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20/02/26 ✓

GOVERNMENT OF NCT OF DELHI
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD SAFETY
8th Floor, Mayur Bhawan, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001

No. F.11(352)/DoFS/Vig./2026/4849-54

Date: 19/2/26

ORDER

Subject: Guidelines for Handling Complaints Received from the General Public against Food Business Operators (FBOs) – reg.

Whereas this Department regularly receives complaints from members of the general public alleging violations of the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and Rules Regulations framed thereunder by Food Business Operators (FBOs)/retailers;

And whereas a considerable number of such complaints are found to be anonymous, pseudonymous, or lacking complete particulars of the complainant and/or supporting evidence;

And whereas indiscriminate or mechanical action on such unverifiable complaints has, in certain instances, resulted in diversion of Food Safety Officers from their statutory functions, avoidable harassment of Food Business Operators, and avoidable strain on departmental resources;

And whereas the guidelines issued from time to time by the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) and the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) provide that anonymous and pseudonymous complaints shall ordinarily not be acted upon, except in exceptional cases involving specific, verifiable, and serious allegations, and only with the approval of the competent authority;

Now, therefore, with a view to ensuring fairness, transparency, accountability, and optimal utilization of departmental resources, the following guidelines are hereby approved for strict compliance while handling complaints received from the general public against FBOs/retailers:

1. **Verification of Complainant:** Complaints lacking complete particulars of the complainant, including full name and verifiable address/contact details, shall not ordinarily be acted upon. Where an address is provided, reasonable efforts shall be made to verify the identity and genuineness of the complainant through written communication and/or by requiring personal appearance, wherever considered necessary. Complaints without verifiable address or contact details shall be filed after recording brief reasons on record.
2. **Verification through Contact Details:** Where only a telephone/mobile number or electronic contact detail is provided, the concerned District Officer may contact the complainant to ascertain the genuineness and credibility of the complaint. Further action shall be initiated only upon satisfaction regarding the authenticity and seriousness of the allegations.

Habitual or frivolous complainants, including those acting with malafide intent or for personal vendetta, shall be appropriately discouraged in accordance with law and established procedures.

- 3. Initiation of Action:** Action on complaints shall be initiated strictly in accordance with the applicable DoPT and CVC guidelines and only after due satisfaction regarding the genuineness of the complaint. As a general rule, surveillance samples shall be drawn in the first instance. Legal samples under the relevant statutory provisions may be drawn only where justified by facts and circumstances, with reasons recorded in writing.

These guidelines shall come into force with immediate effect.

This issues with the prior approval of the Competent Authority.



(SIVA VENKATESH)

HEAD OF OFFICE/ VIGILANCE OFFICER

Copy to:

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1. PPS to Secretary, H&FW – for favour of kind information.
 2. PS to Commissioner (Food Safety), Department of Food Safety – for information.
 3. Dy. Commissioner (Food Safety), Department of Food Safety – for information.
 4. All Designated Officers, Department of Food Safety – for strict compliance.
 5. All Food Safety Officers, Department of Food Safety – for strict compliance.
 6. Office copy.