

National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)

Manual for District Level Functionaries

2017

PREFACE

The purpose of this Development Manual for National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) Scheme is to create an enabling mechanism for improved implementation of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme at the cutting edge, leading to enhanced outcomes in nature and extent. Accordingly, it would act as a guide for implementation by the District Collector and key functionaries at District, Block & Gram Panchayat level to enable quick learning about the Scheme, implementation modalities, roles and responsibilities of various functionaries as well as stakeholders

This Manual is prepared with inputs from a combination of sources, including interaction with the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India (GoI), review of extant scheme guidelines and circulars issued by MoRD from time to time and recently updated in 2014 and discussions with the key personnel involved in implementation of the Scheme.

For greater direction, the guidelines cited must be referred to along with the scheme website (<http://www.nsap.nic.in>) for guidance and clarifications on implementation from time to time.

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1. National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)

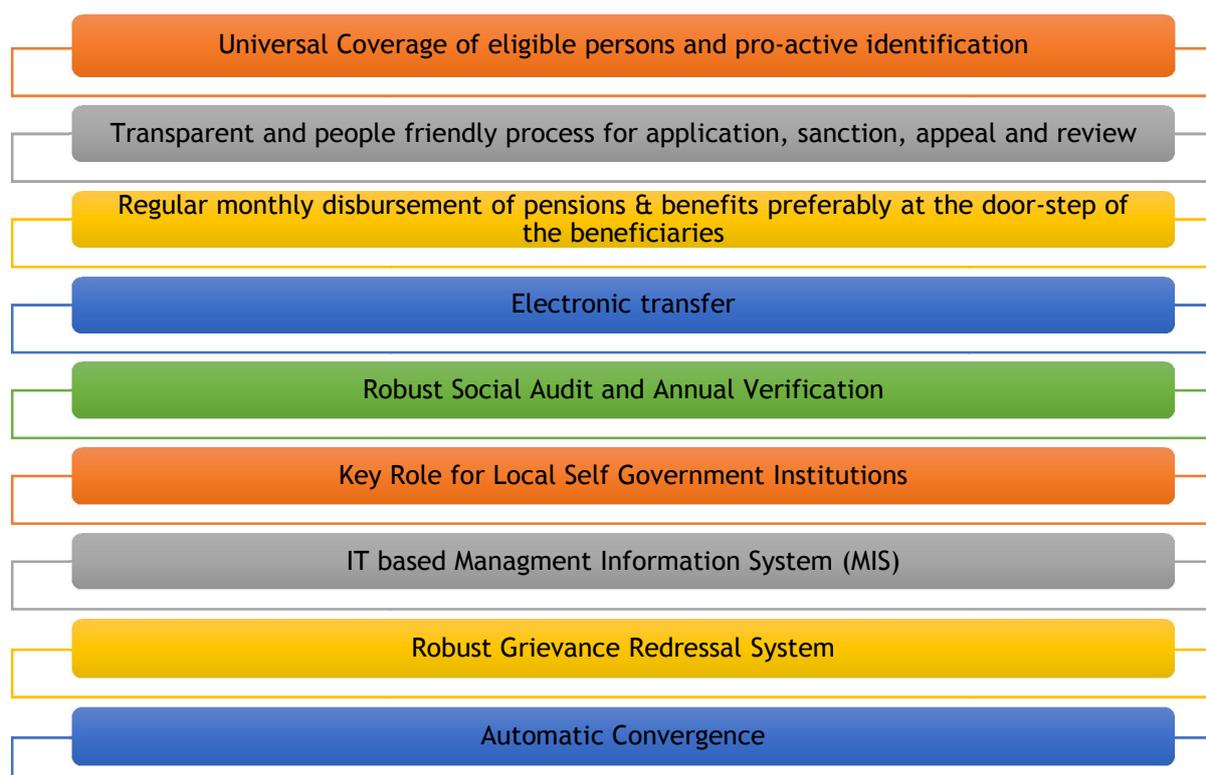
1.1. About the Scheme

The National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) is a welfare programme administered by the Ministry of Rural Development. This programme is being implemented in rural as well as in urban areas. NSAP represents a significant step towards the fulfilment of the Directive Principles of State Policy enshrined in the Constitution of India which enjoin upon the State to undertake within its means a number of welfare measures. In particular, Article 41 of the Constitution of India directs the State to provide public assistance to its citizens in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement and in other cases of undeserved want within the limit of its economic capacity and development.

