

Draft Provisional Guidelines For After Care of Children under ICPS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION/PREAMBLE:

These guidelines are based on the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act 2000, Integrated Child Protection Scheme, UN Guidelines for Alternative Care 2009 and on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. These guidelines have been formulated by the Ministry of Women and Child Development after consultations with key stakeholders, NGOs working on the issue, experts, academicians and officials from various States.

In all After Care procedures, the best interest of the child shall be the paramount consideration. It is important that the highest possible standards of practice are followed, within accepted principles. These guidelines, which incorporate the best of practice and principles, can be helpful in achieving this.

The child has the right to be consulted and to have his/her opinion taken into account in any matter or procedure affecting him/her.

2. WHAT IS AFTER CARE?

In the context of these guidelines, After Care is the provision of care for all children, including children with special needs, after they have reached the age of 18 years, and are discharged from Children's Homes/Special Homes. Children who have completed 18 years may be referred to as "**young adults**". It is to help prepare these young adults to sustain themselves during the transition from institutional to independent life. The objective of after care is to enable such young adults to adapt themselves to society and to encourage them to move away from institution based life.

After care is an important final stage in the continuum of care, as it ensures smooth rehabilitation and reintegration of a child in need of care and protection/conflict with law as she/he steps into adulthood. This is especially required if a child has gone through a long period of institutionalization, which is likely to result in lack of social adjustment.

Under ICPS, After Care services will be provided through a Group Housing system or if that is not available, then through the Institutional Housing model of care, details of which are at Chapter III.

3. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF CHILDREN/YOUNG ADULTS:

a) Children going to complete 18 years of age in the Children's/Special Home, without any family fit to take care of them will be considered for After Care programme.

4. DURATION OF AFTER CARE:

After care services may be available to young adults upto a period of 3 years or until he/she has reached the age of 21 years, whichever is earlier.

5. FINANCIAL NORMS:

Financial assistance per month per young adult will be provided as per ICPS norms applicable at that time for meeting the basic needs including food, clothing, health care and shelter; age appropriate and need based education and vocational training; stipend; and any other requirements. The State Government may provide additional financial support to augment this amount.

6. IDENTIFICATION AND SELECTION OF AFTER CARE ORGANISATIONS:

i) The DCPU shall form a committee comprising of the DCPO (Chairman), PO-IC and PO-NIC, and a member of the CWC, which will identify suitable Government and voluntary organisations to run the different models After Care programme. The list of identified organisations will be approved by Chairman DCPU. This list will thereafter be made available to the CWC/JJB.

ii) Criteria for selection of After Care Organisations:

- The Organization should be registered under the JJ Act.
- Five years of experience in management of a Home
- Minimum three years of experience in assisting children with vocational training
- Minimum three years of experience in placement of children in jobs, apprenticeships etc.
- A well established Counselling programme

CHAPTER II

PROCEDURE RELATED TO PLACEMENT IN AFTER CARE

7. PRE PLACEMENT SERVICES:

i) **Identification and recommendation for After Care by Child Care Institution (CCI):**

When any child in the Child Care Institution (CCI) completes 17 years of age, the CCI would assess whether he/she would be able to adjust to an independent life in the society once he/she leaves the Institution. In case, it is felt that a young adult would find it difficult to live without support, such a young adult would be considered for After Care services.

The CCI will prepare a list of such young adults every quarter and send a request to the DCPU for arranging support under the After Care component to the Protection Officer, Non-Institutional care (PO-NIC)/Probation Officer, details of which are at **Annex II**.

ii) **Preparation of young adult by CCI:** The CCI shall, through counselling support and other programmes, prepare the young adults for life outside the Institution and for the After Care programme. The process of transition from institutional care to after care should take into consideration the gender, maturity and particular circumstances of the child. Young adults leaving institutional care should be encouraged to take part in the planning of their own after care. An aptitude test /career guidance should be done by the counselor of DCPU with the help of a technically qualified person/agency before placing the young adult into appropriate after care programmes.

