

MOST IMMEDIATE
IMPORTANT

No. V-17013/40/2025-PR
Government of India
Ministry of Home Affairs

Women Safety Division, 2nd Floor
Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium
India Gate, New Delhi-110001

October 23, 2025

To

- 1. The Principal Secretary (Home/Jails) of all States and UTs**
- 2. The DG/IG Prisons of all States and UTs**

Subject: Filling up Vacancies in Prison Departments

Sir/Madam,

Please refer to National Crime Records Bureau's latest annual publication titled Prison Statistics India, 2023. It may be seen therefrom that vacancy rates across various categories of posts in prisons and correctional institutions throughout the country are very high. The shortage of essential staff, including correctional officers, medical personnel and mental health professionals not only hampers the maintenance of discipline and security within prisons but also undermines the efforts towards rehabilitation and reformation of inmates. **Adequate staffing in prisons and correctional institutions is therefore absolutely essential** for ensuring their safe, secure, and efficient functioning.

2. In this context, the **Model Prison Manual, 2016**, shared by MHA with all States and UTs underscores the need for adequate staffing in prisons, including qualified medical officers, psychologists, and psychiatrists. The Model Prison Manual, 2016 recommends at least **one medical officer for every 300 prisoners, one correctional officer for every 200 inmates, and one psychologist and one welfare officer for every 500 inmates**. It also highlights the **need for regular mental health assessments, counselling**, and rehabilitation programmes led by trained experts.

3. The Ministry of Home Affairs had issued an advisory to States and UTs on 9th January 2023 also wherein inter-alia it was recommended to **launch special recruitment drives** to fill up existing vacancies across all categories, including medical and mental health staff.

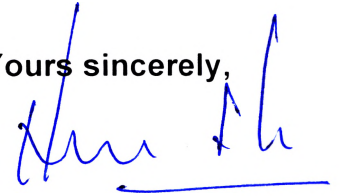
4. Despite these measures, the latest figures on prison staff vacancy as per Prison Statistics India 2023, continue to reflect large-scale vacancies across all categories of

posts. Out of a total of **94,458 sanctioned posts of prison staff across the country**, only **63,490 are in position**, reflecting an overall **vacancy rate of about 33%**. In particular, out of **1,437 sanctioned posts** under the **correctional staff category** (including **welfare officers, psychologists, psychiatrists**, etc.), only **788 posts are currently filled** — indicating a **45% vacancy rate**. Similarly, there are **1,710 vacant posts** out of a total of **3,781 sanctioned for medical staff**. Further, only **31 psychologists and psychiatrists** are reported to be employed in prisons across the country and **25 States/UTs don't have any sanctioned posts for mental health professionals**.

5. In view of the above, the State Governments and UT Administrations are **advised** to undertake **immediate steps to fill up the vacant posts** across all categories, particularly medical staff, in their prison departments.

6. It is expected that with sustained efforts of the State/UT Governments, the existing gaps in staffing will be effectively addressed which will not only strengthen prison management but also ensure a more secure and reform-oriented environment in correctional institutions.

Yours sincerely,



(Arun Sobti)

Director (Prison Reforms)

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