

## **Government notifies the Occupational Safety, Health & Working Conditions Code, 2020, to consolidate existing Labour Laws [the Factories Act, the Mines Act, the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, the Motor Transport Workers Act, etc.] into a single unified Code**

The Ministry of Labour and Employment has notified November 21, 2025, as the effective date for the enforcement of the provisions of the Occupational Safety, Health & Working Conditions Code, 2020. The notification has been issued consolidating the 13 existing Labour Laws (the Factories Act, the Mines Act, the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, the Motor Transport Workers Act, etc.) into a single unified Code.

The Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions seeks to regulate workers' health and safety conditions in establishments with 10 or more workers and all mines and docks. It will apply to: (a) a place where any industry, trade, business, manufacturing or occupation is carried on in which 10 or more workers are employed; or (b) motor transport undertaking, newspaper establishment, audio-video production, building and other construction work or plantation, in which 10 or more workers are employed; or (c) factory, in which 10 or more workers are employed; or (d) a mine or port or vicinity of port where dock work is carried out.

Further, Section 3 of the Code, such as health and working conditions, applies to Contract labour and interstate migrant workers. The Code also prescribes sector-specific rules for transport, journalism and sales workers on working hours and leave, including leave encashment on discharge, dismissal, death or superannuation.

The key highlights of the Occupational Safety, Health & Working Conditions Code, 2020, are as follows:

- Section 6(1)(g): Employers must conduct annual health check-ups for employees at their own cost to support early identification of occupational health issues.
- Section 6(1)(f): Issuance of appointment letters is mandatory for all employees to promote formalisation and ensure transparency in employment terms.
- Section 23: Establishments must provide separate washrooms, bathing facilities and locker rooms for male, female and transgender employees to ensure hygiene and dignity.
- Section 25: Number of working hours restricted to a maximum of 8 Hours in a day, with certain riders.
- Section 27: Overtime requires prior written consent and must be paid at twice the ordinary wage rate.
- Section 32: Not availed leave may be carried forward up to 30 days, while refused leave with wages may be carried forward without limit, ensuring protection for denied entitlements.
- Section 34: Inspector-cum-Facilitators replace traditional inspectors, and third-party audits are introduced.
- Section 43: Women may work between 7 PM and 6 AM, subject to their consent and required safety safeguards; additional measures must be implemented if the work poses health or safety risks.

- Section 57: Contract labour is prohibited in core activities except where the activity is ordinarily outsourced, does not require full-time workers, or where there is a temporary surge in workload.
- Sections 60 & 62: Inter-State migrant workers are entitled to ration portability, construction cess benefits, and PF/insurance benefits available to other workers.