
UNIT 12 SERVICES AT DISTRICT LEVEL *

Structure

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12.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- discuss the basic structure of governance in India;
- explain different kinds of government services available at the district level;
- highlight the significance of Citizen's Charters; and
- describe the grievance redressal mechanism.

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Most of the countries world over are welfarist in nature, though the level of welfarism may differ in each of them. The governments in them provide various goods and services to the citizens to protect and promote their economic and social well-being. They implement programmes for the benefit of the citizens. However, the nature and level of these services and programmes differ from country to country. In fact, there are some 'cradle to grave' welfare countries also in the world, while there are states which do not have the capacity to provide even basic services to their citizens. These services and programmes could be providing employment opportunities,

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housing benefits, delivery of basic services like drinking water, electricity, sanitation, etc., health, education, public transport, among a whole lot of others.

India can also be called a welfare state. The governments at different levels deliver different services to the citizens. To understand as to which service is or could be available at which level, it is important to understand the structure of the government and how the administration is organized.

12.2 STRUCTURE OF THE GOVERNMENT IN INDIA

As per the Constitution, India is a Union of states. So, there is a national level government and there is a state level government in each state. After the enactment of 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts, there are local governments at the panchayat level and the urban local bodies level as well. There are three lists in the Constitution- Union list, State list and Concurrent list. Besides, lists of subjects are also contained in Schedule 11 and Schedule 12 that specify powers of Panchayati Raj Institutions and Municipalities. These determine as to which service would be offered by whom.

To support the governments at all levels, India has a huge bureaucracy deployed at all levels. The officers in it belong to different services like All India Services, Central Services, State Civil Services, etc. It is important to understand that the national government too has to depend a lot on the state's administrative apparatus for delivery of various services.

12.3 ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENT AT THE STATE LEVEL

The state government provides policy directions for the state, which are implemented at the district level. Each state is divided into districts and each district is further divided on the basis of development functions and revenue functions. These divisions are known as blocks and *tehsils* respectively. The head of the district administration is the District Magistrate. The other nomenclatures for the same positions are District Collector and Deputy Commissioner. These vary from state to state and to some extent depend on the functions assigned.

District administration is primarily responsible for:

- i. development functions.
- ii. revenue functions.
- iii. law and order.
- iv. emergency functions.

While there are other responsibilities also, which are taken care of by the district administration, the above are needed by citizens on a regular basis for their dignified existence. The District Magistrate or the Deputy Commissioner is the nodal coordinating officer for various state line departments. These line departments have their district heads at the district level, who are responsible for service delivery concerning their department.

There is a high degree of complementarity between them. Some of these departments are mentioned below:

- i. Education
- ii. Health
- iii. Forestry
- iv. Agriculture
- v. Animal husbandry, etc.

Similarly, district heads of the departments are as follow:

- i. Superintendent of police
- ii. district medical officer
- iii. district health officer
- iv. district forest officer
- v. district agriculture officer
- vi. district education officer, etc.

A good idea about the services can be had by looking at the website of each district. Today each district has an elaborate and often interactive website. For example, the website of Sitapur district in Uttar Pradesh is shown below:

Picture 1: Official Website of District Sitapur



Source: District website accessed at <https://sitapur.nic.in/>

Picture 2: Official websites of District Sitapur



Source: District website accessed at <https://sitapur.nic.in/>

The nature and level of services offered in a district depend on the socio-

economic condition and priority areas of the district and the state as can be seen on the website of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

Picture 3: Official Website of District Bhopal



Source: District website accessed at <https://bhopal.nic.in/en/>

Picture 4: Some Important Links on the Website of District Bhopal



Source: District website accessed at <https://bhopal.nic.in/en/>

The links given on the websites provide information about the contact persons and the address of each service provider. These websites could also be a good source of information about the rates for various services. In many cases, services are available online as well. It should also be kept in mind that many services, although offered by the district administration, may not be mentioned on this particular portal, as there could be a specific website for that service. Any person desirous of or needing any service may either visit the office physically or avail the service online, if available.

12.4 ACCESSING SERVICES

Some of the important services and their providers at the district level, which people may need at different points of time, are mentioned below:

12.4.1 Registration and Mutation of Property

Property registration is mandatory whenever it is bought. Registration establishes the ownership of the buyer over the property. It is done by paying stamp duty and the registration fees in the Sub-Registrar's office. A major part of the process can be done online also.

