

STATE BANK OF INDIA OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

(BENGAL CIRCLE)

(Registered under Trade Unions Act 1926-Regd. No. 6908)

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IP No. 500077

Circular No. 82/2020

Date : 15.04.2020

To All Members (Please Circulate)

We reproduce hereunder the Circular No. 63 dated 15.04.2020 issued by the General Secretary, All India State Bank Officers' Federation, the contents of which are self-explicit.

With revolutionary greetings,

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay
(General Secretary)

To all our Affiliates / Members:

EXTENSION OF COUNTRYWIDE LOCKDOWN SOME PERTINENT ISSUES

We have sent a communication to the Dy. Managing Director (HR) & Corporate Development Officer, State Bank of India, on the captioned subject.

A copy is enclosed for information.

Yours comradely,

(Soumya Datta)
General Secretary

No : 6466/28/20

Date: 15.04.2020

The Deputy Managing Director (HR) & CDO,
State Bank of India,
Corporate Centre,
Madame Cama Road,
MUMBAI - 400 021.

EXTENSION OF COUNTRYWIDE LOCKDOWN SOME PERTINENT ISSUES

It is heartening to note that keeping in view the special circumstances in the aftermath of outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, our esteemed institution has, vide Circular no. CDO/P&HRD-PM/92/2019-20 dated 30 Mar 2020, extended the provision of the existing Scheme-I of our Group Insurance Policy to cover all categories of employees affected on account of COVID-19 disease for a period of one year, under which the staff and officers, in the event of death / disability / serious injury while on duty, are covered for payment of compensation upto Rs 20 lakh.

It is worth mentioning here that the bank has already initiated slew of both financial and safety measures for the employees, which demonstrate its concerns and sensitiveness for the well being of the employees, a unique HR initiative being again a pioneer in the industry. We place on record with deep sense of gratitude our appreciation for such employee friendly measure adopted by the bank at this critical situation.

Our Hon'ble Prime Minister has, during his address to the nation delivered on yesterday, clearly spelt out that the ensuing two weeks are extremely vital in our mission to take on the Coronavirus pandemic, besides proposing a further extension of the Nationwide Lockdown period till 3rd May 2020.

In this context, we draw your kind attention to the fact that there has been an exponential rise in the number of Coronavirus infection cases in the last few days and by now the cumulative number of affected persons has crossed the 11,000 mark. Meanwhile, several hotspots across the country have been identified by the government. The week from 4th to 9th April, 2020 following the announcement of 'Coronavirus Relief Package' by the Hon'ble FM witnessed surge in the number of 'Jan Dhan' account holders visiting our bank branches across the country, especially in rural and semi-urban centres, which defeated the basic concepts of 'social distancing' and 'break the chain'.

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay
General Secretary
Mobile : 9434551152

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Under the circumstances, while the entire society is being forced upon to be confined at home and observe social distancing, our frontline employees/officials are constrained to work over unduly longer period, meet and contact more and more people, exposing themselves and their family members to the gravest risks of the deadly viral infection. In the remote branches, even proper protective gear is also not available for the operating functionaries. Reports of our officers/employees getting affected with the contagion while discharging their duties have already started filtering in. Several bank branches/establishments across the country have been quarantined as a result of employees being found to be infected or having come into contact with an affected person. In fact, many hospitals across the country had to be closed after the doctors and other healthcare workers have started suffering from the ailment after having come in contact with patients, who did not display any symptoms of the malaise at the material time.

Sir, you are aware that the Union government has recently announced a scheme of insurance cover of Rs 50 lakh for nearly 22 lakh workers in healthcare services, who are providing yeoman service in this testing time in spite of the all pervading Lockdown, to offer a protective umbrella for their family as also in recognition of their contribution to the society. The insurance provided under the scheme would be over and above any other insurance cover being availed of by / available ordinarily to the beneficiary. The Rajasthan Government has recently announced financial assistance worth Rs 50 lakh to the family of any government employee in the event of his/her death due to Coronavirus during the anti COVID-19 operation initiated by the State, which is also in addition to the normal insurance cover available under prevalent service conditions. Hon'ble Chief Minister of Delhi Shri Arvind Kejriwal has declared that the State Government would be giving Rs 1 crore to the families of health care workers if they die while treating COVID-19 patients. We believe that this is a right initiative on the part of the relative employers in recognition of the noble service being rendered by such members of staff and should serve as the template for extending such insurance cover / financial assistance to the employees and officers of the bank as well.

In the above backdrop, we urge upon your good office to put in place a comprehensive policy in the right earnest in order to support the family of any employee if he/she lays down life, in the line of duty being a direct consequence of their infection from the dreaded virus:

- i. Insurance coverage of Rs 50.00 lakh in line with the scheme announced by Union Government for a period of one year. An ex-gratia payment of Rs 50 lakh to the next of the kin of any employee, who lays down his/her life while on duty, having been affected by COVID-19 may also be considered.
- ii. Compassionate Appointment to the next of the kin of any employee deceased due to COVID-19.

We also propose to consider the following measures on top priority:

1. To operate with bare minimal staff for Corporate Centre/LHOs/ZOs/RBOs/CPCs during the period of lock down. If any employee/official of these establishments gets affected, the entire establishment would have to be quarantined and subsequently closed for 14 days. Further, all persons and their family members would also be forced to go on quarantine if they come in close proximity of the affected person.
2. To reduce the business hours i.e. the branches to be made functional from 10 am to 2 pm. Since the beneficiaries of the first tranches of the DBT are expected to have withdrawn the amount in the first two weeks, it is logical that timings have to be changed to reduce the possibility of bank branches becoming potential hotspots in community spread of the disease. In fact, this has been implemented in some states like Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
3. To introduce cluster functioning concept by way of BCP.
4. Rotational duty of officers and employees at all branches / establishments of the bank.
5. Alternate day / Twice a week functioning of rural branches.
6. To include COVID-19 test in the list of pathological tests in the tie-up facility with pathological centres.
7. To put on hold the launch of the FIMM vertical, as the period of lockdown has since been extended till 3rd May 2020 and physical movements have been restricted across the country and many states/districts have already sealed off their borders.
8. To issue suitable advisory to Circles to minimize the number of transfer cases in the ensuing transfer exercise in view of the restrictions imposed on movement and also to reduce overheads on account of transfer related expenditure. The Circles should ideally implement a 'Repatriation' based exercise to reduce the number of transfers.
9. To allow officers (including officials attached to ZIOs) to report to nearest Branch/RBO/ZO/LHO, who have been stranded due to lockdown.

In this hour of crisis, we stand committed to work in unison with a view to combating with the menace of the Coronavirus and we reiterate that in the national interest our members will be traversing the extra mile and work with new resolve to overcome the challenges in making essential banking services available for the citizens thereby upholding the 'Brand SBI' through their dedicated efforts even during this critical period being faced by the nation.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,



(Soumya Datta)
General Secretary

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay

General Secretary

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