

**HARMONISED GUIDELINES**

**FOR**

**PASSENGER WITH DISABILITIES,**

**OVER INDIAN RAILWAYS**

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Indian Railways is committed to make Railways accessible for Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) as part of “**Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan**” or “**Accessible India Campaign**” of Government of India

Indian Railways is making every effort possible to make railway services fully accessible in compliance with RPwD Act, 2016. Accordingly, a number of facilities/amenities for persons with disabilities (Divyangjan) are being provided at all stations depending upon their category in Indian Railways. However, Improvement/augmentation of services at railway stations and trains, including those for passengers with disabilities is a continuous process.

Indian Railways endeavours to provide comprehensive facilities and services to Divyangjan which inter-alia includes an easy to use information system, accessible infrastructure, various concessions to passengers traveling on Divyang concession tickets, human assistance, Wheel Chairs, standardised signage etc. It also aims to make the Railway coaches and stations accessible by retrofitting the existing infrastructure as well as integration of accessibility in new infrastructure from planning and design stage itself. Various facilities and accessible infrastructure elements are to be provided based on each category of stations. To have a focussed approach and to realize the broad aim of accessible Indian Railways, the comprehensive accessibility guidelines for Indian Railways have been composed in the following five (5) sections:

- I. Information System Accessibility
- II. Station Accessibility
- III. Platform Accessibility
- IV. Train Coach Accessibility
- V. Monitoring & Feedback Mechanism

These accessibility guidelines for Indian Railways are based on the—state-of-the-art approach and philosophy of Universal Design and with a rationale of “**Reasonable Accommodation**” as guided by the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. “**Reasonable Accommodation**” *means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments, without imposing a disproportionate or undue burden in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise of rights equally with others.*

## 2.0 INFORMATION SYSTEM ACCESSIBILITY

### 2.1.1 Web Page / Websites of Railway/ IRCTC




Website of Indian Railways should have a separate and dedicated one click template for Divyangjans displaying all the information and facilities available for Divyangjans in stations as well in trains. For better accessibility, it shall follow the

Universal Design Principles, W3C guidelines in addition to complying with GIGW guidelines.




Improvement in accessibility of information before, during and after the journey is a continuous and an on-going process and shall further be enhanced through digital systems of Indian Railways.

Following accessibility related Information to be displayed “Station wise” on Webpage for NSG 1 to NSG 4 category stations.

**(i) Accessibility Assistance**

	<p>Is Wheel Chair available? Can Wheel Chair be booked online?</p>
	<p>Battery-operated Car (If Available)</p>
	<p>Is Sahayak available</p>

**(ii) Accessible Amenities / Infrastructure**

	<p>Is dedicated Parking for Divyangjan available? Location of Parking.</p>
	<p>Is Divyang Friendly Toilet/s Available? Location?</p>
	<p>Is Divyang Friendly Water Booth/s Available? Location?</p>
	<p>Availability of Help Booth</p>
	<p>Any other accessibility features</p>

### **(iii) Availability of Divyangjan Friendly Coach, in a Train**

- Is Divyang coach Available?

## **2.2 Mobile App**

A dedicated Mobile App may be developed containing the above mentioned information of all passenger amenities, including Divyangjan amenities. The app should have a search engine for stations of Indian Railways with details about the various facilities as mentioned above. The Mobile App and Website shall be WCAG 2.0 (AA) and STQC certified.

## **2.3 Public Announcement Systems**

- i. Automatic Public Announcement system to be more informative and should include announcements regarding the availability of assistance provided, facilities for Divyangjan and at stations. Announcements regarding position of Divyang friendly coach shall be made at regular intervals.
- ii. At NSG-1 category stations, announcements with Sign Language may be made. Video of Sign language shall be displayed on Digital screens.
- iii. Efforts should be made for better acoustics, sound legibility and audibility to enhance information access through public announcements at Railway Stations.

