

Template for School Child Protection Policy – 18 Feb. 2025

Government Related Authorities



Government Related Authorities, a Summary

Disclaimer: The summary is not a substitute for legal advice.

The following authorities/institutions collectively ensure the protection, rehabilitation, and legal assistance of vulnerable children in India. Working together, they help create a safe, just, and supportive environment for every child.

It is crucial that a school regularly engages with organisations and invites them as dignitaries and guest lecturers on various occasions related to school children's safety and well-being. The School Child Protection Policy's successful implementation hinges on the school's collaboration with these authorities/institutions, especially the District Child Protection Officer and the Child Welfare Committee's chairperson.

- 1. District Child Protection Unit (DCPU)**
- 2. Special Juvenile Police Unit (SJPU) constituted district-wise under the JJ Act**
- 3. Child Welfare Committee (CWC) constituted district-wise under the JJ Act**
- 4. District Legal Services Authority (DLSA)**

1. District Child Protection Unit (DCPU)

The District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) is the nodal agency at the district level responsible for implementing child protection policies under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act). It operates under the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) and is managed by the State Child Protection Society (SCPS). District child protection officer is the nodal person for the unit.

Key Responsibilities:

- Identify and support children in need of care and protection (CNCP).
- Implement child welfare schemes, including sponsorship, foster care, and adoption.
- Coordinate with Child Welfare Committees (CWCs), Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs), NGOs, and police.
- Maintain records of vulnerable children and rehabilitate children in conflict with the law.
- Conduct awareness campaigns on child rights and protection.

2. Special Juvenile Police Unit (SJPU) constituted under the JJ Act

The Special Juvenile Police Unit (SJPU) in each district is a dedicated unit within the police force that handles cases involving children in conflict with the law (CCL) and children in need of care and protection (CNCP) under the JJ Act, 2015. Every police station has a designated Child Welfare Police Officer (CWPO) who works under the SJPU.

Key Responsibilities:

- Ensure the humane and sensitive treatment of children involved in legal proceedings.
- Act as a bridge between law enforcement, CWCs, JJBs, and NGOs.
- Prevent child abuse, trafficking, and exploitation through active intervention.
- Provide child-friendly policing to ensure a non-intimidating environment for children.

3. Child Welfare Committee (CWC) constituted under the JJ Act

The Child Welfare Committee (CWC) is a quasi-judicial body established under the Juvenile Justice Act 2015. It is responsible for deciding the care, protection, treatment, development and rehabilitation of children in need of care and protection (CNCP). Every district has a CWC consisting of a Chairperson and four members, including one woman and a child rights expert.

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Key Responsibilities:

- Assess cases of abandoned, orphaned, surrendered, or abused children and make appropriate rehabilitation decisions.
- Place children in foster care, shelter homes, adoption, or sponsorship programmes.
- Monitor Child Care Institutions (CCIs) and ensure they meet the required standards.
- Recommend legal action in cases of child abuse, neglect, or trafficking.
- Conduct inquiries and issue care and protection orders for affected children.

4. District Legal Services Authority (DLSA)

The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) functions under the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA). It provides free legal aid to economically weaker and marginalised sections, including children. It is governed by the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 and is headed by the District Judge.

Key Responsibilities:

- Provide free legal assistance to children in need, particularly victims of abuse, trafficking, and child labour.
- Organise legal awareness camps and sensitisation programmes for students, teachers, and parents.
- Facilitate legal representation for children before Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs) and Child Welfare Committees (CWCs).
- Support victims of child rights violations by helping them access compensation and justice.

5. Commissions for Protection of Child Rights

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR) are statutory bodies established under the Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005 to ensure the protection, promotion, and enforcement of child rights in India. These commissions function as watchdogs to uphold children's rights and ensure their safety, welfare, and development.

Key Responsibilities:

- *Monitoring & Implementation:* Ensuring the enforcement of child rights laws such as the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, Right to Education Act, 2009, and POCSO Act, 2012.
- *Handling Complaints:* Investigating complaints related to child abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and violations of child rights.
- *Ensuring Child Safety in Schools & Institutions:* Monitoring school safety policies, child-friendly environments, and protection measures in residential institutions.
- *Rehabilitation & Welfare:* Recommending policies and measures for rehabilitating children in need of care and protection and children in conflict with law.
- *Protection from Online Exploitation:* Taking steps to curb cybercrimes against children, including online bullying and child pornography.

The commissions have quasi-judicial powers, meaning they can take up a complaint against the violation of a child's rights in an institution or, *suo motu* (on their own), register a complaint, summon the institution for an explanation, and direct the concerned authority, such as the police, the Directorate of School Education, or the school board, to take appropriate action.