The programme was first launched on 15th August 1995 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) targeting the destitute¹, to be identified by States/UTs, with the objective of providing financial support.

1.2. Key Principles of the Schemes under NSAP

Figure 1: Principles of NSAP



1.3. Current Schemes of NSAP

There are five different schemes being implemented as part of NSAP. The eligibility criteria for each programme differs, which has been outlined in Table 1. The process of beneficiary selection and sanction procedure are common to all the five schemes of NSAP as described in the implementation sections.

Table 1: Scheme Outline and Eligibility Criteria

Scheme Name	Eligibility Criteria
Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A monthly pension of Rs.200 is provided to all persons of 60-79 years from the Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. For persons above the age of 80 years, the pension amount is Rs.500.
Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In this scheme, BPL widows aged 40-79 years are entitled to a monthly pension of Rs.300, which is enhanced to Rs.500 for the widows above 80 years.
Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The people with severe and multiple disabilities (including dwarfs) with 80% and above disability from BPL families in the age group of 18-79 years are provided a monthly pension of Rs.300, which is enhanced to Rs.500 to the age group of 80 years and above.
National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bereaved households that have lost the bread-winner in the age group of 18 to 59 years of the family falling in the BPL category are given one-time lumpsum assistance of Rs.20,000 Bread-winner is defined as either a male or female adult on whose income family subsistence is dependent. The family benefit is paid to the surviving member of the household of the deceased poor, who after local inquiry, is found to be the head of the household².
Annapurna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the scheme, 10 kg of food grains (wheat or rice) per month are provided free of cost to those senior citizens who, though eligible, have remained uncovered under IGNOAPS

1.4. Additional Assistance (Top-up) provided by State Governments

In addition to the assistance provided by the MoRD, Gol it is recommended to the state governments to provide additional assistance (at least an equal contribution in all the schemes³) to eligible beneficiaries so that they can get a decent level of assistance⁴. By following the advice, some of the state governments have increased the assistance as per the following:

Table 2: Additional Assistance (Top-up) by State Governments

States	Top-up per Person per Month (in Rs.)	States	Top-up per Person per Month (in Rs.)
Meghalaya	50	Maharashtra	400
Mizoram	50	Sikkim	400
Madhya Pradesh	75	Uttarakhand	600
Chhattisgarh	100	Andhra Pradesh	800
Odisha	100	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	800
Uttar Pradesh	100	Daman & Diu	800
Assam	200	Lakshadweep	800
Gujarat	200	Tamil Nadu	800
Jammu & Kashmir	200	Chandigarh	1000

States	Top-up per Person per Month (in Rs.)	States	Top-up per Person per Month (in Rs.)
Kerala	250	Delhi	1000
Punjab	250	Himachal Pradesh	1000
West Bengal	250	Telangana	1000
Rajasthan	300	Haryana	1200
Tripura	300	Puducherry	1800
Karnataka	300	Goa	1800
Bihar	400		

