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Bhubaneswar, dated the 17th Sept., 2013

To

All Principal Secretaries to Govt.,
All Commissioner-cum-Secretaries to Govt.,
All Revenue Divisional Commissioners,
All Heads of Departments,
All Collectors.

Sub: Guidelines for conducting written examination for Persons with Disabilities.

Madam/Sir,


With a view to address the problem of writing faced by the Persons with Disabilities during various examinations, it was felt necessary to provide a scribe for all academic and competitive examinations. Accordingly, the guidelines were issued by Women & Child Development Deptt. vide their letter No.10485/WCD, dated 17.05.2013. It appears that some Departments have still not adopted these guidelines. The guidelines are reiterated below:

1. There is no need for fixing separate criteria for regular and competitive examinations.
2. The facility of Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant should be allowed to any person who has disability of 40% or more if so desired by the person.
3. The candidate should have the discretion of opting for his own scribe/reader/lab assistant or request the Examination Body for the same. The examining body may also identify the scribe/reader/lab assistant to make panels at the District/Division/State level as per the requirements of the examination. In such instances the candidates should be allowed to meet the scribe a day before the examination so that the candidates get a chance to check and verify whether the scribe is suitable or not.
4. Criteria like educational qualification, marks scored, age or other such restrictions for the scribe/reader/lab assistant should not be fixed. Instead, the invigilation system should be strengthened, so that the candidates using scribe/reader/lab assistant do not indulge in malpractices like copying and cheating during the examination.
5. There should also be flexibility in accommodating any change in scribe/reader/lab assistant in case of emergency. The candidates should also be allowed to take more than one scribe/reader for writing different papers especially for languages.
6. Persons with disabilities should be given the option of choosing the mode for taking the examinations i.e. in Braille or in the computer or in large print or even by recording the answers as the examining bodies can easily make use of technology to convert question paper in large prints, e-text or Braille and can also convert Braille text in English or regional languages.

7. The candidates should be allowed to check the computer system one day in advance so that the problems if any in the software/system could be rectified.
8. The procedure of availing the facility of scribe should be simplified and the necessary details should be recorded at the time of filling up of the forms. Thereafter, the examining body should ensure availability of question papers in the format opted by the candidate as well as suitable seating arrangement for giving examination.
9. The disability certificate issued by the competent medical authority at any place should be accepted across the country.
10. The word "extra time or additional time" that is being currently used should be changed to "compensatory time" and the same should not be less than 20 minutes per hour of examination for persons who are making use of scribe/reader/lab assistant. All the candidates with disability not availing the facility of scribe may be allowed additional time of minimum of one hour for examination of 3 hours duration which could further be increased on case to case basis.
11. The candidates should be allowed to use assistive devices like talking calculator (in cases where calculators are allowed for giving exams), tailor frame, Braille slate, abacus, geometry kit, Braille measuring tape and augmentative communication devices like communication chart and electronic devices.
12. Proper seating arrangement (preferably on the ground floor) should be made prior to the commencement of examination to avoid confusion or distraction during the day of the exam. The time of giving the question papers should be marked accurately and timely supply of supplementary papers should be ensured.
13. The examining body should also provide reading material in Braille or E-Text or on computers having suitable screen reading softwares for open book examination. Similarly online examination should be in accessible format i.e. websites, question papers and all other study material should be accessible as per the international standards laid down in this regard.
14. Alternative objective questions in lieu of descriptive questions should be provided for Hearing-Impaired persons, in addition to the existing policy of giving alternative questions in lieu of questions requiring visual inputs, for persons with Visual Impairment.

All Departments must ensure compliance of these guidelines by the subordinate offices and allied Academies/examination bodies under their administrative control.

Yours faithfully,


12/9/23
Chief Secretary,
Odisha