

**MODEL
GOVERNANCE CODE
FOR
MEETINGS OF
GRAM PANCHAYATS**



**THE INSTITUTE OF
Company Secretaries of India**

भारतीय कम्पनी सचिव संस्थान

IN PURSUIT OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

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Disclaimer: The adoption of this Model Governance Code on Meetings of Gram Panchayats by the Panchayats functioning under the different State Government(s) is voluntary in nature. If any provision of this code becomes inconsistent with the applicable State laws on this subject, then the provisions of such applicable laws shall prevail.

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अयं बन्धुरयनेति गणना लघुचेतसाम्
उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्।।

(The distinction that this person is mine, and this one is not is a matter of ignorance. For those of noble conduct the whole world is one family.)

The words above are a true depiction of the thought and intent of the Institute of Company Secretaries of India when it comes to undertaking initiatives and initiating actions as regards promoting good governance. While the vision of the ICSI is to be a global leader in promoting good corporate governance, the need of the hour is to ensure that pinnacles are achieved of national governance and the same is pursued at a global level.

The Model Governance Code for Meetings of Gram Panchayats was an attempt of the ICSI to begin the persuasion of best practices right at the Grassroots level. Developed in 2017 to achieve the ultimate goal of developing the framework of good governance at national level, the Code has been well applauded and appreciated all across.

Taking the efforts to the next level, in an endeavour to connect with the masses and to enhance the outreach of this initiative, the ICSI has translated the Code in 10 major regional languages of India. The idea behind this schema of activities is to maximise the extant of the values of good governance and ensure that the principles are followed in true letter and spirit by the real stakeholders, the Panchayats with great ease and comfort.

I commend the dedicated efforts put in by the Directorate of Printing and Publications in the translation and publication of this Code.

I am confident that the publication will prove to be immensely beneficial for the Panchayats in their day-to-day functioning and the ultimate beneficiaries in ushering in a new era of good governance. I would appreciate the users/ readers for offering their constructive suggestions/ comments for the improvement of this publication.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ashish Garg', with a stylized flourish at the end.

CS Ashish Garg
President
The Institute of Company Secretaries of India

PREFACE

“संगच्छध्वं संवदध्वंसं वो मनांसि जानताम्”

Quoting words from the *Rigveda* which mean, “May we move in harmony, speak in one voice; let our minds be in agreement”, I am to believe that the *shloka* deep down propagates the idea of inclusive development and its significance for any nation. For a country where around 70% of the population resides in approximately 7,00,000 villages, India can very aptly be referred to as ‘a land of villages’. That said and done, the development of the economy or achievement of the goal of nation building is next to impossible if the villages or the *grams* of the country are to be sidelined.

Believing the fact and being fully aware of the role played by the presence of good governance practices in the holistic growth and development of the nation, ICSI has approached the villages of the country with a unique and innovative point of view.

The 73rd Amendment to the Constitution in the year 1992 brought about a decentralisation in the governance structure of the country laying the foundation for the *Panchayati Raj* System. The sole purpose of this Amendment was to provide constitutional sanction to establish democracy at the grassroots level as it exists at the state level or national level. Mentioning development at the grass-root level, it would seem apt to refer to an age-old proverb which reads “A tree with strong roots laughs at storms”. At ICSI, we firmly believe that if good governance is meant to make a nation strong and the villages form the roots of the Indian mainland, then

it would be pertinent to be steered by this proverb and efforts be made to guide the villages or grassroots of the nation towards all-inclusive growth and development.

Considering the current roles and responsibilities of the Village *Panchayats*, one can easily understand the significance of governance in this segment of the society. Being local units of self-government, *Panchayats* as managed by their functionaries work towards economic development and ensuring social justice in their area. And to play the role envisaged for them, including carrying out various functions of the likes of planning & budgeting, management of office and accounts, implementation and supervision of projects, holding of *Gram Sabhas*, grievance redressal, etc.; these elected representatives are required to walk an extra mile in making these processes a success.

The ***Model Governance Code for Meetings of Gram Panchayats*** is ICSI's social initiative to facilitate the implementation of standard practices in convening the meeting of *Panchayats*. Though voluntary in nature, this Code is intended to sensitize the elected representatives of the panchayats regarding their roles and responsibilities, bring about awareness and more so be the guiding light as to how good governance can be inculcated at the last leg of the democratic structure of the country.