## **2.4 Station Signage System Design**

The illuminated signage system for the railway stations (across India) shall be unambiguous, prominent and standardised. Standardized illuminated signage of all facilities available at Railway stations, including Wheel Chairs etc. to be provided and displayed prominently for clear visibility from a distance. (NSG 1 to 4 & SG 1 category stations)

Braille signage may also be provided along with all other signages at the stations. (NSG 1 to 2 & SG 1 category stations). Efforts to be made to get frontline service staff trained in sign language in a phased manner.

Coach Position Display system needs to display position of Divyang coach at all stations.

Braille signage to be provided within the coaches at appropriate locations and reach especially for seat numbers and electric control panels. (All Mail / Express trains and above). For eg. Coach number shall be provided near the entrance door, Seat numbers to be provided at the aisle side on the partition wall.

Divyang Coaches to be painted with prominent large sized standardised Divyang symbol / blue band for better visibility from a distance.

## **2.5 Information in Train Coaches**

- i. Emergency evacuation and exit signs in train coaches need to be highlighted in contrasting colour schemes to ensure visibility and legibility especially during emergency situations.

## **3.0 STATION ACCESSIBILITY**

**3.1** The master plan for each new station shall integrate universal accessibility features in its planning, design and implementation stages. For existing stations, holistic plans for accessibility interventions may be prepared and implemented, in a phase wise manner.

**3.2** It is desirable to legibly display the gate numbers and specific name if any (nearby prominent area) of the station entrance side to facilitate ease of movements for diverse categories of divyangjan and other passengers.

**3.3** All public amenities such as, prepaid taxi/ auto booths, Pay & use toilet etc shall ensure accessibility and priority to PwDs.

### **3.4 Accessible Parking**

- i. For NSG-I to NSG-4 category stations, a minimum of two accessible parking lots should be earmarked. For other category of stations, accessible parking lots for vehicles to be provided as per availability of space, feasibility and requirement.
- ii. Parking lot should be as close to the Help-Booth/entry of station as possible. It should ideally be step free or with ramped access.
- iii. Vertical signage may be provided, to make the accessible parking easily visible.

### **3.5 Standard Ramps**

Entrances to station building should have ramp for PwDs. Double height handrails with rounded grips, non-skid surface may be provided on ramps at all entrance(s) of the station or suitably designed system. The slope of ramp should not be lesser than 1:12 in any case, though it's recommended to range it between 1:15 or 1:20 with mid landings.

### **3.6 Ticket and Enquiry Counters**

- i. Provision of low height ticket and enquiry counters duly marked as being Divyang friendly with accessibility signage should be available at NSG-1 to 3 category

stations and SG-1 category stations. For other category stations, Zonal Railway may decide provision of low height ticket counter based on the feasibility and requirement.

- ii. Priority shall be given to Divyangjans in queues at ticket booking office. The queue segregating handrails may be provided.

### **3.7 Help Booth(s) – Assistance points for Divyangjan**

- i. Help Booths are single window access points for Divyangjans for human assistance, information and feedback. To the extent feasible, the help booths may be set-up at NSG-1 to NSG-3 and SG-1 Category stations. Facilities for wheelchairs, other assistive devices, like crutches may also be extended from the help booth. A belly map of the station may be provided at help booths.(only NSG-1 category station). Help booth may be located close to entry point.

Proper manning of help booth to be ensured. All such persons deployed at help-booths may be called “Divyang Sahayak. To the extent possible, manning of the help-booths to be done by any NGO working in the field of disability, free of cost. The said manpower be given basic training on railway systems like ticketing rules, Divyangjan facilities etc by Railways and who in turn will guide and provide assistance to Divyangjans. If no NGO is forthcoming for providing free manpower to be deployed in the Help Booths, then possibility to be explored for outsourcing of manpower for manning of Help Booths. The provision of assistance at Help Booths in such cases to be on chargeable basis.

