

Guidelines for transaction through e-PoS under FPS Automation project

(Annexure to Memo No : 2629-FS/O/Sectt/IT-09/2014 dated 15-10-2020)

A Scheme on "**End-to-end Computerizations of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) Operations**" had been introduced to bring reforms in the Public Distribution System and to ensure transparency in the distribution of food grains. Automation of Fair Price Shop (FPS) was an essential component for implementation of National Food Security and an integral part of the End-to-End computerization of TPDS. Under automation of Fair Price Shops, transaction of foodgrains under PDS has to be done through **electronic Point of Sale (e-PoS)** devices.

FPS automation had been introduced in December, 2018 and full roll out was done from 1st April, 2019. **The Department had issued orders vide no 3069-FS dated 22/07/2019 and 1417-FS dated 11/05/2020 in which 100% transaction through e-PoS is made mandatory.**

The objectives of FPS automation are:

- i. To bring in transparency in the distribution of foodgrains under PDS among the beneficiaries.
- ii. To ensure that only the beneficiary or his family members receive the food grains
- iii. To collect the transaction data in real time basis
- iv. To save the FPS shop owner from the problems of accounting and reporting
- v. To enable the government to make additional allocation at earliest for ensuing a smooth logistic and supply chain management

To fulfill the objectives of the FPS automation, following guidelines are issued defining the functions, roles & responsibilities of the stakeholders:

A. Role & responsibilities of the System Integrator (Agency engaged for FPS automation)

1. Ensure installation & commissioning of e-PoS device in all the FPSs
2. No downtime Maintenance of the e-PoS device installed in the FPS is the responsibility of the agency.
3. Provide hand holding training to the FPS owners / authorized persons for operation of e-PoS device smoothly & effectively at the time of installation and as and when required by DCFS/DDR/SCFS and ROs
4. To send an automated SMS on daily basis to the registered mobile No. of the FPS owner with the alert to open & bring the e-PoS online for data downloading before starting day's distribution
5. To develop a robust and user-friendly call logging system in cases of reporting the issues related with non-functioning, breakdown and other problems related with e-PoS device due to any fault / damage or in case of loss. '**Whatsapp chat box**' or

android mobile app / mobile compliant web browser based call /complaint logging and management system should be developed by the system integrator within 2nd November, 2020 and informed to all users (FPS owners and officials)

6. To attend and respond to the call related with non-functioning of the e-PoS machine within 3 hours of call logging. Should take all possible steps to either repair or replace the e-PoS device immediately or same day.

However, if the call is logged after 3 PM then the e-PoS should be replaced or repaired within 12:00 hours of next day.

Penalty will be imposed in case of any delay in repair/replacement of e-PoS device without any valid ground.

7. The call logging System should also fire an SMS to the area food inspector intimating about the non-functioning of the e-PoS along with the details of the FPS.
8. Shall keep at least 5% reserve stock of e-PoS devices and also keep sufficient stock of batteries (at least 10%), paper-rolls & other spare parts in each district / sub-area. As far as practicable these reserve stocks are to be distributed & kept at Sub-Division level so that repair / replacement can be done immediately.
9. Shall deploy technical (skilled) person for each Sub-Division and 6 (six) technical persons for Kolkata (3 for Kolkata North & 3 for Kolkata South). Name & contact details of these technical persons along with contact details & jurisdiction has to be kept in the automation portal / mobile app in such a way so that the stakeholders can easily access from the portal.
10. The personnel deployed by the agency will conduct periodic inspection to ensure that the e-PoS installed at the FPS is functioning properly and effectively and submit inspection report or send through WhatsApp to the SCF&S / RO at the end of each month. The format of such report shall be finalized by the System Integrator and IT Cell of F&S Department.
11. Shall provide access / log in credentials to the officers of State / Directorate / District / DDR/ Sub-division /RO/ Inspector levels, as per direction of the Department / Directorate.
12. Shall provide various MIS based reports in different Formats and at various State / Directorate / District / DDR/ Sub-division /RO/ Inspector levels. In addition to that shall also provide Reports as per direction of the Department / Directorate.
13. Shall develop / customize / upgrade the software applications of e-Pos and Portals per the requirement of the Department to make best use of the entire automation process
14. Shall provide quality carrying cases or protective covers for every e-PoS device to safeguard it from regular wear & tear

B. Role & Responsibilities of the FPS owners

1. Do 100% online transaction through e-PoS device mandatorily in real time basis during the working of the FPS Shop.
2. Un-automated transaction without any valid reason and approval of the authority shall be treated as violation of government order and punishable under control orders in vogue.
3. **Open the e-PoS device, bring it online and download daily data before starting the distribution.**
4. **Transactions of foodgrains through e-PoS are to be done during working hours on real time basis only.**

Exemptions: Provided if any FPS falls in 'internet shadow zone', the FPS owner will apply to the District Magistrate / Director of Rationing (for Kolkata North & Kolkata South sub area only) through proper channel for exemption from this clause. The District Magistrate / Director of Rationing will issue order after verifying the fact from the leading internet service providers.