1.5. Coverage & Beneficiaries

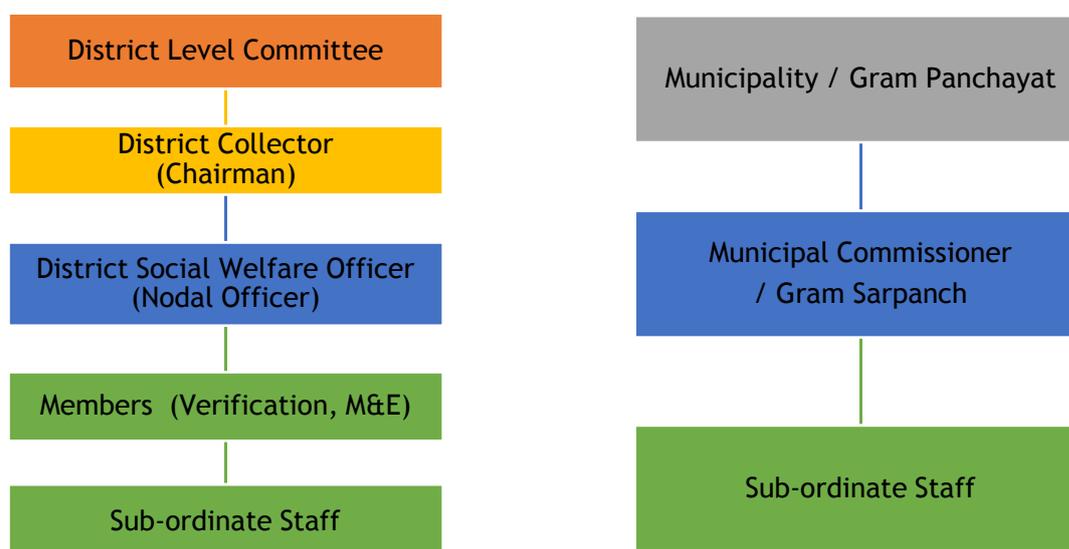
The scheme envisages universal coverage of eligible persons on the basis of Below Poverty Line (BPL) population of the State. For calculating the estimated number of beneficiaries under each scheme for each State/UT, the population figures as per the Census of India 2001 and the poverty ratio determined by the Planning Commission have been taken into account. The estimated number of beneficiaries each year is determined on the reports of the previous year submitted by the State Governments.

2. Implementation Mechanism

2.1. Programme Administrative Structure

An illustrative example of programme administrative structure at District & Municipality / Gram Panchayat level is given in the figure below, which might vary from state-to-state:

Figure 2: Structure at District & Municipality / Gram Panchayat level



2.2. State & District level Committees⁵ & their Activities

A State Level Committee (SLC) headed by the Chief Secretary or Additional or Special Chief Secretary is formed to oversee disbursement, nominating a Nodal Department to implement the schemes. Its composition is provided in the figure below:

Figure 3:
Composition of State Level Committee



SLC is also responsible to monitor state-level implementation and for the purpose, it is advised to meet at least twice in a year. The identified state nodal department (which vary from state to state) is required to submit physical and financial progress report in the prescribed format as given in Annexure I.

A District Level Committee (DLC) as presented in the following table is constituted to implement the schemes at the district level.