- ii. Where separate Help Booths can't be provided due to some constraints, enquiry booth etc may be re-designated and re-designed with a separate accessible counter for Divyangjan to function as Help booth keeping the practical feasibility of workload of nominated official. If need be extra manpower be provided for the purpose.

### **3.8 Security Check**

- i. Security check in railway stations shall ensure non-discrimination of persons with disabilities through wider access to security panels (Door Frame Metal Detectors) especially for Wheel Chairs to pass through. Wider Door Frame to be procured for future installation.
- ii. It is recommended to also sensitise security staff at railway stations to adequately support divyangjan through the security check and make security check a seamless and accessible feature of Railway station.
- iii. Police personnel should be informed and sensitised regarding the provisions of the RPwD Act 2016 which would also help them to register complaints with required sensitivity.

## 4.0 PLATFORM ACCESSIBILITY

- i. Seating & lighting arrangement inside the waiting halls may provide earmarked priority seating for passengers with disabilities, elderly, pregnant women with proper signage. Space to be kept free for Wheel Chair near the seat marked for PwDs. Wheel Chair manoeuvring spaces shall be free of any obstructions.
- ii. Visual signage informing about Priority Seating for Divyangjan shall be displayed predominantly to ensure passenger cooperation.
- iii. Platforms should be well illuminated with at least 100 lux levels or more for better visibility, high contrast and legibility).(NSG1-4 & SG1 to 2 category stations).
- iv. Few mobile charging points may be located at lower level for ease of access, where mobile charging points are provided.
- v. Initially tactile pathways to be provided at NSG-1 to NSG-3 category stations and these should be 1800mm away from the platform edge. Also, within the station, priority should be accorded to Home Platform / Important platforms.
- vi. During the works of platforms being raised to High level or during resurfacing of platform, the guiding tactile path will be ensured at NSG 4 category stations and other important 'tourist' stations.

### Toilets

- vii. A few toilets may have universal accessibility features. Accessible toilets may be provided with a wider door, grab rails and swing bars within, a wall hung WC and a proper signage outside.
- viii. The toilet door shall provide a clear opening width of at least 900mm. All fixtures and utilities may provide a clear space of 900mm x 1200 mm for Wheel Chair users to access them.
- ix. Wherever, space is constrained, a unisex toilet cubical with accessibility features may be provided.

### Drinking water booths

- x. At least one drinking water booths accessible for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) should be provided on each platforms of NSG- 1 to 4 and SG-I to 2 category stations. For other category of stations, Zonal Railways may decide upon the provision of Divyangjan friendly drinking water tap based on the feasibility and requirement.

- xi. The drinking water points shall have a clear knee space between the bottom of the apron and floor or ground of at least 750mm wide, 200mm deep and 680mm high as appended in drawing. Free standing or built -in-drinking water taps not having a knee space should have a clear floor space of at least 1200mm x 1200mm floor space.
- xii. The grating below the water point (whether tap type or fountain type) shall ensure grooves are not wider than 12 mm. It is to ensure that the front wheels of Wheel Chairs and the white cane or crutches don't get stuck.

### **Eateries and Cafeteria**

- xiii. Eating space facilities and services shall be made accessible and inclusive to all including Divyangjan, marked by signage.
- xiv. Service and Payment counters, refreshment rooms, shops, kiosks at platforms, cafeteria shall be based on universal design features incorporating low height, foot and knee clearances along with manoeuvring space.
- xv. A Tactile path leading to the counters may be created for-NSG- 1 to 2 and SG-1 station.

## **4.1 Inter-Platform Transfer (Vertical Circulation)**

As a policy measure to improve accessibility for platform interchange on railway stations, esp. for persons with disabilities, a ramped subway with acceptable gradient shall be considered as the first and the most preferred means of accessibility followed by a second alternative of providing a FOB with dog legged ramp (1:12 slope) at least one side with foot over bridge. Lifts with FOB shall be considered as the third possible alternative for inter-platform transfer subject to feasibility of each specific station.