Largely guided by the ultimate guiding principle of 'Antyodaya' which means "rise of the last person", this initiative of ICSI is intended to emphasize upon effective decision making at the meetings of Gram Panchayats and to bring this section of the nation at par with the mainstream governance structure of the country.

I acknowledge the efforts of CS Pavan Kumar Vijay, Past President, ICSI, CS Ranjeet Pandey, Central Council Member, ICSI, CS Banu Dandona, Joint Director, CS

Anamika Chaudhary, Deputy Director and CS Rakesh Kumar, Executive (Academics) in preparing the manuscript of this *Model Governance Code for Meetings of Gram Panchayats*.

Improvement is a continuous process and equally applicable to this Model Governance Code. I would personally be grateful to users and readers to offer their suggestions/ comments for further refinement of this Model Governance Code.

Place: New Delhi

CS (Dr.) Shyam Agrawal

Date: 4th October, 2017

President

The Institute of Company Secretaries of India



My idea of Gram Swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is necessary.

– **Mahatma Gandhi**

A strong believer of strengthening local self-government systems, Mahatma Gandhi Father of the Nation, was of the opinion that every village must be fully and completely empowered to deal with local issues. The above quote is sufficient enough to prove this thought.

As per the Constitution of India, Village *Panchayats* are local units of self-government, working towards economic development and ensuring social justice in their area. By virtue of this mandate, the *Panchayati Raj* Institutions (PRIs) in the States have grown over the years and played a significant role in achieving economic development and securing social justice for all. Yet, there is a long way to go before effective outcomes are witnessed and further development is visible in the functioning of *Panchayats* as people's institution of self-governance.

Panchayats, as local governments, have a critical role in ensuring the participation and inclusion of the poor, marginalized, and vulnerable groups in decision-making. Since, local people know their area, resources and problems best; *Panchayats* can plan for local economic development and address the problems of areas concerned.

Need of Governance Reforms

Diverse practices are followed across the nation as far as the functioning and working patterns of the *Panchayats* are concerned. To improve their functioning, the elected representatives and other stakeholder of *Panchayats* need to be made well conversant with the processes to be followed

for effective participation of all members in the Gram Panchayat meetings and ensuring democratic decision-making.

It goes without saying that the effective participation, discussion and decision making at *Panchayat* meetings is a key facilitator of good governance. But a *Panchayat* can be effective only if it is aware of people's needs, functions in a democratic manner, undertakes participatory and inclusive planning, executes schemes and projects effectively and is accountable to the people. In contrast, if the functioning of the *Panchayat* itself is unplanned, if decisions are not taken democratically, the *Panchayat* will not be able to perform its role in the manner as is expected of it. Since, the most important decisions are taken at the *Panchayat* Meetings, it is important that these be very well conducted.

In this backdrop, the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) has introduced this "*Model Governance Code for Meetings of Gram Panchayats*" to facilitate standard practices in convening and conducting the meetings of Panchayats.

For the purpose of development of this Governance Code, the conclusive study of practices was undertaken and field visits conducted across various States, wherein the latter enabled the observance and development of understanding of the practical issues as well as local practices followed in conducting and convening the meetings of *Gram Panchayats*.

The Code seeks to prescribe a set of principles for convening and conducting Meetings of *Gram Panchayats* and matters related thereto. It is a known fact that, the fundamental principles with respect to governance of *Gram Panchayat* Meetings are laid down in the respective State laws. This Governance Code shall strive to supplement such laws for promoting better governance in the functioning of *Gram Panchayats*.

While the ultimate goal of this Governance Code is to facilitate good governance through standardisation of secretarial practices, its introduction shall serve multiple purposes, including but not limited to:

- ❖ facilitation of uniform and standardise practices in conducting and convening the meetings;
- ❖ imbibing professionalism in the administration of Meetings;
- ❖ streamlining systems and procedures;
- ❖ ensuring proper maintenance of Meeting records and other related documents/information;
- ❖ ensuring stricter controls and discipline in the functioning of *Panchayats*;
- ❖ reduction in disputes;
- ❖ effective utilisation of funds and strengthening of internal control mechanisms; and
- ❖ detection of instances of manipulation in Meeting records.

In the Governance Code that follows, standard practices have been articulated, and made comprehensively available at one place. Adherence to the same by Panchayats shall greatly ease the processes followed, since it gives clarity on major aspects of convening and conducting the meeting, following the principles of good governance.