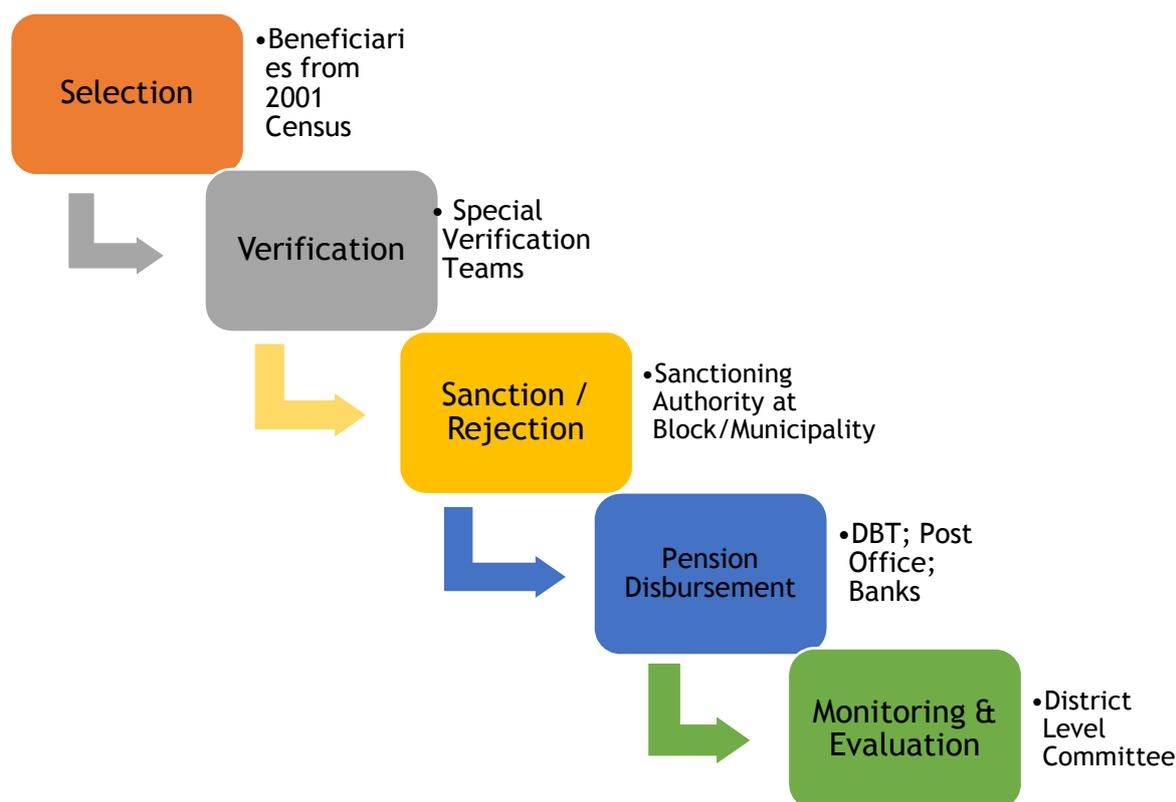
Table 3: Activities of District Level Committee

Committee	Key Activities
<p>District Level Committee (DLC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chairperson, ZP or CEO, ZP / District Collector Head of the Committee - District Level Officials: Welfare Departments (varies from state to state) - Four representative from among Chairpersons of Gram Panchayat /Municipalities - Four Independent experts & representatives of NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Efficient IMPLEMENTATION of the NSAP in accordance with the guidelines and the procedures therein. - Giving wide PUBLICITY to NSAP and generation of awareness. - CONVENE meetings of the District Level Committee regularly. - MONITOR and compile information about the implementation of the scheme and furnishing it to the State authorities on a quarterly basis, for onward transmission to the Ministry.

2.3. Programm Implementation Work-flow Process

The nodal department in consultations with the Gram Panchayat (GP)/ municipalities identifies the beneficiaries followed by verification process done by the Revenue department officials at Block and District level and finalises list of beneficiaries. This list of beneficiaries is submitted by the nodal department through the DLC to the SLC who forwards it to MoRD for funds disbursement as per the norms⁶.

Figure 4: Programme Implementation Work-flow



2.4. Procedure for Sanctioning / Rejecting the Social Assistance benefit

The sanctioning authority at the local government level either sanctions or rejects the applications made by the eligible beneficiaries. The states are given the flexibility of identifying and nominating the sanction authority.