### **Subway**

- i. The height of subway should be at least 2.75 metres and minimum width of subway to be 4 metres (desirable 7.5 metres).
- ii. Provision of adequate lighting and drainage system and also ensures security and safety for Subway. Power supply to subway should be made available from the feeder cable of traction line (OHE) or other means of uninterrupted power source of electric supply.
- iii. Tactile path (guiding and warning) from the platform may seamlessly lead to Subways (NSG1 to 2 & SG1 category stations).



## **Foot Over Bridges (FOB)**

- iv. FOB should be preferably 20 feet wide at NSG 1 to 3 and SG-1 category stations wherever feasible. For other category of stations, Zonal Railways may decide upon the width of FOB based on the feasibility and requirement. Handrails shall be provided as per design.
- v. Tactile guiding and warning blocks may be provided which shall lead to the edge of staircases, lifts or escalators. (NSG 1 to 2 category stations).
- vi. Stations where there is more than one platform without any FOB/ Subway connecting them, a pathway for passengers may be provided connecting the ends of the platforms. The pathway should have a minimum width of 2 meter and notices / signages should be prominently displayed near such crossings. (As per para 417 of IRWM).
- vii. Above mentioned provisions/ guidelines for FOB, supersede earlier guidelines, issued from time to time by Railway Board on this subject.

## **Elevators**

- viii. Access through Lift shall be provided at platforms where FOB ramp is not available / feasible
- ix. The minimum size of the lift shall be 1500 mm x1500mm which allows easy manoeuvrability of Wheel Chair users with a clear door opening of minimum 900mm to be provided. The gap between the lift door and building floor shall not be more than 12 mm
- x. The call button located outside of the lift may have a clear floor space of minimum 900 mm x 1200 mm with no obstruction so as to enable a Wheel Chair user to easily reach the call button and it shall be installed at a height between 800 mm and 1000 mm. It shall have buttons with Braille / raised letters.
- xi. The control panel inside the lift shall be placed at a height between 800mm to 1000mm, for Wheel Chair users. It shall have buttons with Braille / raised letters. Grab bars shall be placed at a height of 900mm from the floor level and be fixed on both sides and rear of the lift. An emergency switch (in Red colour) be placed for emergency support services for all lift users including persons with disabilities.
- xii. The lift should also have a voice announcement system. At least 50 decibels shall be maintained for the same.
- xiii. The provision of a mirror on the wall of the lift car opposite the lift door is a positive aid to navigation for Wheel Chair users. It allows the Wheel Chair user to

see if anyone is behind them and also to see the floor indicator panel. The mirror shall not extend below 900 mm from the lift floor to avoid confusing people with visual impairments.

## **5.0 TRAIN / COACH ACCESSIBILITY**

### **5.1 Train Coach and Platform Interface**

- i. The difficulties observed in negotiating the gap between Train coach and platform needs to be minimized to the best extent possible by technological innovations for ease in boarding and alighting to all passengers including persons with disabilities (Divyangjan).
- ii. The new train coaches shall integrate an accessible feature of having atleast one door wider than others to provide better access for Wheel Chair bound persons with disabilities.

### **5.2 Coach Exteriors**

- i. Paint the signage/ symbol of Divyang coach prominently and big in a standardised format on outside so as to be identified from a distance.
- ii. Braille coach number may be provided near the coach entrance door or at door handle for easy identification of coach along with direction indication for ascending / descending coach position for passengers with visual impairment.
- iii. The foot step edges will be in contrasting colour scheme for better visibility to low vision / colour blind and others with vision impairments.

### **5.3 Coach Interiors and Seating**

Railway coach interiors shall enhance their accessibility features through the following recommendations / guidelines:

- i. Seat numbers shall be provided in braille along with contrasting colour scheme on handles near aisle for easy accessibility of visually impaired and all others. Seat number in larger font also to be provided near aisle for those with low vision.
- ii. Electrical control switches along with mobile/laptop charger points shall be in contrasting color scheme with tactile features embedded on them.
- iii. A step ladder may be modified for easy access for upper berth in sleeper class, three tier and two tier AC coaches.