It is expected that, though voluntary in nature, the *Model Governance Code on Meetings of Panchayats* will play an indispensable role in the governance structure of this system. The meetings conducted by following the principles and procedures as provided in the Governance Code, will help in curbing *mala fide* actions and promoting discipline in the Panchayat Meetings.

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MODEL GOVERNANCE CODE FOR MEETINGS OF GRAM PANCHAYATS

The following is the text of the Model Governance Code for Meetings of the Gram Panchayats.

INTRODUCTION

This Code seeks to prescribe a set of principles for convening and conducting Meetings of Gram Panchayats and matters related thereto.

The principles enunciated in this Code for Meetings of the Gram Panchayats are equally applicable to meetings of Standing Committees, unless otherwise stated herein or otherwise stipulated by any other applicable laws, Guidelines, Rules or Regulations.

A Gram Panchayat cannot act by itself and it acts only through its elected members i.e. Panch(s) and Sarpanch. Panch(s) and Sarpanch are in a fiduciary position vis-à-vis the Gram Panchayat and, to that extent, they are also deemed to be trustees of the properties and assets of the Gram Panchayat. They owe a duty to the people of the village and should exercise care, skill and diligence in the discharge of their functions and in the exercise of the powers vested in them. All the powers vested in Panch(s) and Sarpanch are exercisable by them only collectively through decisions taken at a validly convened meeting of the Gram Panchayat.

The fundamental principles with respect to Governance of Gram Panchayat Meetings are laid down in the respective State laws. This model code facilitates compliance with these

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principles by endeavouring to provide further clarity where there is ambiguity and establishing benchmark standards to harmonise prevalent diverse practices.

This model code does not seek to substitute or supplant any existing laws. It strives to supplement such laws for promoting better governance in the functioning of Gram Panchayat.

Gram Panchayats functioning under the different State Government(s) are free to adopt the provisions of this Model Governance Code on Meetings of Gram Panchayats. If any of the provisions of this Code are or become inconsistent with the applicable laws, provisions of such applicable laws shall prevail.

DEFINITIONS

In this Code, unless the context otherwise requires –

“Clear days” means days excluding the day of the dispatch of notice and the day of the meeting, and includes Sundays and holidays;

“Competent Authority” means such officer or authority as the State Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint to perform such functions and exercise such powers in relation to Gram Panchayats as are specified in the notification;

“Government” or “State Government” means the State Government of the concerned State;

“Gram Panchayat” means a body constituted for local self-governance at village level as per the applicable State Laws relating to Panchayats;

“Interested Member” means a Member having personal or financial interest, either directly or indirectly, in any matter placed before a meeting of the Gram Panchayat;

“Member” means a member of a Gram Panchayat and includes a Sarpanch;

“Minutes” means a formal written record, in physical or electronic form, of the proceedings of a meeting;

“Panch” means a member of a Panchayat, other than a Sarpanch;

“Prescribed” means prescribed by respective State Acts or Rules made thereunder;

“Sarpanch” means the President or Chairperson or Pradhan of the Gram Panchayat by whatever name called, elected directly by the persons registered in the electoral rolls relating to the village or the group of villages comprised within the area of the Panchayat;

“Secretary” means a person appointed with such designation by the State Government or by such authority as may be authorised by the Government in this behalf, for a Panchayat;

“Standing Committee” means a Standing Committee constituted by the Panchayat;

“Special Meeting” means a meeting, other than a regular meeting of the Gram Panchayat, convened suo moto by the Sarpanch or on the special request of the members, to discuss any specific item including matters of urgent nature;

“Up-Sarpanch” means the Vice-President or Vice-Chairperson or Up-Pradhan of a Gram Panchayat, by whatever name called, elected directly by the persons registered in the electoral rolls relating to the village or the group of villages comprised within the area of the Panchayat.

Words and expressions used herein and not defined shall have the meaning respectively assigned to them under the State Act under which the respective Gram Panchayat has been constituted.

1. CONVENING A MEETING

1.1 Authority

- 1.1.1 The Secretary, on the direction of the Sarpanch or the Up-Sarpanch in the absence of the Sarpanch, shall summon a meeting of the Gram Panchayat.
- 1.1.2 If a meeting is statutorily required to be convened within a prescribed period, the Secretary shall summon such meeting in consultation with the Sarpanch.
- 1.1.3 The Secretary, on requisition by the prescribed number of Members, shall consult the Sarpanch for convening the meeting.
- 1.1.4 The Sarpanch may whenever he thinks fit, and shall, upon the written request of the prescribed number of members, require the Secretary to call a special meeting within the prescribed period from the date of receipt of such request and to take such steps as may be necessary to convene the meeting.
- 1.1.5 In case the Sarpanch fails to call a special meeting, then the Up-Sarpanch or in his absence, the Competent Authority may call such meeting and require the Secretary to give notice to the Members and to take such steps as may be necessary to convene the meeting.

