



16 May 2013

To

The Chairman
Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission
Chennai

Dear Sir/Madam

Subject: Requesting inclusion of enabling facilities to persons with disabilities in the instructions to candidates appearing for computer based test already issued by TNPSC.

Reference

1. Letter no Fno 16-110/2003-DD.III dated 26 February 2013 of Ministry of Social Justice, Department of Disability Affairs, Government of India.
2. Office Memorandum no Fno 16-110/2003-DD,III 26 February 2013 of Ministry of Social Justice, Department of Disability Affairs, Government of India.
3. <http://www.tnpsc.gov.in/docu/> instructions to candidates _cbt.pdf

Nethrodaya is a social service organization dedicated to the welfare of the differently abled community in Tamilnadu for the past 10 years. Government of Tamilnadu has conferred "The Best Institution Award" to Nethrodaya in recognition of its outstanding services to the differently abled community for the year 2012.

- 1) In the Government of India letter read 1 above, addressed to the Principal secretary/Secretary, Social welfare Departments of States, enclosing Guidelines for conducting written examination for persons with disabilities, the state governments were instructed to follow guidelines enclosed to the letter while conducting examinations for persons with disabilities.
- 2) In the office Memorandum read 2 above, it has been indicated that chief commissioner of persons with Disabilities in his order dated 23 /11/2012 in case no 3929/2007(in the matter of shri. Gopal sisodia, Indian Association for the Blind vs State Bank of India and others and in case no

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65/1041/12-13 (in the matter of score Foundation vs department of disability affairs, had directed the Ministry to circulate guidelines for the purpose of conducting written examination for persons with disabilities for compliance by all concerned.

- 3) In CBT instructions to the candidates 3 read above, it has been indicated that the question and answers can be zoomed to the required level for the candidates with visual impairment.

Based on the guidelines of Government of India, we request you to kindly extend the following enabling facilities to differently abled candidates especially visually challenged, appearing for computer based test (CBT) examinations and all examinations conducted by Tamilnadu Public Service commission.

Kindly take immediate steps to implement the Government of India guidelines in all respects by issuing revised categorized instructions to the candidates with disabilities. As per the above guidelines the following steps are required to be initiated:

- i) There is no need for fixing separate criteria for regular and competitive examinations.
- ii) 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.
- iii) The candidate should have 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.
- iv) Criteria like educational qualification, marks scored, age or other 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 mal practices like copying and cheating during the examination.
- v) 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.
- vi) 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

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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.

- vii) 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.
- viii) 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 candidates as well as suitable seating arrangement for giving examinations.
- ix) The disability certificate issued by the competent medical authority at any place should be accepted across the country.
- x) 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.
- xi) The candidates should be allowed to use assistive devices like talking calculator (in case 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.
- xii) 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.
- xiii) The examining body should also provide reading material in Braille or E-Text or on computers having suitable screen reading software 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.

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xiv) Alternative objectives 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.

Tamilnadu has been a pioneer State in empowering the differently abled community by implementing several welfare initiatives. If guidelines issued by Government of India in conducting examinations for the visually impaired candidates are implemented, Tamilnadu will be the first State and will be a modal State which will make a huge difference in the performance of visually impaired candidates in various direct recruitment examination.

Looking forward to your positive response at the earliest

Thanking you

For Nethrodaya

C. Govinda krishnan

Founder

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