- iv. A vertical handrail to be fixed adjacent to the ladder for providing support while climbing for upper berth. Appropriate standardized pictogram shall be used to display the same. Suitable instructions will be issued for providing adequate handrail holds without infringing into the aisle space
- v. Braille and tactile signage should be placed at a height between 900 mm to 1500 mm (ideal location at 1050 mm) above the finished floor level.

## **5.4 Coach Amenities**

In an effort to make coaches more accessible and user friendly, the train coaches shall be equipped with amenities to ensure better access. This shall include improved accessibility features in all train toilets, braille signage to indicate seat numbers, etc.

### **5.4.1 Accessible Toilets**

- i. Foldable door of toilet in new coaches shall be made more accessible and easier to operate with low physical effort.
- ii. Adequate grab rails in both Indian squat and Western type toilets shall be provided for better access and safety of passengers with disabilities, elderly and all others. The faucet / tap, handles in coaches is recommended to have a lever type handle for easy access.
- iii. Emergency Alarm switch of bigger size shall be provided in toilets and in Divyangjan coach for evacuation of all including persons with hearing and visual impairments. Passengers shall be made aware to respond in public interest in case of hearing of alarm from toilet.
- iv. Auto announcements to be made related to accessibility features provided on the train. Also, these train borne accessibility features to be displayed and announced at stations and also on websites.

### **5.4.2 Divyang Friendly Coaches**

- i. It is desirable to have safe foldable ramps to access the Divyang Friendly Coaches as an accessible feature.
- ii. Divyang Friendly Coaches shall be prohibited for boarding and usage by passengers other than escorts travelling with a person with disability.
- iii. Stoppers for Wheel Chairs shall be affixed in Divyangjan coach for keeping them safely hinged during the journey.

### **5.4.3 Emergency Evacuation**

It is recommended to have accessibility guideway to be used for emergency evacuation from the train coaches. Following provisions may be ensured in all coaches for safe exit of passengers including persons with disabilities on priority.

- i. Emergency exit sign in green and white colour should be well illuminated at each side of the train coach aisle which should be clearly visible.
- ii. The emergency window in AC coaches for evacuation / rescue should be well identified with a signage, including in braille.
- iii. An audio announcement along with flash sign during emergency evacuation may be explored for informing persons with visual and hearing impairments respectively.
- iv. A self-reflective and contrasting colour line bordering the aisle should be visible as a guiding line even during low or no lighting conditions in a coach, especially at nights.
- v. Coach attendants, support staff, RPF personnel and all others on board the train should be sensitised and well trained for emergency rescue operations especially for persons with disabilities. This perspective shall be included in their training modules and revised regularly.

## **6.0 MONITORING & FEEDBACK MECHANISM**

### **6.1 Monitoring Mechanism**

- i. Present system of station inspection by multi-disciplinary committee such as SIG etc. and designated officials is adequate to monitor the facilities for PwDs.
- ii. Inspection reports by individual Railway officials or multidisciplinary committee should include para on Divyang friendly facilities/services and para suggesting for scope for improvements.

### **6.2 Feedback Mechanism and Response**

- i. Feedback / Complaint and Suggestion Book to be made available at the Station Director office / SM / SS office / Help-Booth at NSG-1 to NSG-3 stations and SG-1 category stations. Assistance also to be rendered for persons with visual impairments to write their complaints/feedbacks/suggestions.
- ii. Complaint Book shall also be made available when asked for in A/C coaches by TTE of train for any issues in regard to accessibility.
- iii. Feedbacks / Complaints through Website and Mobile App with facility to upload photographs for crowdsourcing shall be enabled as a feature in Indian Railways.
- iv. All complaints to be directed to designated official of concerned Railway for its appropriate redressal.

