

Ministry of Labour & Employment



Social Security for Unorganised Workers

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The Central Government has formulated the four Labour Codes, namely, the Code on Wages, 2019, the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, the Code on Social Security, 2020 and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 after amalgamating, simplifying and rationalising the relevant provisions of the previous 29 Central Labour Acts. The four Labour Codes have come into force with effect from 21st November 2025 across the country.

The four Labour Codes reduce multiplicity of definitions & authorities, facilitate use of technology, bring transparency & accountability in enforcement. Simultaneously, it strengthens the protection available to workers, including unorganized workers. The Labour Codes have a large number of provisions to ensure the social security of unorganised workers in the country.

Under the Social Security Code, 2020:

- Social Security cover to all workers including unorganised workers, Gig & Platform workers.
- To cater to new forms of employment, definitions of aggregator, gig worker, platform workers introduced
- Universal coverage of Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), extended pan-India against in notified districts/areas at present.
- ESIC benefits extended to establishments with less than 10 employees on voluntary basis
- Mandatory ESIC coverage to establishments employing even single employee, involving hazardous process.
- Universal coverage of Employees Provident Fund Organization (EPFO), now applies to all establishments employing 20 or more employees.
- As per Section 45 of the Code on Social Security, 2020, the Central Government may, by notification, frame scheme for unorganised workers, gig workers and platform workers and the members of their families for providing benefits admissible under Chapter IV (ESIC) by the Corporation.

Under the Code on Wages 2019:

- Universalisation of minimum wages to all employments as against scheduled employment in the previous Act.
- 'Floor Wage' has been made Statutory which will be notified by Central Government. Minimum rates of wages fixed by the appropriate Government shall not be less than floor wage.

- Promote gender neutrality and prohibit discrimination in recruitment and wage payment, including transgender.
- Timely payment of wages to all employees.
- Allowances exceeding 50% made part of wages which will enhance maternity benefits, gratuity, Employees Provident Fund (EPF), Employees Pension Scheme (EPS) Contribution, etc.

Under OSH & WC Code 2020:

- Employer to provide free of cost annual health check-up for employees above the specified age.
- Definition of Inter-State Migrant Worker expanded that includes migrant workers employed by contractor, and also self-migrated workers. They are entitled for (a) annual lump-sum travel allowance, (b) portability of benefits

The coverage of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) has been extended pan-India as against notified districts/areas. Further, ESIC coverage on voluntary basis for establishments having less than 10 employees has been introduced. Further, benefits under ESIC can also be made applicable to an establishment which carries on hazardous occupation as notified by the Central Government, in which even a single employee is employed.

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