The case history of the child will be prepared by the social worker/case worker in the CCI

iii) **Scrutiny of Documents by DCPU:** Protection Officer (Non Institutional Care)/Probation Officer will scrutinise the documents for eligibility of children, recommended by the CCI. The list of children would then be finalised and sent to the DCPO for approval. The DCPU will inform the CWC/JJB when the child is approved for After Care

iv) **Placement order by CWC/JJB**

After approval from DCPO, the list of young adults will be given by PO (NIC) to the CWC/JJB. The CWC/JJB will examine each case submitted by PO (NIC), for eligibility for the After Care programme, and satisfy itself regarding the suitability of placement into after care. The CWC must interview of the young adult to take his/her consent. Based on the individual

requirement, CWC/JJB will decide the type of model of after care most suitable for the young adult.

The CWC/JJB shall make an order in prescribed format given in J. J. Rules [Form XIX] for placing the child reaching 18 years of age under the After Care programme. A copy of this order shall be sent to the DCPS, which shall facilitate the actual placement, release of funds and monitoring the well being of the young adult.

v) **Placement of young adult:** DCPU will co-ordinate with CCI and the After Care organisation for placement of the young adults within 15 days of their reaching the age of 18 years. The CCI shall prepare a case history of the child being transferred to after care and hand it over to the After Care organisation.

8. POST PLACEMENT SERVICES

i) **Release of Grant:** Once the CWC/JJB has approved the case, the DCPU will release the grant on a quarterly basis to the After Care organization for each child, and maintain records of the same.

ii) Preparation of Care Plan for the Child by the After Care Organisation

The main focus of after care should be to help the young adults gain skills for increasing their employability and enable them to adapt to life in the society. The After Care organization should provide bridging services for transition of the child from institutional care to an independent/self-sufficient life.

The organization will draw up an individual care plan for each young adult based on the case history given by the CCI. The type and duration of support would vary according to the needs and circumstances that the he/she may have been through in the past. These circumstances would include the length of stay in an institutional environment, the kind of treatment he/she may have received there.

9. MONITORING AND REVIEW:

i) **Tracking progress of child:** The After Care organisation will maintain individual case files for each young adult placed in after care. PO (NIC)/Probation Officer will make quarterly visits to the after care facilities and assess the social, vocational and educational progress of the young adult to determine whether necessary and appropriate services are being provided. The PO would also meet the young adult and discuss the progress with him/her. During the visit, the PO will also note the general well being and health of the young adult and the

general environment and upkeep of the place where the/he/she is living. All records of these visits will be maintained and updated after each review and assessment is completed.

Quarterly review of the young adult in after care will also be conducted by the CWC/JJB.

The organization should also form a monitoring committee comprising of volunteers, RWA/community representatives, social worker which can regularly assess the progress of the young adults.

ii) **Monitoring of After Care Organisation:** The After Care organisation will be required to submit a statement of accounts to the DCPU every six months and an annual audited statement. They will also send a quarterly progress report for each child with the following information:

- Educational status (If child is studying)
- Health status (Specify in case of any health problems)
- Vocational Training(Specify the training and level)
- Employment status
- Trainings attended (Life skills etc.)
- Mention the general progress of the young adult and his/her psycho-social development

The Organisation will also inform the DCPU if they have established any linkages with the corporate sector, NGOs and any civil society organisations for placements of the young adult.

iii) **Records to be maintained by DCPU:** The PO (NIC) of the DCPU will maintain –

(1) Master Register of young adults covered under the after care program. This register should provide a disaggregated picture of the whole process including:

- a) Date of placement,
- b) Gender
- c) Age of child at time of placement
- d) Parental status
- e) Date of completion of after care

(2) Individual file of every young adult placed in after care: This should have the following details and documents:

- a) Individual care plan envisaged at time of placement
- b) The placement order of the CWC/JJB

- c) Number of visits to the child and organisation, young adult's educational level, vocational level and significant details of each visit.
- d) Observations made at the time of each review of the placement in terms of extent and quality of compliance with care plans.
- e) Date and reason for completion of after care.

iv) **Submission of Quarterly Reports:**

Submission of Annual report to the DCPC and the SCPC: The PO (NIC)/Probation Officer of the DCPU will prepare a consolidated annual report which be placed before the District Child Protection Committee (DCPC) and the State Child Protection Committee (SCPC) for review in order to ascertain the young adult's progress and the After Care organisation's efforts at meeting their physical and psychosocial needs.