1.2 Time, Place and Serial Number of meeting

- 1.2.1 A meeting may be convened on any day, at any time ***between 7 am to 8 pm,*** at any place within the area of the Panchayat or at such other place as may be approved by the Gram Panchayat/ Government.

1.2.2 Every meeting of the Panchayat shall be serially numbered for ease of reference.

1.2.3 Serial number of the original meeting and the adjourned meeting, if any, should be the same. The manner in which meetings may be serially numbered is given below :

[Illustration: If serial number of the original meeting is 6th, the serial number of the adjourned meeting should be 6th meeting (Adjourned)]

If, currently, the Panchayat is not following the practice of giving serial numbers, it shall start numbering its meetings from the date of adoption of this Model Code.

1.3 Notice

1.3.1 Notice of the meeting of the Gram Panchayat shall be served at least five clear days before the date of the meeting.

1.3.2 If a majority of the Members agree to convene a special meeting, the Notice thereof may be given at a shorter period of time than that stated above but at least 24 hours before the meeting.

However, for considering any urgent matter, a meeting may be convened at any time, even with notice of less than twenty-four hours.

1.3.3 Where the meetings of the Gram Panchayat are held on pre-determined dates, such meetings may be convened without any separate Notice, unless the applicable laws require for separate notice for each meeting.

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- 1.3.4 The Notice shall specify the serial number, date, day, time and full address of the venue of the Meeting.
- 1.3.5 Notice of the meeting of the Gram Panchayat shall be issued by the Secretary or by such other officer as prescribed by the Government for this purpose and in their absence, the Sarpanch or any other member, authorised by the Panchayat for this purpose may issue the notice of the Meeting.
- 1.3.6 Notice shall contain the contact details and authority of the person issuing the Notice.
- 1.3.7 Notice in writing of every Meeting (except where exempted in terms of para 1.3.3 above) shall be given to every Member and such officer as may be prescribed by the Government, by hand or by post or by e-mail.
- 1.3.8 Wherever the presence of a Patwari or other Tehsil level functionaries of the State Government or of a Panchayati Raj Institution, is required or desired by the Gram Panchayat at its meeting, the Notice of such meeting shall also be sent to them. The notice shall also be sent to such officer as may be prescribed by the Government.
- 1.3.9 In order to facilitate effective and timely communication, the Notice of a Meeting may be given through SMS or other software used by the Panchayat, followed by a copy of the written Notice as stated above.
- 1.3.10 The Notice shall also be affixed on the Notice Board of the Gram Panchayat. In case of pre-determined dates a general notice specifying

day, interval, time and full address of the venue of the Meetings shall be kept affixed during such period.

- 1.3.11 The Notice should be sent on the letter-head of the Gram Panchayat. In case of unavailability of the letter head of the Gram Panchayat, the letter head of the person issuing the Notice, may be used.
- 1.3.12 Notice shall be sent at the registered address of the Member or such other address, if any, provided by the Member for the purpose.
- 1.3.13 The Gram Panchayat shall maintain proof of sending Notice and its delivery.
- 1.3.14 In case of delivery of Notice by hand, the signature of the recipient will be obtained in a register maintained for this purpose and be kept as record of proof of delivery.
- 1.3.15 In case of Notice sent through e-mail, the proof of delivery may be maintained by way of the soft copy.
- 1.3.16 Proof of sending Notice of a meeting and its delivery shall be preserved for such period as may be decided by the Gram Panchayat, which shall not be less than five years from the date of the meeting.

(A sample format of Notice is placed at *Annexure-A*)

1.4 Notice of an Adjourned Meeting

- 1.4.1 Notice of an adjourned meeting shall be given to all Members including those who did not attend the Meeting on the originally convened date.

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1.4.2 If the date of the adjourned Meeting is decided at the Meeting itself where all the Members are present, the Notice should be given forthwith at the Meeting.

