



LABOUR

A landmark move towards comprehensive child protection: Draft Maharashtra Child Labour Amendment Rules 2025

AUTHOR Nidhi Singh, Akshita Singh

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Introduction

The Government Of Maharashtra Has Introduced The Draft Child Labour (Prohibition And Regulation) Amendment Rules, 2025, Issued On August 7, 2025, Representing A Significant Stride In The State's Commitment To Eradicating Child Labour. These Proposed Amendments Aim To Fortify Enforcement Mechanisms, Raise Public Awareness, And Ensure The Comprehensive Rehabilitation Of Rescued Children. This Initiative Emphasizes Maharashtra's Dedication To Fulfilling Its Constitutional Obligations And Adhering To International Standards For The Protection And Welfare Of Children.

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Background And Context

Despite India's Strong Legal Framework Aimed At Eradicating Child Labour, Including The Child Labour (Prohibition And Regulation) Act, 1986, And Its Accompanying Rules, Child Labour Remains A Critical Social Issue. Enforcement Gaps, Economic Inequalities, And Regional Challenges Still Stand In The Way Of Fully Eradicating Child Labour, Especially In States Like Maharashtra, Where Both Industrial Hubs And Rural Areas Create Complex Ground Realities. In Response To Ongoing Concerns About Child Exploitation And The Urgent Need For Stronger Protections, The State Government Has Proposed Amendments To The Existing Child Labour (Prohibition And Regulation) Rules, 1997.

The Proposed Rules Are Designed To Align Maharashtra's Child Labour Regulations With Constitutional Safeguards Particularly Article 24 Of The Indian Constitution, Which Prohibits Employment Of Children In Hazardous Occupations And International Commitments Such As The United Nations Convention On The Rights Of The Child (Uncrc) And International Labour Organization (Ilo) Conventions. Through These Amendments, Maharashtra Aims To Tackle Modern Challenges In Preventing Child Labour, Improve Coordination Between Departments, And Take A Holistic Approach That Focuses On The Welfare And Rehabilitation Of Affected Children.

Key Features

The Proposed Amendments To The Maharashtra Child Labour Rules Introduce Key Measures To Strengthen Enforcement And Safeguard The Welfare Of Rescued Children. The Salient Features Include:

- **Public Awareness Initiatives (Rule 2a):** The State Government Is Mandated To Conduct Comprehensive Awareness Campaigns Using Diverse Channels Such As Folk, Traditional, Electronic, And Print Media, Establish Easy Reporting Mechanisms For Violations, And Require Public Display Of Key Provisions Of The Child Labour Act In High-Visibility Areas. These Campaigns Seek To Educate Employers, Communities, And The General Public About The Prohibitions Under The Child Labour Act And The Critical Importance Of Protecting Children From Exploitation.
- **Constitution Of Vigilance Committees (Rule 2b):** To Enhance Monitoring And Enforcement At The District Level, The Draft Proposes The Establishment Of Vigilance Committees Comprising Officials From Various Governmental Departments. These Committees Will Detect Violations, Coordinate Enforcement, And Ensure Compliance Within Their Jurisdictions.
- **Rehabilitation And Welfare Provisions (Rule 2c):** Recognizing The Necessity Of Support For Rescued Children, The Amendments Provide For The Establishment Of Rehabilitation Centers. These Centers Will Enable The Educational And Vocational Training Of Children Rescued From Child Labour, Aiding Their Reintegration Into Mainstream Society And Promoting Their Overall Welfare.
- **Employer Obligations And Reporting Requirements (Rule 2d):**
The Draft Rules Impose Stringent Obligations On Employers To Maintain Accurate Employment Records, Verify The Age Of All Employees, And Submit Regular Compliance Reports To The Designated Authorities. These Measures Are Intended To

Author's View

The Draft Maharashtra Child Labour (Prohibition And Regulation) (Amendment) Rules, 2025 Signify A Pivotal Advancement In The State's Efforts To Eradicate Child Labour. The Draft Rules Adopt A Comprehensive Approach That Moves Beyond Mere Statutory Prohibition To Address The Underlying Socio-Economic And Systemic Factors Perpetuating Child Labour. However, Real Success Will Depend On How Well These Rules Are Put Into Action. Authorities Need Proper Training, Resources, And Support To Enforce Them Effectively, And Employers Must See Compliance Not Just As A Legal Requirement But As A Moral Duty. Just As Important Is Changing Mindsets, Communities Should Play An Active Role In Preventing Child Labour, Reporting Violations, And Helping Rescued Children Rebuild Their Lives. These Amendments Should Therefore Be Seen Not As A Conclusion, But As A Crucial Milestone In The Broader Journey Towards A Child Labour-Free Maharashtra.

Conclusion

The Draft Maharashtra Child Labour (Prohibition And Regulation) (Amendment) Rules, 2025 Take A Targeted Approach To Closing Enforcement Gaps, Raising Public Awareness, And Ensuring Proper Rehabilitation For Rescued Children. By Adding Clear Mandates For Vigilance, Awareness, And Employer Accountability, The State Has Set A Strong Framework For Child Protection. Effective Implementation Could Make These Rules A Model For Other States And Advance India's Goal Of Eliminating Child Labour.

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