



KERALA STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED

(Incorporated under the Indian Companies Act, 1956)

CIN:U40100KL2011SGC027424

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ABSTRACT

Enhancing Digital Payments in KSEBL – Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020 – Implementing and ensuring compliance of online payments of electricity bills above ₹.1000/- in KSEBL – Sanctioned – Orders issued.

CORPORATE OFFICE (SBU-D)

B.O. (FTD) No. 395/2021 (D (D&IT)/D6-AE3/Rights of Consumers/2021-22) dtd, Tvpm 26.05.2021

Read: 1. Kerala Electricity Supply Code 2014

2. BO (FTD) No. 1925/2018[D (D&IT)/D6-AE2/Cashiers/2018-19/0001] dated 15.11.2018
3. BO (FTD) No.1994/2018[D (D&IT)/D6-AE2/Cashiers/2018-19] dated 14.12.2018.
4. BO (FTD) No. 577/2019[D (D&IT)/D6-AE2/Cashiers/2019-20] dated 23.07.2019.
5. BO (FTD) No. 964/2019[D (D&IT)/D6-AE2/Cashiers/2019-20] dated 28.12.2019
6. Circular No. D (D, IT & HRM)/ COVID 19/ 2019 – 2020/10 dated 30.04.2020
7. BO (FTD) No. 485/2020 (IT/CU/Covid-19/Cash back/2020-21) dated 22.07.2020
8. The Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020
9. Note No. D (D&IT)/ D6-AE3/ Rights of Consumers/2021-22 dated 18/05/2021 of the Director (Distribution, IT & HRM) to the Full Time Directors (Agenda Item No.56/5/21).

ORDER

In compliance with the KSERC Regulation 137(2) of the Kerala Electricity Supply Code 2014, KSEBL had introduced facilities for new modes of payment namely bank transfer, on line payment etc, as early as 2013 itself. But the same failed to gain popularity because of the poor net connectivity, high transaction charges etc. and other issues. As a part of Ease of Doing Business reforms, considering the huge technological advancements in the IT field industry, KSEBL is obliged to facilitate easier submission and faster processing of applications by providing online facility, and making payments upfront for the same and tracking progress of the works for new service connection and other services according to the simplified procedure as approved by KSERC and implemented in KSEBL during 2017.

Considering that there are various modes of digital payments available to the public and there are Akshaya payment centers, the consumers will not find it difficult to switch to digital mode, especially in a digitally empowered state like Kerala, if KSEBL decides to limit the cash transaction hours. Therefore as part of implementing measures to enhance digital payment, KSEBL had initially decided that the remittance of all non-domestic consumers with monthly bill amount of and above ₹.2000/-, shall be made online which was later extended to include domestic consumers with bimonthly bill amount of and above ₹3000/- with effect from 01.01.2020 and regardless of this, the amounts shall be accepted at the counter for the first few billing cycles, but advising such consumers to resort to Digital mode of payment from the next cycle onwards, as per BO read as 5th above.

KSEBL, as per BO read as 4th above, had entrusted the Executive Engineers of Electrical Divisions to review the number of counter transactions in the remaining Sections, in the first and seventh month of every year starting from 2020 and start implementing the single shift in sections where average monthly transactions fall below 6000, under intimation to the Chief Engineer (HRM). Further directions were also issued to the ARUs to suitably re-deploy such excess Cashiers so as to relieve other categories of employees who were deployed for Cashier duties. The above steps were part of streamlining the employee cost and for re-fixing the sanctioned place of Cashiers by the Chief Engineer HRM. This was followed by the nationwide lock down due to COVID-19 pandemic and since then the online transactions have risen significantly during and thereafter.

KSEBL has adopted various steps in line with the Government guidelines to curb the threat of community spread of COVID-19, as well as the commitment of ensuring uninterrupted power supply throughout the lock down period. As a part of these directions, meter readings were stopped and cash counters at Section offices were closed during lock down period and majority of consumers had resorted to online mode of payment of bills in order to avoid overcrowding in Section offices and to ensure social distancing as per Government directives. KSEBL as per BO read as 6th above, had gone a step further and decided to issue a 5 % cash back offer, up to a maximum of Rs.100/- per bill to all consumers who will perform 1st-time online bill payment from the date 04.05.2020 to 16.05.2020, which was further extended upto 31.12.2020 as per BO read as 7th above.

Meanwhile the Central Government, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 176 of the Electricity Act, 2003 has notified Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020, with effect from 31.12.2020. Rule 7(2) states that for "*Bill amount of more than **one thousand rupees** or an amount specified by the Commission shall mandatorily be paid online.*"

The pandemic had gravely affected the performance of the field officers in execution of distribution works owing to restrictions imposed. Considering the sudden surge in Covid affected people, it is a necessity that all services be digitally available to reduce the physical flow of customers to the Section offices. As part of steps to combat second wave of pandemic COVID-19 and promotion of online payments, KSEBL has decided to waive transaction charges for online transactions from 10.05.2021 to 31.07.2021.

Hence the Director (Distribution, IT&HRM) suggested that all categories of consumers with bill amounts of and above Rupees one thousand shall be mandatorily paid online, with immediate effect as intended in Rule 7(2) of Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020, and regardless of this, the payment may be accepted at the cash counter for the first few billing cycles, but advising such consumers to invariably resort to Digital mode of payment from the next cycle onwards. The Chief Engineer HRM shall also be directed to re-fix the sanctioned place of Cashiers due to the implementation of single shift at Electrical Sections as per BOs read as 3rd and 4th above and further reports from the concerned ARU's implementing single shift at Electrical Sections within their jurisdiction.

The matter was placed before the Full Time Directors for a decision as per the Note read as 9th above.

Having considered the matter in detail, the Full Time Directors in its meeting held on 21/05/2021,

1. Resolved to accord sanction to insist that the remittance of electricity bills of all categories of consumers of and above Rupees one thousand (₹.1000/-) shall be mandatorily paid online.
2. Further resolved that the above payment shall be accepted at the Cash counter of Electrical Section Offices for the first few billing cycles and advise such consumers to resort to Digital mode of payment from the next cycle onwards.
3. Further resolved to authorize the Chief Engineer (IT)/ CPRO for wide publicity to consumers regarding restriction in making payment at cash counters in case of bill amount of and above ₹.1000/-.
4. Further resolved to authorize the Chief Engineer HRM, to re-fix the sanctioned place of Cashiers due to implementation of single shift at Electrical Sections as per BOs dated 14.12.2018 and 23.07.2019 and further reports from the concerned ARU's implementing single shift.
5. Further resolved to modify the Board order dated 28.12.2019 to the above extent.

Orders are issued accordingly.

By Order of the Full Time Directors,

Sd/-
Lekha. G
Company Secretary-in charge.

To: The Chief Engineers (Distribution)/HRM / IT, CR & CAPs.
The Deputy Chief Engineers of all Electrical Circles
The Executive Engineers of all Electrical Divisions
The CPRO

Copy to: The Financial Advisor /Chief Internal Auditor/LA&DEO/CVO
The TA to Chairman & Managing Director
The TA to Director (Distribution, IT&HRM / Transmission & System Operation, Generation-
Electrical & Supply Chain Management / Generation-Civil/Planning, REES & Safety)
The RCAO/ The RAO/The LLO
The PA to Director (Finance) /CA to Secretary (Administration)/Company Secretary
The Fair Copy Superintendent/ Library/Stock File.

Forwarded / By Order



Assistant Engineer