10. TERMINATION OF AFTER CARE:

In the circumstances enumerated hereunder, the After Care organisation shall propose termination of after care services, of identified young adults, to the DCPU, and after verification of the details submitted, the DCPO shall recommend the case to CWC/JJB for final termination orders.

- If the young adult has found suitable employment and a place to live before attaining 21 years of age.
- When the young adult has completed 21 years of age, regardless of whether he/she has got employment or not.
- In case it is found during monitoring visits by functionaries of the After Care organisation or DCPU that the young adult despite receiving counseling/assistance is
 - Displaying lack of interest in vocational training/education etc.
 - Regularly breaking discipline
 - Picking fights with other residents, neighbours, staff etc.
 - Spoiling the atmosphere of the Home by his/her behaviour
 - Becoming a negative influence on other residents due to his/her habits such as drinking, drug abuse etc.
- In case of girls, if it is found that there is no family support or fails to get a suitable employment, she may be referred to Swadhar Homes for shelter and continuation of vocational training.
- In case girl/boy gets married
- If the young adult is absent for more than 15 days without information

CHAPTER III

SERVICES AND MODELS OF AFTER CARE

11. SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE AFTER CARE ORGANISATION

The After Care Organisation shall essentially provide for every child:

- Housing facility, for a maximum period of 3 years as per selected model
- Professional emotional and psychological counselling on a weekly basis.
- Health care through tie ups with nearby medical centres/doctors
- Vocational training facilities through tie ups with educational institutions teaching certified skill development courses under ‘National Skill Development Programme’/ITIs and other recognised vocational training institutes. The aim is that the child is prepared for employment through a certificate course and can be gainfully employed thereafter on this basis.
- Assistance in opening bank accounts and for getting identification such as “Aadhar” number, ration cards, voting cards, etc.
- Out of pocket expenses during the course of the vocational training till such time that the youth gets employment.

In addition the above, assistance would be provided for the following:

- If the child is interested in education, in addition to the vocational training, he/she may be encouraged/assisted to pursue the NIOS programme.
- Training, apprenticeships and placement in collaboration with professional agencies and corporates. This may include convergence with Labour Department and other agencies for skill development.
- Arranging loans for entrepreneurial activities along with professional advice and training
- Peer counselling
- Legal services that may be required by the child through DCPU or linkages with other organisations.
- Computers, recreational material and other facilities at the place of stay.
- Specialized counseling services in polyclinics may be provided to those children who have disciplinary issues, problems of substance abuse, frequent absenteeism etc. so that they can be mainstreamed into society.

12. MODELS FOR AFTER CARE:

i) Option I:

Living Arrangements: Children will stay in groups of 4 to 8 in an accommodation taken on rent in a suitable, safe residential locality. Here, children will be encouraged to live together as a family unit and learn to share responsibilities of running their own kitchen and home. The Organisation will assist in providing the rent and deposit for the accommodation. It would be the responsibility of the after care organisation to see that the household duties are amicably shared by the children. The organisation will assist the children through peer interactions and guidance from the social workers to run the house efficiently and without discord.

ii) **Option II:** If the first option is not feasible in the District/State as the number of children is too low or if there is no suitable NGO available, then the DCPU could identify an existing children's Home which is run by the Government / NGO, where a portion will be earmarked for After Care.

