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Sanitation Worker's **HANDBOOK**



(On Safety, Security, and Responsibilities of Rural Sanitation Workers)



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UNICEF



Urban Management Centre is a women-led non-profit organization dedicated to building resilient systems for inclusive and equitable development. We work with governments to strengthen local governance and build lasting institutional structures. We also work directly with vulnerable people to ensure that they have the tools and support they need. Over the last 25 years, UMC and its teams have developed fundamental innovations in urban and rural development challenges such as performance assessment, capacity building, and decentralized institutional strengthening.

For more information, visit our website:
www.umcasia.org



UNICEF has partnered with Urban Management Centre (UMC) to professionalize the rural sanitation sector to ensure the availability of high-quality services. UNICEF and UMC are working together to support the development of trained and capacitated sanitation workers, promote robust engagement modalities of the workers, and increase awareness amongst all on the role's responsibilities and importance of sanitation workers. The program envisages developing guidelines that GPs will use to procure sanitation services that ensure the safety and dignity of workers. Define the content for innovative communication materials, assets, and approaches to promote the role of Sanitation/WASH workers, for them to perform with incentives and dignity

Disclaimer

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Sanitation Worker's **HANDBOOK**

(On Safety, Security, and Responsibilities of Rural Sanitation Workers)



About this Handbook

This handbook is meant to be used by sanitation workers. This handbook aims to inform sanitation workers who are currently engaged in sanitation work with the Gram Panchayat. Sanitation workers are mainly engaged in cleaning of toilets, emptying of septic tanks, solid waste collection and transportation of waste, street sweeping and sewer lines and maintenance hole (if the village has underground drainage network). Sanitation workers play an important role in ensuring the health of our communities. However, they do not have receive appropriate protective gear, safety devices and equipment related to their work. There is an emerging need to inform sanitation workers of their roles and responsibilities, mode of employment, rights and entitlements.



I am Nirmala, you may address me as Nirmala Didi. I am school teacher of our gram panchayat. I would like to share insights (tips) on your work-related responsibilities, safety, health and your rights and entitlements.



You, sanitation workers, are the Swachchhta Sathis of our village. You perform one of the most essential jobs as a sanitation worker and play a very important role in keeping our village clean and healthy. It is due to your unrelenting endeavors that:



Our waste gets collected from houses, and our streets and neighborhoods remain clean (garbage free).



our village have clean toilets in anganwadis, schools, health centers, and community/ public toilets.



our septic tanks/ pits get cleaned whenever required.



our clogged drains get cleaned.

With your efforts, our village aesthetics and livability is well maintained, our land and water bodies also remain pollution free.

“ We, citizens, respect you for your valuable services and we are thankful to you



This handbook is divided into **five sections**.



SECTION I

A covers roles and responsibilities; safety gears, tools and equipment required for the different sanitation works.

SECTIONS II

B cover engagement with employer; rights and entitlements;
C health, hygiene and nutrition and
D do's and don'ts of sanitation workers.
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Our village Swachchhta Saathis

In Gram Panchayat there are primarily six types of sanitation workers for solid and liquid waste management which is essential for the operation & maintenance and sustenance of sanitation infrastructures.

Let's take a look at each type of sanitation work, including roles and responsibilities, safety gears, and tools and equipment required while working as per the job roles.



Toilet cleaner



Desludging / Emptying of
Septic tanks / Pits



Drain cleaner



Street sweeper



Door-to-door
waste collector



Waste handlers at the Waste
Processing Unit

Roles and Responsibilities of Sanitation Workers



You as a sanitation worker, involved in various work such as cleaning of toilets, drains and septic tanks/pits; solid waste collection and transportation of waste; street sweeping. You provide essential services to the society, therefore it is necessary to understand your job responsibilities. The responsibilities shall vary depending upon the nature of work, risk involved and technical understanding.



**Toilet
Cleaner**



**Septic
Tank/Pit
Cleaner**



**Drain
Cleaner**



**Street
Sweeper**



**Door-to-
door waste
collector**



**waste
segregator**

Safety Gears (Personal Protective Equipment):



You, as a sanitation worker, while handling waste experience injuries and accidents due to harmful gases and liquids as well as a lack of proper safety equipment. Thus, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) helps to protect you from such infections, injuries, and health related problems. PPE is essential for your safety and to safely perform your job roles.



