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Haryana Labour Department Issues Notification on Employing Women During Night Shifts

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The Haryana Labour Department has issued a comprehensive notification aimed at ensuring the safety and security of women employees working during night shifts. This move is part of the Haryana Government's ongoing efforts to regulate and protect the rights of women in the workforce. The notification, dated 8th May 2025 and numbered 11/26/2025-4Lab, outlines specific conditions that employers must adhere to when employing women during night shifts, which are defined as from 08:00 PM to 06:00 AM. This initiative is a significant step towards creating a safer and more inclusive work environment for women in various sectors.

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Background and Circumstances Leading to the Notification

The notification builds on previous efforts by the Haryana Government to regulate the employment of women during night shifts. The State Government of Haryana has previously included IT, ITeS, banking establishments, three-star or above hotels, 100% export-oriented establishments, logistics, and warehousing establishments in the proviso to clause (iv) of sub-rule (2) of Rule 15 of the Punjab Shops and Commercial Establishment Rules, 1958. This was done to allow these establishments to employ women during night shifts, subject to the provisions of Section 28 of the said Act. The new notification aims to provide a more detailed framework to ensure the safety and well-being of women employees working during these hours.

Legal Provisions Under Which the Notification Has Been Issued

The notification is issued under sub-section 3 of Section 30 of the Punjab Shop and Commercial Establishment Act, 1958, and all other enabling powers. This section empowers the Governor of Haryana to issue notifications for laying down conditions for employing women employees during night shifts, ensuring their security and safety. The notification supersedes all earlier notifications in this regard and provides a comprehensive set of guidelines for employers to follow.

Content of the Notification

The notification outlines several conditions that employers must comply with when employing women during night shifts. Employers must submit applications for exemption to the Labour Commissioner or Chief Inspector of Shops of Haryana at least one month prior to the commencement of the period for which the exemption is sought. The exemption will be valid for one year from the date of the order, unless there are changes in security, transportation agreements, or other details of the occupier/director/manager.

Employers are also required to comply with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, and the rules framed thereunder (POSH Act). They must submit a copy of the Annual Return to the District Authority under the POSH Act and the Labour Commissioner, Haryana. Additionally, employers must obtain written consent from each woman employee agreeing to work during night shifts.

To ensure the safety of women employees, employers must provide adequate lighting inside and outside the establishment, including all areas where female employees may need to move during their shift. Sufficient security guards, including female security guards, must be provided during night shifts. Employers must also provide transportation facilities, with well-trained and responsible drivers, proper communication channels, and additional measures such as CCTV cameras and GPS in vehicles to ensure safety.

Women workers must be employed in batches of at least four. However, this requirement may be relaxed for senior women employees earning more than one lakh per month who consent to work during night shifts. Employers must also provide appropriate medical facilities, including a doctor or female nurse, during night shifts. They may also arrange ambulance services and other necessary medical facilities in coordination with nearby hospitals.

If the establishment provides boarding and lodging, these facilities must be exclusively for women and under the control of women wardens or supervisors. Employers must follow all other provisions of the Punjab Shops and Commercial Establishments Act, 1958, and other relevant labour legislations, including the Equal Remuneration Act.

Conclusion

The notification issued by the Haryana Labour Department marks a significant advancement in the regulation of employment for women during night shifts. By providing clear guidelines and conditions, the government aims to create a safer and more inclusive work environment for women in various sectors. This initiative shows the need for protecting women's rights and ensuring their well-being in the workplace. As the notification comes into effect, it promises to bring about a far-reaching change, making the process of employing women during night shifts more secure and reliable for all parties involved.

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