Provided further that in case of interruption of internet services due to any natural calamity or due to any other reason:

- a. the Inspector, Food & Supplies having jurisdiction may allow exemption for 1 day,
 - b. the Sub-Divisional Controller, Food & Supplies / Rationing Officer having jurisdiction may allow exemption exceeding 1 day but not more than 3 days,
 - c. the District Controller, Food & Supplies / Deputy Director of Rationing having jurisdiction may allow exemption exceeding 3 days but not more than 7 days.
 - d. If exemption for more than 7 days but up to 15 days is required due to any reason, the proposal has to be sent to the Director, DDP&S / DR through proper channel with the recommendation of the DCF&S / DDR. DDP&S / DR may issue exemption order.
 - e. If exemption for more 15 days is required due to any reason, the proposal has to be sent to the Department through proper channel with the recommendation of DDP&S / DR. Department may issue exemption order.
5. Shall do Aadhaar and mobile seeding through e-PoS promptly, whenever the beneficiary approaches the FPS.

6. Shall maintain & preserve the e-PoS device as per standard operation guidelines of the device. **Safety & security of the e-PoS installed in the FPS is the complete responsibility of the FPS owner and/or his/her designated employee**
7. Shall keep the e-PoS device after use in the protective cover supplied by the agency to safeguard it from regular wear & tear
8. **The cost for repair / replacement of the e-PoS devices has to be borne by the FPS owner, if damage is caused due to negligence or intentional mistake / act of the FPS owners or his/her staff and in case of lost due to lack of safety & security.**
9. **Shall immediately report the non-functioning of e-PoS due to any fault / damage through call log system only. Delay of reporting the non-functioning in the call log system of more than 30 minutes shall be treated as intentional delay.** Any willful delay in this regard will be treated as violation of government order and punishable under control orders in vogue.
10. **Transaction has to be done mandatorily through biometric authentication where Aadhaar number is seeded or through OTP where mobile number is seeded with the Digital Ration Card.**
11. Display a notice in the prescribed format in the notice board appealing the beneficiaries to seed their Aadhaar and mobile numbers.
12. Shall enter Aadhaar Number of every member of the family of the beneficiary and mobile no. of at least one member of the family through e-Pos.
13. Should not add any new member through e-PoS, if his data is not in the e-PoS. However, he should advise the Digital Ration Card holder to visit his nearest Food Inspector / Rationing Office / SCF&S Office for activation / merger of a Digital Ration Card if it is not activated.

C. Role & Responsibilities of the Inspector, Food & Supplies Department

1. Shall login in the automation portal (even login through mobile is possible) & monitor whether the e-PoS has been activated by FPS Owner and whether transactions are being done through e-PoS in real-time or not.
2. Shall also monitor whether transactions are being made during normal working hours or not.
3. Shall monitor whether the Guidelines for the FPS Owners are being scrupulously followed or not.
4. Shall also monitor whether the Guidelines for the System Integrators are being scrupulously followed or not.
15. Shall also monitor and check whether the System Integrator is maintaining at least 5% reserve stock of e-PoS devices and stock of batteries (at least 10%), paper-rolls & other spare parts in each district / sub-area at Sub-Division level. Shall also monitor proactively monitor that technical (skilled) persons are deployed by vendor / SI for each Sub-Division / rationing area.
5. Shall download weekly and monthly reports from the portal and analyze them on following points :
 - i. Whether the ePoS was activated daily and in time
 - ii. Whether the data was downloaded daily
 - iii. Whether all the transactions were made through e-PoS only
 - iv. Whether all the transactions were made online and in real-time
 - v. Whether all the e-PoS transactions were made during within reasonable time of operation of FPS
6. Shall proactively coordinate with the technical person of the vendor/ System Integrator to ensure that faulty / damaged e-PoS device / battery gets replaced within 24 hours of call logging
7. **Shall take prompt actions in case of any un-automated transaction by FPS owner or deviation or negligence from guidelines without any valid reason.**
8. **Shall take prompt actions in case of any deviation or negligence from guidelines by vendor / System Integrator without any valid reason.**
9. In case of any damage of e-PoS device, it should be first ensured that it is replaced by the vendor and then conduct a field enquiry to assess the cause of damage & submit report to the higher authority fixing the responsibility. He shall maintain a proper record of the report.
10. May issue exemption order after verifying the fact(s) if exemption for 1 day is required in case of interruption of internet services due to any natural calamity or due to any other reasons. The reasons shall be recorded in writing.
11. **Shall submit a fortnightly report on the deviations by various FPS owners with name and extent of deviation and action taken report to the SCF&S / RO. The report should also mention the number of FPSs doing un-automated transactions with reason of such un-automated transactions& actions proposed.**