1.4.3 Notice of every Meeting so adjourned shall be affixed on the Notice Board of the Panchayat.

1.5 Agenda of the Meeting

1.5.1 The Secretary shall finalise the Agenda and Notes on Agenda of every Meeting in consultation with the Sarpanch.

1.5.2 Each item of business to be taken up at the Meeting shall be serially numbered.

1.5.3 Agenda setting out the business to be transacted at the Meeting and Notes on Agenda shall be given to all the Members along with the Notice of the Meeting, unless otherwise provided in the applicable laws.

1.5.4 The Notes on Agenda shall specify details about the business to be transacted at the meeting.

1.5.5 The Notes on Agenda may be sent separately after issuing the Notice, but at least 3 clear days before the Meeting.

1.5.6 Agenda and Notes on Agenda of the Meeting of the Gram Panchayat shall be sent by the Secretary or by such other officer as may be prescribed by the Government for this purpose and in their absence, by the Sarpanch or any other Member, authorised by the Panchayat for this purpose.

1.5.7 Wherever the presence of the Patwari or other Tehsil level functionaries of the State

Government or of a Panchayati Raj Institution, is required or desired by the Gram Panchayat at a Meeting, the Agenda and Notes on Agenda of such meeting shall also be sent to them.

1.5.8 Agenda and Notes on Agenda shall also be sent to such officer as may be prescribed by the Government.

1.5.9 If majority of the Members agree to convene a special Meeting, the Agenda and Notes on Agenda may be circulated at a shorter period of time than stated above. In such cases, the Agenda and Notes on Agenda shall be given at least 24 hours before the meeting.

(A list of Standard Agenda Items is placed at *Annexure-B*)

1.6 Consideration of any other item of business

1.6.1 No item of business other than those included in the Agenda shall be considered at a Meeting of the Gram Panchayat.

1.6.2 Any other item not included in the Agenda of the Meeting, may be placed at the next meeting of the Gram Panchayat or in case of urgent matters a special meeting may be convened.

1.6.3 However, items of urgent nature having wider public interest may be taken up for consideration with the permission of the Sarpanch and with the consent of the majority of the Members of the Gram Panchayat.

2. FREQUENCY OF MEETING

2.1 A Gram Panchayat shall meet for the transaction of business as often as may be necessary.

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- 2.2 Unless otherwise provided under the applicable laws, the Gram Panchayat shall meet at least once in every month.

3. QUORUM

3.1 Quorum for the Meeting of the Gram Panchayat

- 3.1.1 Quorum for a Meeting of the Gram Panchayat shall be majority of the total number of Members of the Gram Panchayat for the time being or such minimum number of Members as prescribed under the applicable laws.
- 3.1.2 Quorum shall be present throughout the meeting.
- 3.1.3 If the required quorum is not present at any stage of the meeting, the remaining item(s) of business shall not be taken up for consideration and be deferred to the next meeting, with reasons to be recorded in writing.

3.2 Quorum of Non-Interested Members / Disclosure of interest

- 3.2.1 An Interested Member (whether or not the Sarpanch/ Up-Sarpanch), shall neither be reckoned for Quorum nor shall participate during discussion and voting on the item in which he is interested.
- 3.2.2 If the Sarpanch is interested in any item of business, such fact shall be disclosed by him at the meeting before the consideration of such item and he shall leave the Chair to any Non-interested Member in respect of such item.
- 3.2.3 If disclosure of interest is already communicated to the Secretary before circulation of the

Agenda and Notes on Agenda, then such disclosure shall be indicated in the Notes on Agenda in respect of such item.

- 3.2.4 The disclosure of interest by Interested Member(s) in a matter to be considered at the Meeting and the fact that they abstained from the discussion/voting at the meeting on the said matter shall be recorded in the Minutes.

3.3 Adjournment of the Meeting for want of quorum

- 3.3.1 If, at the appointed time for the Meeting, a quorum is not present, the Member(s) present shall wait for at least 30 minutes or for such longer period as may be prescribed by the Government or agreed to by the Member(s) present at the meeting and if within such period there is no quorum, the Meeting shall be adjourned to the next day at the same time and place or to any future day at such time as the Chairperson or in his absence as the Member(s) present at the meeting may decide.
- 3.3.2 If even at an adjourned meeting no quorum is present, the Meeting shall stand cancelled.
- 3.3.3 If at a Meeting where the quorum is present, a few agenda items remain pending for discussion/decision due to insufficiency of time, the meeting may be adjourned to the following day or any other future day to discuss the unfinished agenda of that Meeting.

3.4 Adjournment of the meeting otherwise for want of quorum

- 3.4.1 The Sarpanch with the consent of majority of the Members present may adjourn a validly convened meeting of the Gram Panchayat.