Table 4: Sanction / Rejection of Social Assistance

Sanction or Rejection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After receipt of applications⁷ that are verified and recommended by Gram Sabha / Area Sabha, State shall designate Sanctioning Authority (States are given flexibility to form these authorities and verification teams) • If application rejected, reason for rejection has to be intimated to beneficiary and a copy to GP/Municipality. • Sanction or rejection should not exceed sixty days from the date of receipt • A model format for Sanction Order is provided as Annexure IV of programme
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	guidelines ⁸ (IGNOAPS / IGWPS / IGNDPS & NGBS)
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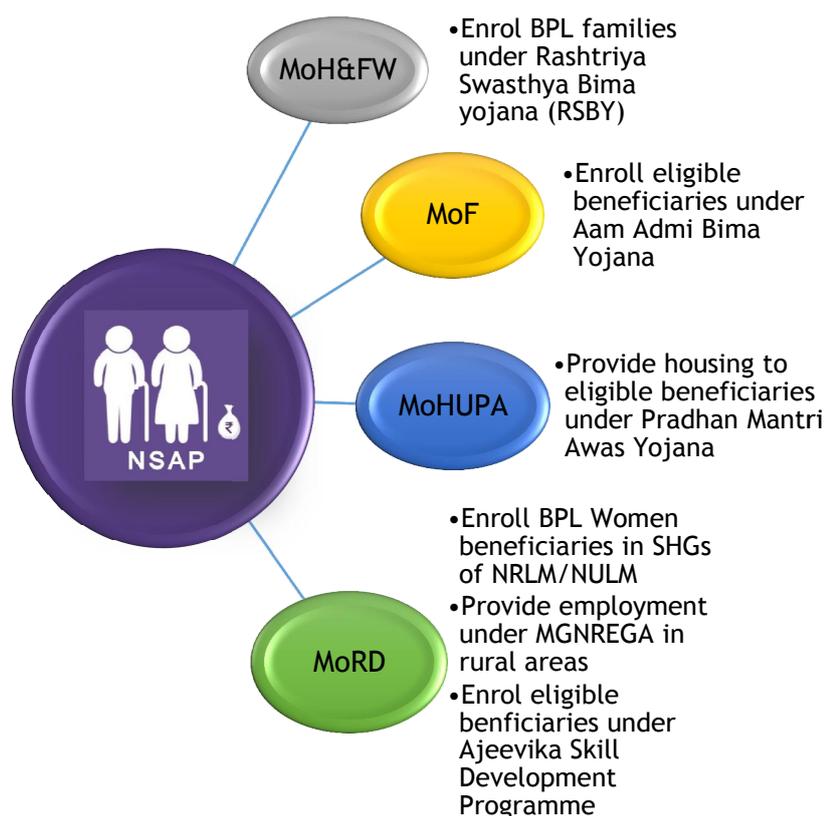
2.5. Procedure for disbursing benefits to beneficiaries

Table 5: Disbursement of Pensions & Other Benefits

Guidelines for Disbursement & Mode of Payments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pensions can be disbursed at the convenience and choice of the beneficiary - Physical disbursement mechanisms such as door-step service; postal money orders, Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) such as Bank Account, Post Office Account etc. are to be made to provide pensions to the old beneficiaries depending on their Social, Economic & Physical vulnerability. As a rule, they should not be required to travel more than 3 km to access their pension account
Guidelines of Cash disbursement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In case of cash disbursements, it should be disbursed to the beneficiaries in Gram Sabha's / Area Sabha's - Payment should be made on Special/Specific day of the month - Door-step delivery of pension to beneficiary to be ensured within 7 days; Beneficiaries list (in the local language) to be displayed to general public - Receipt of payment to beneficiary record should be maintained on record at GP/Municipality
IT Enabled Transfer of Pensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In NSAP, both for sanction and disbursement of pensions, use of IT is required for efficient service delivery

2.6. Convergence of different anti-poverty programmes with NSAP

Figure 5: Convergence of different anti-poverty programmes with NSAP



2.7. Monitoring & Evaluation

The programme envisages monitoring and evaluation at different stages as well as different levels of implementation.