Helmet



Safety goggles



High visibility reflective jacket



Full body coverall



Particulate mask with a nose clip



Nitrile gloves

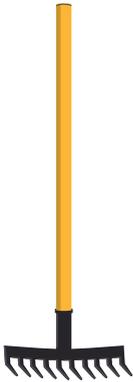


Thigh waders with attached boots

Tools and Equipment Required for Cleaning



You, sanitation workers, work and deal with various types of work manually. While working, it's important to understand and adopt a mechanical approach. It is necessary for your employer/GP to provide appropriate tools, equipment, vehicle, and all necessary supplies. The tool, equipment, and vehicle should be used on a regular basis only after receiving proper guidance/training.



Spade



Shovels



Broom



Vacuum truck

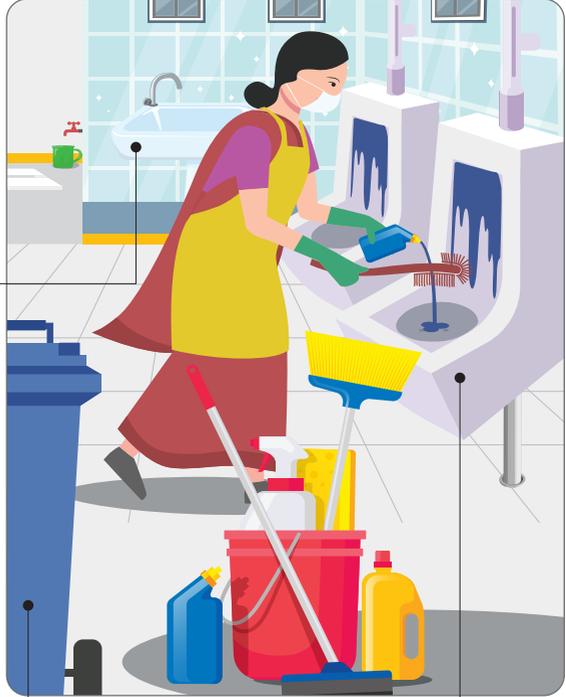
Toilet Cleaner



As a cleaner of community/public/institutional toilet



1. Your responsibilities as a toilet cleaner are to:



Clean, disinfect and maintain toilets / sanitation complex allotted to you by the



Litter should be collected, and stains must be removed to make it ready for the



Clean properly all toilets/urinals/squatting pans with liquid / detergent



Clean floor, doors, latches, door fixtures, ventilator, wash basins, buckets, mug and



Clean toilet every day, as per cleaning guidelines by making use of the equipment



Clear clogs from floor drains, sinks, toilets, and urinals.



Empty and clean the waste bins regularly from the toilet premises.



Ensure that requisite quantity of cleaning materials such as phenyl, acid,



Dispose the waste in the designated area or hand over to the waste collector.



Ensure that toilet blocks are cleaned as per the set frequency by the gram



Raise demand with gram panchayat/ employer for appropriate PPE, tools



Do not eat, drink, or smoke while using bleaches, cleaning agents, disinfecting

1. Your responsibilities as a toilet cleaner are to: (continued)



Do not leave open containers of bleaches, chemical products, and disinfecting agents



Do not mix cleaners and disinfectants, mixing can react to create poisonous



2. Your safety gears



Wear safety goggles, N 95 mask (without air vent), nitrile gloves (length 13”), uniform/



After finishing work, wash your gloves, apron and boots with water and soap, dry



Change your PPEs at least once every six months or if they are torn or damaged, ask

3. Know your tools and cleaning agents

a. Your cleaning tools -

broom, tile brush, mop, scrubbing sponge, floor wipers, bucket, mug, dust collecting pan and soft cloth.



After every use, wash your tools and store them in a safe place.



Keep the cleaning tools in a place that is out of reach of toilet users.

b. Your cleaning agents and consumables –

liquid soap, glass and mirror cleaning liquid, naphthalene balls, disposable garbage bag, hand washing soap/ liquid, napkin /tissue and sanitizer.



Use optimum quantity of cleaning agents and avoid wasting it.



Before the cleaning agents and consumables run out, report to the



Do not take any cleaning agents and consumables out of toilet facility.