For registration as well as mutation, an advocate may need to be engaged, as some legal documents need to be prepared in both cases. Mutating property is a mandatory process in all legal transactions involving property. It becomes essential for deciding the tax liability when the property ownership gets changed. These revenue records are maintained by civic bodies like municipalities, panchayats and municipal corporations.

12.4.2 Calling Police or Registering FIR

Maintaining law and order is the responsibility of the state. However, some problems may emerge any time. Whenever facing a problem or in an emergency situation, police may be called by dialing 100, which is the police control room's number. A police complaint, the initial reporting, can be filed if there is any crime or offence committed. Anyone- the victim of the crime, victim's family members, friends or witness can file the complaint. Normally, a complaint is filed in the nearest police station in whose jurisdiction the crime is committed. However, in an emergency situation, the complaint can be filed in any police station. Policemen file a First Information Report (FIR) if it is a cognizable offence.

Complaint or FIR can be filed both online and offline, provided online facilities are available.

Picture 7: E-Services Offered by Delhi Police



Source: Delhi Police portal accessed at <https://delhipolice.gov.in/>

In offline mode, the complaint can be filed by visiting the police station or sending a written complaint by post.

12.4.3 Registering on an Employment Exchange

Getting a job is the highest priority for unemployed people. Anyone can register in an employment exchange. There is a network of employment exchanges across the country. There were 1005 employment exchanges functioning in the country during the year 2021 and around 4.9 lakh job seekers were placed through employment exchanges during the year 2021.** Many states have web portals at the state level. This can be searched online and registration can be done by the desirous persons.

** Directorate General of Employment 2022. Employment Exchange Statistics 2022. New Delhi: Government of India.



Source: Website accessed at <https://sewayojan.up.nic.in/>

The offices are available at the district and sub-district levels also, where registration can be done. For example, Kerala has three professional and executive employment exchanges at Thiruvananthapuram formerly Trivendrum, Ernakulam and Kozhikode for the candidates who have professional degrees and post-graduation with second class. There are 14 district employment exchanges, 60 town employment exchanges, six special employment exchanges for physically challenged applicants, one rural employment exchange in Thiruvananthapuram and two coaching cum guidance centres for SC/STs.

Procedure for New Registration in Delhi

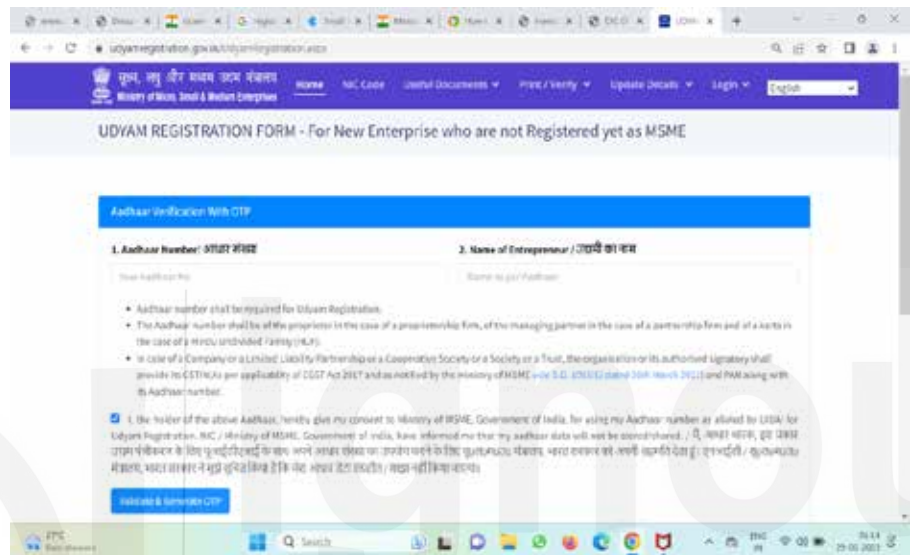
- Open the delhi employment exchange portal on web browser.
- Read the instructions given carefully, before clicking on “Register” button.
- Enter the basic information and select required fields.
- Enter the Email OTP (One-time Password) and Mobile OTP before clicking on the submit button.
- Click on “Submit” button to register. The User Id/Email Id and password for accessing the employment Portal is provided on your registered email id.
- Enter the Qualification, Skill, Experience, National & International Language by clicking on Add/Delete option. While entering remember the following:
 - The data added to the list will be submitted. Only selection of data does not mean that data will be submitted.
 - After selecting the data you must click on the “ADD” button.
 - You can enter a maximum of 10 records in skill.
 - Skill is an auto-complete field, wait to populate. As you will type data field will be populated and you have to select from the appearing list by clicking on desired data.