Table 6: Monitoring & Evaluation

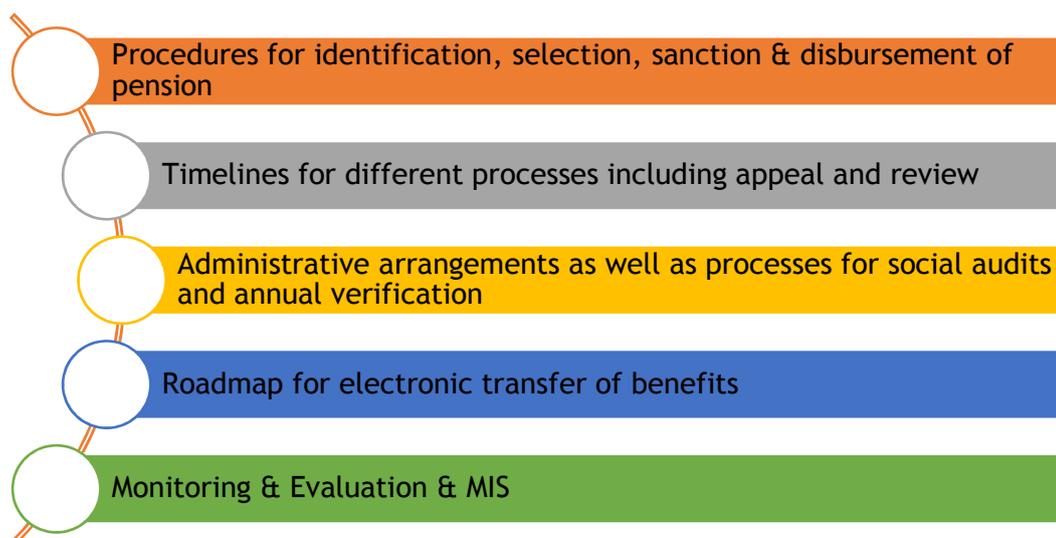
Performance Review Committee (PRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the Performance Review Committee (PRC) meetings scheduled in every quarter of the financial year by the MoRD, GoI, the Secretary may review the progress of NSAP - In addition to PRC review, designated Area Officers from MoRD make field visits to interact with beneficiaries and the field reports are prepared and submitted with copies to state
National Level Monitors (NLMs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The MoRD appointed National Level Monitors (NLMs) - third party monitors, for field evaluation of all MoRD schemes, which includes NSAP implementation as well. - The State Nodal Departments are advised to proactively assist the NLMs and facilitate their field visits and the field reports are prepared and submitted with copies to state - At present, there are about 67 agencies appointed by the MoRD which undertake field studies.
Evaluation Studies by Ministry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As per the requirement, the ministry undertakes evaluation studies in select districts/Municipalities/Gram Panchayat to review the implementation of the schemes
State level NSAP-MIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MoRD developed MIS system⁹ which is compatible to the states needs, may be adopted in maintaining the data

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - States that use their own systems need to port the data onto the NSAP-MIS - The Programme guidelines provide detailed NSAP-MIS usage in the NSAP latest operational guidelines¹⁰ - The Functional features of NSAP-MIS include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Beneficiary database; Legacy data; Fund flow o Process flow for new beneficiaries o Pension Disbursing Authorities o Acquittance Roll o Updation of the Disbursement Ledger o Discontinuation database o Reinstate database - Aadhar based platform for pension disbursement
Disha Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disha committees at the district, municipality and gram panchayat-level are also a forum for review of implementation of NSAP
Grievance Redressal Mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Grievance Redressal System at District / Municipalities / Gram Panchayats are to be set up with an appropriately senior officer at the helm to redress the grievances
Social Audit (Social Audit Committee)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social Audits are required to be conducted at Gram/Area Sabhas once in every six months with an advance notice of 30 days - The committee is to be constituted with at least two beneficiaries from each of the schemes of NSAP and an additional woman beneficiary as member of the committee. Adequate representation of SC/ST/Minorities is to be ensured in the committee - The social audit reports so prepared are to be monitored by the State nodal department

2.8. State Specific Variation of Guidelines for implementing NSAP

Key principles of the Scheme mentioned in section 1.2 of the manual are non-negotiable features and should be the guiding factors in the implementation of NSAP at State / District level.

Figure 6: State Specific Variation of Guidelines



However, States are permitted to come up with variations in the guidelines within the framework of key principals of NSAP. Following factors are to be considered for State specific guidelines.

2.9. Timelines for different processes relating to NSAP schemes

The timelines for different processes under NSAP vary between the States, however for some key processes, following timelines may be followed:

Table 7: Timelines

Activity	Timeline
Verification after submission of applications	15 days from the date of application submission
Ratification at Gram Sabha / Ward	20 days from verification
Gram Panchayat / Municipality	Within 15 days from verification
Sanction of Pensions	Within 10 days from the date of ratification
Time period for disposal of Appeals (if pension is not sanctioned)	15 days from ratification
Time period for disposal of second Appeal	15 days from the first appeal

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The District Collector provides overall direction to the District Welfare Officer and monitors implementation of the scheme.