Septic Tank/ Pit Cleaner



As a septic tank/pit cleaner



1. Your responsibilities as a septic tank cleaner are to:



Clean septic tank / pit using desludging vehicle and deposit the sludge



Lighting a matchstick or absence of foul smell does not reveal the presence of harmful



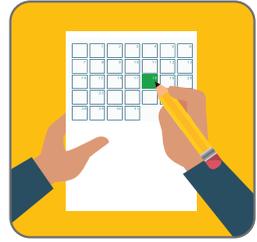
Ensure that there is a team of two persons onsite.



Ensure that the cleaning of septic tank / pit happens during daytime only.



Maintain vacuum truck and other equipment.



Keep record of your work done in a month.



Not smoke or use an open flame on-site while carrying out desludging activities.



Don't dispose sludge near residential areas or near water bodies.



Never agree to enter the septic tank / pit without appropriate written



Don't smoke while disposing the sludge.



Don't drive fast or exceed the speed limit.



2. Your safety gears



Wear safety helmet with air vents, safety goggles, N 95 mask (without



Wear PPEs while carrying out de-sludging activities.

MANUAL CLEANING of septic tanks/pits is **COMPLETELY BANNED** in India.



Ensure to wash hands with soap and water after emptying the septic tank.



Clean PPEs with soap and water after every use, rinse and store in a safe place.



Change your PPEs at least once every six months or if they are torn or damaged, ask

3. Know your tools and cleaning agents



Your cleaning equipment – cesspool vehicle (a vehicle equipped



Ensure that all the safety equipment is functional and good for



Ensure equipment used during septic tank / pit is explosion and fire-proof.



Clean and maintain equipment after completion of work.

Drain Cleaner



As a drain cleaner



1. Your responsibilities as a drain cleaner are to:



Remove silt, solid waste and clear clogs from open, partially open, and closed drains.



Keep record of your work done in a month.



Do not handle waste with bare hands.



Ensure that there is perform work under the observation of supervisor. a team of



Ensure use of machine (grabbers and scoopers) for cleaning drains, which



Thoroughly wash all contaminated parts of the body with soap and water, after the work



Do not leave any waste at the work site.



Do not dump waste in any location, always dispose it at the designated/treatment



2. Your safety gears



Wear safety helmet with air vents, safety goggles, N 95 mask, nitrile gloves (length



Use rubber/nitrile gloves to avoid sewage or sludge to come in direct contact.

MANUAL CLEANING of septic tanks/pits is COMPLETELY BANNED in India.



Wear proper PPEs while cleaning to avoid contact of faecal matter.



Clean PPEs with soap and water after each use and store in a safe place.



Change your PPEs at least once every six months or if they are torn or damaged, ask

3. Know your tools and equipment at the job



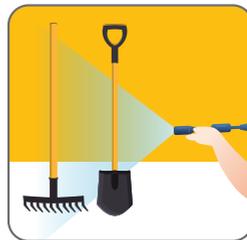
Your cleaning equipment – use grabber machine, high suction vacuum to



Be thoroughly familiar with the functions of all equipment use for cleaning of drains.



Grabbers and scoopers are to be used for cleaning of open drain.

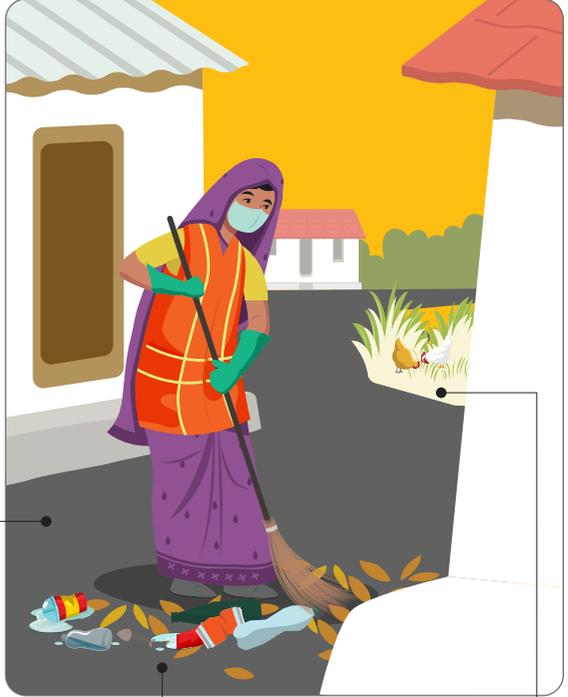


Machineries and equipment that has come across to any direct contact with the

Street Sweeper/ Road Cleaner



As a Street Sweeper/ Road Cleaner



1. Your responsibilities as a street sweeper are to



Sweep the roads/street as per the established schedule including markets, parks and



Avoid touching any sharp objects with bare hands; use a dustpan or shovel.