Living Arrangements: The After Care programme will be housed in a portion of an existing Children's Home, in which a portion has been earmarked for children eligible for after care. The children can stay in groups of 4 to 8. There will be a common kitchen for all the children. The institution may have a maximum of 25 children. Here, the home is run by the after care organisation including, housekeeping, kitchen etc. However, day to day management could be done by children's committees. The organization will ensure that all meals and daily needs are provided for the children and that the children are following the plan prepared for them. Children could be encouraged to participate in cooking, cleaning etc.

iii) **Option III:** In metropolitan cities (Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai and Kolkata) a dedicated institution for After Care can be considered in case it is available.

Living Arrangements: The children will stay in larger accommodation, with dormitory style arrangements. There will be a common kitchen for all the children. The institution may have a maximum of 25 children. Here, the home is run by the after care organisation including, housekeeping, kitchen etc. However, day to day management could be done by children's committees. The organization will ensure that all meals and daily needs are provided for the children and that the children are following the plan prepared for them. Children could be encouraged to participate in cooking, cleaning etc.

13. FACILITIES:

The following facilities must be provided for the young adults irrespective of the model adopted.

i) Expenditure on daily needs: The children will be provided, on a weekly basis, a fixed amount per residential unit for meeting their daily needs including cost of running the kitchen, cleaning etc.

ii) Out of pocket expenses: The children will also be provided on an individual basis, out of pocket expenses to meet their expenses including transportation, personal expenses etc.

iii) Counselling: Individual and group counselling will be provided on a regular basis to ensure that the children are able to adjust to their new surroundings and peers. As the children would have been in institutions for long periods of time, counselling is essential for emotional and social development. This is to help in building their self esteem, build relationships and for their reintegration into society.

Counselling is also required to assist the children in adjustment to jobs and work environment.

iv) Savings: The children would be encouraged to save their earnings which can be used later. The Organisation will help all children to open an individual bank account which they can operate independently.

v) Vocational Training: All children will be facilitated to join a suitable vocation, enroll in certified skill development courses under “National Skill Development Programme”/ITI or assisted in getting job placements which are suitable for them. This is to help them to become financially independent. Appropriate vocational training facilities should also be made available for children with special needs depending upon their capabilities

vi) Linkages with Corporate sector and Civil Society groups: The after care organization must establish and build a network with companies and NGOs where the youth can be placed or trained as apprentices.

vii) Identity: As children who have been in institutions do not have any proof of identity, it is essential for the after care organization to help in getting a voter card, Aadhar number or any

other relevant documents which they will require for their future life.

viii) Health: The after care organizations must hold regular health check up camps and awareness camps for all youth at the programme. The aftercare organisation should have linkages with a nearby doctor/hospital which the child can access on his/her own in case of illness.

ix) Volunteers: Volunteers can play a major role in the after care system. A volunteer programme is recommended for all after care organizations to help the youth in their education programmes, language and social skill development, placements, recreation etc. Peer volunteers can also be involved in this programme. Volunteers should also be involved in programmes for children with special needs.

x) Life Skills Programmes: Regular camps and programmes are required to be organized for the youth at the after care organizations to help in their adjustment to society. This will include sessions on decision making, problem solving, sex education, coping with stress, etc. Information on social, legal and health services available should be given.

xi) Monitoring and follow up: The organization will ensure regular visits by the social worker/outreach worker to each group home to make certain that the children are adjusting to their home and that the unit is functioning well. Weekly sessions will be held with all children in after care at a common place so that the children get an opportunity to meet with their peers and with those who are now living independently. This networking will help the children to get placements and find living arrangements once they are out of the after care system.

STATUS OF CHILDREN TO BE PLACED IN AFTER CARE

| SL. No. | COMPONENT | | STATUS |
|---------|---------------------|---|--------|
| 1. | Health | Current course of treatment, if any. Special Needs, if any. | |
| 2. | Education | Current level or if enrolled in any course/school (formal or non-formal) : | |
| | | Educational performance | |
| 3. | Vocational Training | Current course | |
| 4. | Activities | Life skill training, Sports, arts, music and crafts, any other special interest that the child may have. | |
| 5. | Behaviour Pattern | Interaction with peers | |
| | | Adjustment within the institution (Is child well adjusted or does he/she have any problems in adjustment) | |
| 6. | Any other | | |