii) Verifying and controlled access to CCTV surveillance and procedures for handling visitors and pickups.
- iii) Community based inspections may be carried out at regular intervals, at least one in a quarter, to ensure that the crèche is working in a child friendly manner and have all the minimum required facilities/ systems in place.

Annexure

Indicative Items for setting of Crèches

For Health	For Hygiene	Pre-School Learning Kit/Toys	Miscellaneous Items
Weighing scale	Soap for washing dishes	Stringing beads	Beds
Normal/Digital Thermometer	Soap for hand washing	Balls	Cradle (Palna)
Growth Monitoring Device	Spin Mop with bucket	Fixing blocks	Round Tables
Height Chart	Sanitiser	Dolls	Storage Cabinets
For Safety and Protection	Utensils	Kitchen set	Spare Clothes
Fire Extinguisher	Dustbins with lid	Doctor Set	Stationery Items
First Aid Kit		Sports Kit	
CCTV Camera			
Torch			

Note: This is only an indicative list and Institutions/ Organisations are encouraged to supplement for holistic development and well-being of Children.



**Ministry of
Women & Child Development
Government of India**