Do not dump collected waste in nalla/water bodies or any open area.



Ensure that dustbins along the roadsides and public places are maintained clean, and



Ensure that all waste collected from street sweeping is transported in



Report any residents dumping waste on the road, to the GP

2. Your safety gears



Wear mask, gloves, reflective jacket and shoes while sweeping roads/streets.



Puncture-resistant gloves should be used while working to avoid injury.





Reflective jacket should be used while working during dusk and



Mask should be used to protect you against dust and smoke.



Wash gloves, reflective jacket and footwear after use and store properly.

3. Your responsibilities as a street sweeper are to



You must get all the tools and equipment such as broom/ long



Use equipment to handle the different type of waste to avoid injury and direct



After completion of work, place the equipment in designated place.

Door-to-Door Waste Collector



As a Waste handler



1. Your responsibilities as a door-to-door waste collector are to:



Collect segregated waste from all households and other establishment on the



Follow route plan with pre-informed timings for collecting waste.



Request the residents/shop keepers to give segregated wet and



Ensure that the solid waste shall be collected using containerised



Ensure that there is always a team of two- persons– one driver and one helper– for



Ensure that all collected waste should be segregated in biodegradable,



Infectious waste should not be mixed with other garbage as it may lead to



Waste collected should not be dumped in nalla/water bodies or any open area.



Your responsibilities as a waste handler at processing unit are to:



Ensure to first segregate wet and dry waste, and if you have segregated waste,



Sort and dump waste as per the sorting categories.



Do not put your bare hands into the garbage container or garbage pile



Maintain a dry and pest-free sorting and storage space.



Ensure to have a well-stocked first aid kit.



While handling waste, if you come across any cuts, bruises, punctures or other injuries of this



Wet waste should be further compost as instructed.



2. Your safety gears



Wear uniform and proper PPEs such as masks, fluorescent jacket/vest, hand



Wear PPEs while collecting waste for your safety and well-being.



Clean jacket/vest, hand gloves and footwear with soap and water after use, rinse and



Change your PPEs at least once every six months or if they are torn or damaged, ask

3. Know your tools and equipment at the job



Use equipment such as spade, containerised tricycle/pushcart/barrow wheel/mini



Make sure to have a vehicle with partition/ containerised tricycle/ pushcart for putting



Make sure to have proper vehicles, tools and equipment required for collection,



After completion of work, place the vehicle at the designated place.



Always ensure to keep vehicle clean and maintained for your safety.



SECTION II

B. Engagement with employer



You, sanitation workers must know and be aware about your engagement modalities. Majority of you are working as daily wagers or on verbal mutual contracts, with incomes that are low and not well-paid. It is essential to have a legal written employment contract, this

ensures job security. It is signed between you and your employer. It will protect you by defining your responsibilities and duties and can support you in standing up for your rights.

C. Rights and entitlements



The government has been implementing several welfare schemes and insurance to support low-income people. There are various schemes and loans, but only few are able to access them due to a lack of documents and proper knowledge. You must aware about your rights and entitlements linked through various programs that provide safety net for you and your family.

D. Health, Hygiene And Nutrition



You, sanitation workers deal and come into contact with hazardous biological and chemical cleaning agents while working. Even face risks of cuts and physical injuries and come in contact with fecal matter. This enhances the chances of getting infected and being prone to diseases. Hence, it is important to have knowledge about health, hygiene, and nutrition. This will ensure that you stay protected and also do not carry any infection back at home.

E. Do's and Don'ts



While performing sanitation work there are certain do's and don'ts which must be followed for your health and safety. It ensures all necessary points to be kept in mind to avoid any circumstances. This list of dos and don'ts will guide you through what you should and should not do.