3.1. District Collector

The district collector is head of DLC and required to undertake certain roles and responsibilities for implementation of the scheme. In addition, the District Collector monitors the programme as Member Secretary of District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (Disha)¹¹.

Table 8: Roles and Responsibilities of District Collector in NSAP

Role	Responsibilities
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PLANNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing meetings at least once in every quarter
IMPLEMENTATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring efficient implementation of scheme in accordance with the guidelines and procedures Creating awareness about the scheme and providing it wide publicity Compilation of information about the implementation and furnishing it to the state authorities on a quarterly basis, for onward transmission to the Ministry
MONITORING	<p>A tentative schedule for quarterly meetings is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> April - Planning and Coordination Meeting where all the budgetary approvals under Central, State and Local Government Budgets could be presented and implementation issues resolved for effective coordination. Clear timelines and targets for implementation could be firmed up at this meeting. July - First Implementation Review of programmes as per the implementation plan and time-frame agreed in the first meeting. October - Second Implementation Review of programmes to identify the constraints to timely completion of works. February - Final Assessment of Progress made during the year.

3.2. District Social Welfare Officer or other identified Nodal Officer

Table 9: Roles & Responsibilities of District Social Welfare Officer / Nodal Officer

Role	Responsibilities
PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION	<p>Verification of Beneficiaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Verification of Beneficiaries list by Special Verification Team (States are given flexibility to form these teams - guidelines do not prescribe the members) under Authorized Officer
	<p>Additions & Deletions in the List</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition or Deletion in the list with reasons should be submitted to the authorized Officer of Special Verification Team Interested person may file claims and objections within 15 days Second appeal should be made in front of the reviewing authority
	<p>Identification of new beneficiaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per BPL list the beneficiaries should be proactively identified by reaching their households, if not in the BPL list, should be included (as per judgement of Supreme Court of India in W.P. no. 196 of 2001).
	<p>Inclusion of new Beneficiaries to the list</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Beneficiary Application as given in Annexure III (IGNOAPS, IGNDPS, IGNDPS & NFBS) of the programme guidelines can be filled and filed with required attachments by an individual or Authorized Officials¹² has to reach out to potential beneficiaries and get the application forms filled and provide assistance in getting the requisite certificates listed below

Role	Responsibilities
	<p style="text-align: center;">Facilitaiton in obtaining requisite certificates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age (Birth Certificate or Ration Card and EPIC or Age certificate by Medical Officer of any Government Hospital- In absence of any valid certificate) • Widow Certificate can be obtained from the Revenue Authority of that area. In the Death Certificate of the Husband, authorities need to ensure surviving wife (widow) name is included. • Disability Certificate has to be mandatorily issued to the person with disability on spot in the organised camps at convenient localities
	<p style="text-align: center;">Verification of applications (of new beneficiaries)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verification officer or Verification team under an authorised officer (suggested level is District Welfare Officer) to verify the applications with reference to the facts produced • Verification should be completed within two weeks from the date of receipt • Recommendations list should be discussed in the Grama Sabhas in rural areas and Area Sabhas in Urban areas, if time limits are not adhered to

3.3. Village / City level Functionaries

Table 10: Roles and Responsibilities of Village Level Functionaries - Sarpanch / Panchayat Secretary / Municipal Commissioner / Executive Officer

Roles	Responsibilities
PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION	<p style="text-align: center;">Identification of eligible BPL beneficiaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify BPL beneficiaries specific to the four schemes as per the eligibility criteria • Cross verification of existing data (if any)
	<p style="text-align: center;">Beneficiary List Preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare Below Poverty Line (BPL) list of Beneficiaries with available Census data or approved beneficiary list submitted and approved by State & Central Governments in the previous year
	<p style="text-align: center;">Additions and deletions to the list</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition or Deletion in the list with reasons should be submitted to the authorized Officer of Special Verification Team • Aggrieved citizens may appeal to the District Welfare Officer rejection of deletion from the list
	<p style="text-align: center;">Awareness Generation among the people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness generation among people about the eligibility, scale of assistance and through publicity programs by Gram Panchayats
MONITORING	Extending support in conducting social audit