Source: Delhi Employment Exchange web portal accessed at <https://onlineemploymentportal.delhi.gov.in/Home/InstructPage>

12.4.4 Registering an Enterprise

Any citizen wishing to set up an enterprise should register it, though it is voluntary. The government is encouraging people to become entrepreneurs and providing support through various policy measures. It has simplified various procedures also. Only Aadhaar, PAN and GST numbers are needed. Registration can be done on the web portal of the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

Picture 9: Process for Registration of a Enterprise



Source: Enterprise registration website accessed at <https://udyamregistration.gov.in/Government-India/Ministry-MSME-registration.htm>

An enterprise for the purpose of this process is known as Udyam and its Registration Process is known as ‘Udyam Registration’. A permanent registration number is given after registration. After completion of the process of registration, a certificate is issued online. This certificate has a dynamic QR Code from which the web page of the Portal and details about the enterprise can be accessed. There is no need for renewal of Registration. Single window systems at Champions Control Rooms and at District Industries Centres help entrepreneurs in the process. Registration Process is totally free. No Costs or Fees are to be paid to anyone.

Benefits of taking Udyam Registration

- Any number of activities including manufacturing or service or both may be specified or added in one registration.
- Along with the Udyam registration, enterprises may register themselves on GeM (Government e Marketplace), Samadhan (portal to address issues relating to delay in payments) and simultaneously MSMEs themselves can also onboard on TReDS (Trade Receivables electronic Discounting System) platform (the invoices of receivables are traded on this platform) through three available platforms.
- Udyam registration may also help MSMEs in availing the benefits of schemes of Ministry of MSMEs such as Credit Guarantee Scheme,

Public Procurement Policy, additional edge in government tenders and protection against delayed payments etc.

- It becomes eligible for priority sector lending from banks.

Source: Website of the Ministry of MSME

12.4.5 Centrally Sponsored Schemes

Centrally sponsored schemes are classified as Central Assistance to State Plan (CASP) and are key instruments for meeting the objectives outlined in the National Development Agenda. Such schemes are different from central sector schemes, on the basis of the subject matter and funding pattern. While the major share remains that of the central government, the state governments also contribute their share for the implementation of the programme. There are more than fifty such schemes. The District Collector is the nodal officer for implementation of these schemes. They are implemented at municipal, block and panchayat levels.

To avail the benefits, the beneficiaries need to get themselves registered under the scheme for which they are eligible. Guidelines of each scheme prescribe eligibility, procedure for registration and granting of benefits.

Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Pre-matric Scholarship to the Scheduled Caste Students in Haryana

Objectives of the scheme are:

- To support parents of SC children for education of their wards studying in classes IX and X so that the incidence of drop-out, especially in the transition from the elementary to the secondary stage is minimized, and
- To improve participation of SC children in classes IX and X of the pre-matric stage, so that they perform better and have a better chance of progressing to the post-matric stage of education.

Conditions of eligibility:

- Student should belong to Scheduled Caste.
- His/ her Parent/Guardian's income should not exceed Rs. 2 lakh per annum.
- She/he should not be getting any other Centrally funded Pre-Matric Scholarship.
- She/ he should be a regular, full-time student studying in a Government School or in a School recognized by the Govt. or a Central/State Board of Secondary Education.
- Scholarship for studying in any class will be available for only one year. If a student has to repeat a class, she / he would not get scholarship for that class for a second (or subsequent) year.

An application for scholarship should comprise:

- One copy of the application for scholarship in the prescribed form (separate application forms as have been prescribed for 'fresh' and renewal scholarship by concerned States/UTs).