D. Role & Responsibilities of the SCF&S / Rationing Officer

1. Shall login in the automation portal (even login through mobile is possible) & monitor whether the e-PoS has been activated by FPS Owner and whether transactions are being done through e-PoS in real-time or not.
2. Shall also monitor whether transactions are being made during normal working hours or not.
3. Shall monitor whether the Guidelines for the FPS Owners are being scrupulously followed or not.
4. Shall also monitor whether the Guidelines for the System Integrators are being scrupulously followed or not.
5. Shall also monitor and check whether the System Integrator is maintaining at least 5% reserve stock of e-PoS devices and stock of batteries (at least 10%), paper-rolls & other spare parts in each district / sub-area at Sub-Division level. Shall also monitor proactively monitor that technical (skilled) persons are deployed by vendor / SI for each Sub-Division / rationing area.
6. On receipt of report from the Inspector or from his / her own source regarding un-automated transactions by any FPS owner without any valid reason shall issue show cause notice to the said FPS owner, conduct a proper inquiry and take penal action for violation of government order related to PDS.
7. **Shall obtain a fortnightly report from the concerned Food Inspectors on the deviations by various FPS owners with name and extent of deviation and action taken report.**
8. **Shall analyze the report, discuss with the Inspectors and advise them on appropriate course of action.**
9. Shall coordinate with the vendor / System Integrator to ensure that any issues related with deviation from the guidelines, maintenance of reserve stocks, deployment of manpower, replacement of faulty / damaged e-PoS device within 24 hours of call logging, etc. are monitored.
10. In case of any damage of e-PoS device, first ensure that it is replaced by the vendor and then cause a field enquiry through the Inspector, Food & Supplies, issue order and/or submit report to the DCF&S / DDR
11. May issue exemption order after verifying the fact(s) if exemption up to 3 days is required in case of interruption of internet services due to any natural calamity or due to any other justifiable reasons. The reasons shall be recorded in writing.
12. Shall submit a fortnightly report to the DCF&S / DDR regarding the status of compliance with guidelines for mandatory use of e-PoS, number of FPSs doing un-automated transactions, reasons of such un-automated transactions, actions taken for un-automated transaction & further actions if any to be taken against the FPS or the Food Inspector.

E. Role & responsibilities of the DCF&S / DDR

1. It shall be the responsibility of DCF&S and his officers at the district level to ensure that all the guidelines are scrupulously being followed and complied with by FPS owners, Food Inspectors, SCF&S/ ROs, System Integrator and his representatives at the District or DDR area.
2. Shall login in the automation portal (even login through mobile is possible) & monitor whether the e-PoS has been activated by FPS Owner and whether transactions are being done through e-PoS in real-time or not.
3. Shall also monitor whether transactions are being made during normal working hours or not.
4. Shall monitor whether the Guidelines for the FPS Owners are being scrupulously followed or not.
5. Shall also monitor whether the Guidelines for the System Integrators are being scrupulously followed or not.
6. Shall also monitor and check whether the System Integrator is maintaining at least 5% reserve stock of e-PoS devices and stock of batteries (at least 10%), paper-rolls & other spare parts in each district / sub-area at Sub-Division level. Shall also monitor proactively monitor that technical (skilled) persons are deployed by vendor / SI for each Sub-Division / rationing area.
7. **Shall obtain a fortnightly report from the concerned SCF&Ss / ROs on the deviations by various FPS owners with name and extent of deviation and action taken report.**
8. **Shall analyze the report, review it regularly, discuss with the SCF&Ss / ROs and advise them on appropriate course of action.**
9. Shall coordinate with the vendor / System Integrator to ensure that any issues related with deviation from the guidelines, maintenance of reserve stocks, deployment of manpower, replacement of faulty / damaged e-PoS device within 24 hours of call logging, etc. are monitored.
10. In case of any damage of e-PoS device, first ensure that it is replaced by the vendor and then cause a field enquiry through the Inspector, Food & Supplies, issue order and/or submit report to the DCF&S / DDR.
11. May issue exemption order after verifying the fact(s) if exemption up to 7 days is required in case of interruption of internet services due to any natural calamity or due to any other justifiable reasons. The reasons shall be recorded in writing.
12. Shall submit a fortnightly report to the DDP&S / DR regarding the status of compliance with guidelines for mandatory use of e-PoS, number of FPSs doing un-automated transactions, reasons of such un-automated transactions, actions taken for un-automated transaction & further actions if any to be taken against the FPS or the Food Inspector or SCF&S / RO.