4. Annexures

4.1. Annexure I: District Level Monthly / Quarterly Progress Report Formats¹³

1.	Opening Balance under NSAP as on 1 st April (in lakhs)	
2.	Funds released for NSAP, upto month of reporting (in lakhs)	
3.	Total Available Funds	

#	Item	IGNOAPS	IGNWPS	IGDNDPS	NFBS	Annapurna
1.	Total funds utilized (in Lakhs)					
2.	Mode of Disbursement (in numbers)					
	a. Bank Account					
	b. Post Office Account					
	c. Money Order					
	d. Cash					
3.	Total Number of Beneficiaries					

Signature of Designated Officer

Name.....

Designation.....

Official Seal.....

4.2. Annexure II- IGNOAPS / IGNWPS / IGDPS / NFBS

Certificate of Coverage
(To be submitted by 15th December)

Government of

Year.....

INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OLD AGE PENSION SCHEME (IGNOAPS)

This is to certify that _____ (number) persons eligible and belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) household both in rural and urban areas have been covered under IGNOAPS/IGNWPS/IGDPS/NFBS and are receiving the pension.

It is also confirmed that for the purpose of identifying new eligible beneficiaries under IGNOAPS/IGNWPS/IGDPS/NFBS, the Guidelines of NSAP, have been followed

(Signature)
Secretary of Nodal Department for NSAP

Or

Officer designated.

Date.....

Seal.....

(To be prepared and submitted separately for each scheme)

Abbreviations

BPL	Below Poverty Line
DLC	District Level Committee
GP	Gram Panchayat
IGNDPS	Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme
IGNOAPS	Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme
IGNWPS	Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme
MIS	Management Information System
MoRD	Ministry of Rural Development
NFBS	National Family Benefits Scheme
NLMs	National Level Monitors
NSAAC	National Social Assistance Advisory Committee
NSAP	National Social Assistance Programme
NULM	National Urban Livelihood Mission
PMAY	Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana
PRC	Performance Review Committee
RSBY	Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana
SLC	State Level Committee

End Notes and References

- 1 Destitute are defined as any person who has little or no regular means of subsistence from his / her own source of income or through financial support from family members or other sources
- 2 For the purpose of the scheme, the term 'household' would include spouse, minor children, unmarried daughters and dependent parents. In case of death of an unmarried adult, the term household would include minor brothers/sisters and dependent parents.
- 3 Ltr No. J-11015/1/2012-NSAP dated 08 November 2012 of Ministry of Rural Development to all state governments
- 4 For details refer Section 2.4.2 of Programme Guidelines
- 5 Committee Members may defer from one State to other State
- 6 Central assistance to states/UTs is determined on the basis of BPL population of the state. For calculating the estimated number of beneficiaries under each scheme for each state/UT, the population figures as per the Census of India 2011 and the poverty ratio determined by the Planning Commission have been taken into account. For further details, refer Section 2.4 of Programme Guidelines
- 7 Annexure III of Programme Guidelines
- 8 Annexure IV of Programme Guidelines
- 9 <http://nsap.nic.in/login/login2.do?param=open>; can be assessed with State Username and Password
- 10 NSAP Operational guidelines can be referred in the at the following web link <http://nsap.nic.in/guidelines.html>
- 11 District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (Disha) instituted with guidelines issued by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India in July 2016. For details refer http://rural.nic.in/sites/default/files/Disha_Guidelines_English.PDF and <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/mbErel.aspx?relid=147922>
- 12 Authorised Officials designations or cadres may vary from State to State
- 13 Reports for every Quarter (June, September, December and March) should come in the same format States to ensure that similar reports are received monthly from districts and municipalities. Release for next quarter is based on figures reported in Quarterly Progress Report / Monthly Progress Report