- b. One copy of the passport size photograph with signatures of the student thereon (for fresh scholarship).
- c. A certificate (in original) of Caste duly signed by an authorized Revenue Officer not below the rank of Tehsildar.
- d. An income declaration by the self-employed parents/guardians, stating definite income from all sources by way of an affidavit on non-judicial stamp paper. Employed parents/guardians are required to obtain income certificate from their employer and for any additional income from other sources, they would furnish declaration by way of an affidavit on non-judicial stamp paper.
- e. A receipt in acknowledgement of the scholarship in the previous year on the form attached to the application only, duly counter-signed by the Head of the Institution/School concerned, if the applicant was in receipt of a scholarship under this scheme in the preceding year.

State Govt. would prescribe a suitable application form in the local language and place it on its websites. School authorities will get these forms filled by the eligible students and send them to Block / District level authorities. State Governments/UT Administrations will delegate powers to sanction scholarships under the scheme to appropriate District / Block level authorities/ Heads of Institution, as appropriate.

Source: Guidelines issued by Government of Haryana accessed at <https://haryanascbc.gov.in/sites/default/files/documents/Pre-Matric-Scholoship-Scheme.pdf>

Multiplicity of Access Points

It is quite possible that the citizens get confused sometimes when two or more systems are providing the same service online. This is not a problem actually. The citizens, in such cases, may apply anywhere, but the service will be delivered by one designated agency only. In fact, all the links navigate to the organization which is supposed to provide that service.

12.4.6 Central Sector Schemes

Central Sector Schemes are those that are 100% funded by the centre on subjects within the union list. These are designed and planned by the central government. For example, Central Sector Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer-2021 is implemented by the State Governments/UT Administrations through their District Magistrates/Collectors/Sub-Divisional Magistrates. The rehabilitation assistance is Rs. One lakh per adult male beneficiary. A beneficiary has the option to either deposit it in an annuity scheme or receive cash grant. The District Administration assesses the cash requirement of the beneficiary and exercises its best judgement in the matter and put the money under annuity scheme with the consent of the said adult male. A survey of bonded labourers is to be conducted once in every three years per sensitive district.

It is the responsibility of the beneficiary to ensure that he / she is included in the survey. In case of any problem, the course can be taken of grievance redressal mechanism.

12.4.7 State Sponsored Schemes

Sometimes, there are state specific problems. To address such problems and meet people's needs, state governments also design and implement programmes. These are fully funded by the state governments. For example, Government of Maharashtra has launched a programme *Providing Basic Facility to the Rural Area suggested by people's Representatives* for development of basic facilities development work in villages. Citizens may take advantage of such schemes by keeping in touch with the block level officials and their local government.

Check Your Progress 1

1. Write a note on the various kinds of government services available at district level.

2. What is a First Information Report?

3. What are the benefits of taking Udyam Registration?

12.5 CITIZENS' RIGHTS/PREROGATIVES

With respect to various services being provided by the government agencies several safeguards have been implemented. These are some of the efforts to facilitate the services as well as ensure some sort of accountability of the government offices.

Citizen's Charter:

It has been observed quite often that people are not aware about the purpose of a government office. In such a situation, the citizens are not able to access the services being provided by that organization. To address this problem and make administration responsive, consensus evolved at the government level to reduce existing information dissymmetry. As per the initiative, each organization is now expected to display its mandate at the most visible place inside. Known as 'Citizen's charter', it aims at increasing transparency and accountability. With the advancement of E-governance, these charters are now displayed on the websites of the service providers too. This document describes each service, minimum standards of performance, grievance redressal mechanism, etc. that a particular organization provides. Thus, any citizen now can ask for the service based on this information and ask questions from the concerned authorities in case of delay or denial.

Right to Public Services Act

Right based approach has been adopted by the governments to make administration even more responsive and ensure speedy public service delivery. Most of the state governments have enacted Right to Public Services Acts. These Acts provide for each government agency to identify the services which they would be providing in a time bound manner. In case of delay, there is provision of payment of penalty to the citizens. *Aaple Sarkar* in Maharashtra and *Sakala* in Karnataka are good examples of this Act. In Karnataka, 100 Departments / institutions are presently providing more than 1100 services in a time bound manner. Any citizen wishing to avail a service from a particular department can approach the Sakala desk in that office and apply.