F. Role & Responsibilities of the DDP&S / Director of Rationing

1. Monitor & Supervise to ensure the implementation of these guidelines strictly. To provide support to the field offices and the System Integrator as and when required for implementation of these guidelines.
2. Nominate an officer as Nodal Officer for 3-4 districts that will coordinate between the Districts, Directorate and System Integrators.
3. **Shall obtain a fortnightly report from the concerned DCF&S / DDR on the deviations by various FPS owners and extent of deviation and action taken report.**
4. **Shall analyze the report, review it regularly, discuss with the DCF&S / DDR and advise them on appropriate course of action.**
5. Shall coordinate with the vendor / System Integrator to ensure that any issues related with deviation from the guidelines, maintenance of reserve stocks, deployment of manpower, replacement of faulty / damaged e-PoS device within 24 hours of call logging, etc. are monitored.
6. May issue exemption order after verifying the fact(s) if exemption up to 15 days is required in case of interruption of internet services due to any natural calamity or due to any other reason.
7. Shall submit a fortnightly report to the DDP&S / DR regarding the status of compliance with guidelines for mandatory use of e-PoS, number of FPSs doing un-automated transactions, reasons of such un-automated transactions, actions taken for un-automated transaction & further actions if any to be taken against the FPS or the Food Inspector or SCF&S / RO.

G. Dos of the beneficiary

1. Beneficiary should seed Aadhaar and Mobile numbers with their Digital Ration Card number for authenticated transaction during lifting of foodgrains.
2. Beneficiary should verify the quantity of foodgrains to be received and also take the cash memo (receipt copy) before leaving the counter.
3. Beneficiary should cooperate with the FPS dealer at the time of biometric authentication or mobile OTP based authentication.
4. Beneficiary should maintain social distancing at the time of lifting foodgrains during COVID-19 pandemic.

H. Replacement of damaged e-PoS device and bearing of cost thereof

1. The agency will repair / replace the faulty / damaged / lost e-PoS device within 24 hours of its report as detailed in “**Role & responsibilities of the System Integrator**”.
2. If the fault / damage is due to damage / expiry of battery or technical fault of any parts and FPS owner is not responsible for the fault / damage, the agency will repair / replace the e-PoS device at its own cost.
3. If fault / damage is caused due to negligence of the FPS owner or due to willful act of the FPS owner, then the cost for repair / replacement will have to be borne by the FPS owner. In this case the agency after repair / replacement will submit an application to the SCF&S / RO for realization of cost from the FPS owner. SCF&S / RO will cause an enquiry through the Inspector, F&S to ascertain the actual cause(s) and fix the responsibility.
4. Inspector, Food & Supplies will enquire and ascertain the cause of fault / damage / lost and submit report to the SCF&S / RO within 48 hours.
5. On receiving report from the Inspector, F&S, the SCF&S / RO will issue order in this regard after giving opportunity of being heard to the FPS owner and the agency.
6. If fault / damage is caused due to any force majeure which is beyond the control of the FPS owner and the agency, the SCF&S / RO will send proposal along with enquiry report to the Department through proper channel. The department will take decision on perusal of the enquiry report and after giving opportunity of being heard to the stakeholders, if required.

I. Appeal

1. 1st Appeal

If the FPS owner or the agency is aggrieved against the order of the SCF&S / RO, they may prefer appeal to the DCF&S / DDR within 15 days from the date of passing the order. The DCF&S / DDR will dispose of the appeal after giving opportunity of being heard to all concern within 15 days.

2. 2nd Appeal

If the FPS owner or the agency is aggrieved against the order of the DCF&S / DDR, they may prefer appeal to the DDP&S / DR within 15 days from the date of passing the order by the DCF&S / DDR. The DDP&S / DR will dispose of the appeal after giving opportunity of being heard to all concern within 15 days.

J. Realization of cost from the FPS owner

If the FPS owner is found responsible for the fault / damage / lost of the e-PoS device and is ordered to meet up the cost towards repair / replacement to the agency he /she will pay the cost to the agency as per order. In case of non-payment the cost will be realized from the commission of the FPS owner and will be paid to the agency.