B. Engagement with employer

Know your engagement with your employer



You must have a copy of a written contract from your employer, who could be the GP, a



Your employer should provide you with machines to avoid manual cleaning and



The following points should be covered in your written contract:

- Working hours in a week / month / year
- Provision of required PPEs, equipment & tools
- Wages (should be as per prescribed minimum wages for skilled/unskilled as per the state norms)
- Paid leaves
- Details of family members and other dependent members
- Frequency of health check-ups



Appropriate PPEs should be provided as per the job role and use PPEs while



You should get safety-related training periodically by the GP/ employer to perform



C. Rights and Entitlements

Know your Rights and Entitlements



A photo ID either from employer or GP.



Access to clean water, toilet facility and provision of soap, paper towels, and



A designated place for storing PPEs should be provided.



As per PEMSAR act, 2013 - 'No person, local authority or any agency shall engage



You should be linked with existing government schemes for the benefit of you and your families, such as:



Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY):

provide accidental death and disability cover of ₹2 lakhs per year on premium of ₹20 per year.



Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY):

a one-year cover term life insurance scheme, renewable from year to year, offering life insurance cover for death due to any cause ₹2 lakhs on premium of ₹436 per year is payable on a subscriber's death due to any cause.



Atal Pension Yojana:

pension between ₹1000 to ₹5000 per month at the age of 60 years.



Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY):

ensure access to financial services, namely, banking / savings & deposit accounts, remittance, credit, insurance, and pension in an affordable manner. Access to zero balance saving bank account for receiving direct benefit transfer.



सौभाग्य

प्रधानमंत्री सहज बिजली हर घर योजना

Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana -“Saubhagya” Scheme:

provide energy access to all by last mile connectivity and electricity connections to all remaining un-electrified households.



Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY):

provide insurance cover up to ₹5 lakhs per family, per year for secondary and tertiary hospitalization.



D. Health, hygiene and nutrition



Periodical health checkup, at least twice a year.



Maintain personal hygiene and wear clean clothes daily.



Always take bath after work and wear clean clothes to reduce the risks of infections.



Always keep nails short and well-trimmed.



Always wash hands using soap every time after working and before eating food.



Always report any eye injury, no matter how minor.



If waste splashes into your eyes, flush eyes with water for at least 15 minutes.



In case of any cuts or wounds, use bandage and antiseptic cream to cover the wound



Always cover your wound with a waterproof bandage or band aids.



Do not drink alcohol, smoke, or chew tobacco, any other such harmful products



Be aware of the hazards of waterborne diseases such as typhoid and cholera



Cuts and grazes should be covered with waterproof aids.



Take vaccines dose on time to build protection against diseases such as



Maintain hygiene while preparing food.



Daily intake of balanced diet food, eat 3 times a day & avoid eating stale food.



Intake minimum 2.5 litre water a day.

E. Do's and don'ts

a. Do's



Use appropriate PPE while cleaning as per your job role.



Discard used PPEs in bio-medical bins (yellow coloured bins).



Wash your hands after safe discarding PPEs.



Refuse to undertake any potentially hazardous task until properly trained about



Do report in case of any job-related injury or illness to the colleague or supervisor



Do maintain your important documents properly, such as Contract paper, ID card,



Be polite with your colleagues, employer and citizens.



Be regular and punctual at the work.



Be properly dressed in uniform during working hours.



Do maintain a clean and safe work area.



Do encourage your children to pursue higher education for better life.



b. Don'ts



Do not accept the work without written contract.



Do not sign the contract without reading.



Do not start your work without having appropriate safety device, tools and



Do not waste consumables at workplace or and not use outside the



Do not let children play with the PPEs and keep it out of reach of children.



Do not touch helmet, goggles, and mask with dirty hands.



Do not touch your face, once you have worn gloves.



Avoid touching or adjusting other PPE while working.



Do not store the helmet in direct sunlight or near hot surfaces.



Do not touch unclean waders with bare hands.



Do not use brushes or abrasive cloths to clean the inside of your waders.



Do not let your child below 16 years to work.



Do not use cellphones while driving and on duty unless it is an emergency.



Do not encourage nuisance at any place.



Do not use loud, offensive, or abusive language.



Do not ignore any symptoms of illness and seek treatment immediately.



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