Picture 10: Checking status of service request made under Sakala in Karnataka



Source: Sakala Portal accessed at <https://sakala.kar.nic.in/aboutact.aspx>

Grievance Redressal

It is quite possible that the consumer is not satisfied with the quality of service or has some problem in accessing a service. In such circumstances, the individual can take recourse to the grievance redressal mechanism established for the purpose. This mechanism is now an integral part of any service provision. Each office displays a helpline number and a number for lodging complaints. A written complaint can also be made to the same contact person. If the problem is not solved at the first level, consumers can escalate the issue to higher authorities and finally to the appellate authority. These complaints can also be lodged online on portals established by the governments.

Picture 11: Grievance Redressal Portal of Uttar Pradesh Government



Source: online accessed at https://jansunwai.up.nic.in/?language=en_US

1. What is the significance of citizen's charters?

2. What do you understand by Right to Public Services Act?

12.6 LET US SUM UP

Reforms are being carried out to improve public service delivery. Governments are leveraging technology to deliver services efficiently. Any citizen / consumer can access any service which he / she needs. Lack of knowledge or ignorance is no longer a constraint. They can visit the office concerned or check on the websites to know as to which agency would provide a particular service and how. This unit brought out these concerns in some detail.

12.7 KEY WORDS

Mutation: Getting a land mutated means that the registration has been duly recorded in the revenue records. (<https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=4a184e9b-5912-42bc-af78-d25dd0871ee9#:~:text=Registration%2C%20essentially%2C%20is%20the%20process,recorded%20in%20the%20revenue%20records>)

First Information Report (FIR): It is a written document prepared by the police when they receive information about the commission of a cognizable offence. (<https://www.humanrightsinitiative.org/publications/police/fir.pdf>)

Citizen's Charter: It is a document which represents a systematic effort to focus on the commitment of the organisation towards its citizens in respects of Standard of Services, Information, Choice and Consultation, Non-discrimination and Accessibility, Grievance Redressal, Courtesy and Value for Money. (<https://panchayat charter.nic.in/#/>)

12.8 SOME USEFUL INFORMATION

List of Important emergency helpline numbers

100	Police
101	Fire
102	Ambulance
103	Traffic police
108	Disaster management / medical helpline
112	All-in-one emergency number
1033	Emergency relief centre on national highways
1091	Women helpline in distress

1096	Natural disaster control room
1291	Senior citizens
1930	Cyber complaints
1800 11 4000	National consumer helpline

**LIST OF 26 CENTRAL SECTOR/ CENTRALLY SPONSORED
SCHEMES AMENABLE TO DIRECT BENEFIT TRANSFERS**

Sl. No	Ministry/Department	No. of Schemes	Name of the Scheme
1	Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment	7	1 Post-Matric Scholarship for SC Students.
			2 Pre-Matric Scholarship for SC Students.
			3 Pre-Matric Scholarship for Children of those engaged in unclean occupations.
			4 Upgradation of merit of SC Students.
			5 Post-Matric Scholarship for OBCs.
			6 Top Class Education Scheme.
			7 Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship
2	Ministry of Education D/o Higher Education	3	1 Scholarship to Universities/ College Students.
			2 Fellowship Schemes of UGC.
			3 Fellowship Schemes of AICTE.
3	Ministry of Education D/o School Education & Literacy	2	1 National Means cum Merit Scholarship.
			2 National Scheme for Incentive for the girl child for secondary education.
4	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	3	1 Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme.
			2 Top Class Education System.
			3 Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship.
5	Ministry of Minority Affairs	3	1 Matric Scholarship Scheme.
			2 Maulana Azad National Fellowship.
			3 Merit cum Means Scholarship Scheme.
6	Ministry of Women and Child Development	2	1 Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY).
			2 Dhanalakshmi Scheme.

7	Ministry of Health & Family Welfare	1	1	Janani Suraksha Yojana.
8	Ministry of Labour and Employment	5	1	Scholarship to the Children of beedi workers.
			2	Housing subsidy to beedi workers.
			3	Stipend to children in the special schools under the Child Labour Project.
			4	Stipend to trainees- Welfare of SC/ST through Coaching cum Guidance & Vocational Training
			5	Stipend to trainees in Left Wing Extremism districts
	Total	26		

12.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 12.3
2. See Section 12.4
3. See Section 12.4

Check Your Progress 2

1. See Section 12.5
2. See Section 12.5