## SCALE OF FACILITIES

### [A] Common Facilities - To be extended Pan India.

S.No.	Facilities	Action By
1.	Each entry / exit gate at station to be numbered and marked prominently, where more than one gate on each side.	Commercial / Engineering
2.	Luggage may be allowed in Battery operated cars for PwDs.	Commercial
3.	Priority seating arrangement may be made for PwDs at stations/waiting area.	Commercial / Engineering
4.	Low height ticket counters may be provided for PwDs, wherever feasible.	Commercial/ Engineering
5.	Coach display system shall also display position of divyang coaches.	Telecom
6.	The integrated railway help line (139) and Rail Madad may be used for requirements of Divyangjan also.	Telecom/ Commercial
7.	Automatic Public Announcement for Divyangjan facilities & Divyang coach position.	Traffic Commercial
8.	Ramp & Subway or FOB with ramp / Lift are to be provided progressively. Priority will be accorded to the higher category station over lower category station.	Engineering / Electrical.

### [B] Information Systems Accessibility

S.No.	Facilities	Category of Station	Action By
1	i. A Web-page for Divyangjan incorporating information related to various accessibility features is to be provided. This web-page to be linked with the main website of Indian Railways.	For NSG 1 to 3 to start with.	C&IS / CRIS  (Zonal railway to provide station wise data)
2.	Public Announcement i. Facilities for Divyangjan, at	NSG 1 to 4	Traffic Commercial

	<p>stations.</p> <p>ii. Announcement regarding Divyangjan friendly coach position.</p>	<p>SG 1 to 2 NSG 1 to 4 SG 1 to 2</p>	
3	<p>Signages</p> <p>i. Directional &amp; Informational signages for PwDs.</p> <p>ii. Braille signage to be provided at the station.</p> <p>iii. Braille signage to be provided within the coaches for Seat No. / berth number.</p> <p>iv. Braille Coach numbering near Coach Entrance door.</p> <p>v. Signage/ Symbol for Divyangjan on Divyang Coaches</p>	<p>NSG1 to 4 &amp; SG1 to 2</p> <p>NSG1 &amp; SG 1</p> <p>All Mail Express trains</p> <p>-do-</p> <p>-do-</p>	<p>Commercial/ Electrical</p> <p>Commercial / Engineering</p> <p>Mechanical Coaching</p> <p>Mechanical Coaching</p> <p>Mechanical Coaching</p>

### **[C] Station & Platforms**

1.	Car Parking 2 car parking slot with signages	NSG1 to 4	Commercial
2.	Ramps at entrance of station building.	All	Engineering
3.	Dedicated Help Desk (Wheel chairs, Divyang Sahayak & Battery operated vehicle if available)	NSG1 to 4 SG 1	Commercial
4.	Divyangjan friendly Toilet (At least one)	NSG 1 to 4 For other Category, to be decided by GM/ DRM	Engineering
5.	Drinking Water points	NSG 1 to 4 & SG 1 to 2	Engineering
6.	Standard Tactile guide/pathway at platforms.	NSG1 to 3.	Engineering

**[D] Train Coach Accessibility**

1	<p>Coach Amenities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Accessible toilets with wider door.</li><li>ii. Stoppers for Wheelchairs to be affixed.</li><li>iii. Step ladder may be modified for easy access to upper berth. A vertical handle may be fixed adjacent to the ladder.</li><li>iv. Accessibility guideway for emergency evacuation from the train coaches.</li><li>v. The emergency window in AC coaches for evacuation / rescue to be well identified with a signage, including in braille.</li></ul>		Mechanical / Coaching.
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**[E] General:**

1. Zonal Railway to explore possibility of providing Tactile/guiding pathway, progressively at all major/ important stations.
2. Announcement with Sign language may be explored at few important stations.
3. Efforts to be made to provide Braille signages at major stations.
4. A dedicated Mobile App, containing information related to provision of assistance, facilities etc. for PwDs, may be developed.