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3.4.2 The facts and reasons of such adjournment shall be recorded in the proceedings of the meeting.

3.4.3 The procedure of adjournment, if any, approved by the Gram Panchayat or the Government shall be complied with.

4. ATTENDANCE AT THE MEETING

4.1 Attendance

4.1.1 Every Gram Panchayat shall maintain a separate attendance register for the Meetings of the Gram Panchayat.

4.1.2 The attendance register shall contain the following particulars: Serial number and date of the meeting; place of the meeting; time of the meeting; name and signature of the Members, the Secretary and of other person(s) attending the meeting by invitation.

4.1.3 The attendance register shall be maintained at the Office of the Gram Panchayat or such other place as may be approved by the Gram Panchayat.

4.1.4 The attendance register shall be open for inspection by the Members.

4.1.5 Entries in the attendance register shall be authenticated by the Secretary or in his absence, by the person authorised by the Government.

4.1.6 Attendance register shall be kept in the custody of the Secretary or a person authorised by the Government.

4.1.7 The attendance register shall be preserved for a period of at least five years from the date of the last entry therein or for such other higher period as may be specified by the Government.

4.1.8 The attendance register or any other records of the Panchayat shall not be destroyed except in accordance with the policy approved by Government.

(A sample format of attendance register is placed at Annexure-C)

4.2 Leave of Absence

4.2.1 Leave of absence shall be granted to the Member(s) only when a request for such leave has been received by the Secretary or by the Sarpanch.

4.2.2 The request for leave of absence shall state a reason for the Member's inability to attend the meeting.

5. READING OF AGENDA AT THE MEETING

The Sarpanch or the Secretary shall read out the Agenda at the meeting. The Sarpanch or the Secretary shall explain the objective, need and implications of the matters/resolutions before they are put for discussion and voting at the Meeting.

6. MINUTES OF THE MEETING

6.1 Recording of Minutes

6.1.1 The proceedings of every meeting shall be recorded in the Minutes Book by the Secretary.

6.1.2 Summary of the decision taken at the meeting

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shall be read over at the meeting immediately after deliberation and be accordingly recorded in the Minutes Book.

6.1.3 Minutes shall be written in concise and plain language. Minutes shall contain a fair and correct summary of the proceedings of the meetings including the following:

- Minutes shall state, at the beginning, the serial number and type of meeting, date, day, venue and time of commencement of the meeting. Minutes shall also state at the end, the time of conclusion of the meeting.
- Minutes shall record the names of the Members present in the meeting along with the names of the Secretary and the invitees.
- Minutes shall record the reason for convening the meeting at shorter notice, if any.
- Dissenting views of Member(s), if any, on any matter shall be recorded in the Minutes with the name of the dissenting member.

6.1.4 Any Document, report or notes placed before the Meeting of the Gram Panchayat and referred to in the Minutes shall be identified by initialling of such document, report or notes by the Secretary or the presiding authority of the Meeting.

6.2 Maintenance of Minutes

- 6.2.1 The Secretary shall maintain the Minutes.
- 6.2.2 Distinct Minutes Book shall be maintained for the meetings of the Gram Panchayat and its Standing Committees.
- 6.2.3 The Minutes shall be maintained in the official/ local language of the State.
- 6.2.4 Pages of the Minutes Book shall be consecutively numbered.
- 6.2.5 Minutes shall not be pasted or attached to the Minutes Book or tampered with, in any manner.

(A sample format of Minutes Book is placed at *Annexure-D*)

6.3 Modification or Cancellation of Resolutions/Decisions

- 6.3.1 No resolution of a Gram Panchayat shall be modified or cancelled except through a resolution passed by a majority or such higher number of the total Members of the Gram Panchayat as prescribed and permitted under the applicable laws.
- 6.3.2 Such modification or cancellation of a resolution shall be done within the time prescribed, if any, by the Government.

6.4 Signing of Minutes

- 6.4.1 Minutes of the Meeting of the Gram Panchayat shall be signed and dated by the presiding authority of that meeting or the next Meeting.
- 6.4.2 The person signing shall initial each page of the Minutes and sign the last page.

6.4.3 The date and place of signing the Minutes shall also be mentioned at the last page of the Minutes.

6.4.4 Minutes once entered in the Minutes Book, shall not be altered. Any alteration in the Minutes as entered shall be made only by way of approval of the Gram Panchayat at its subsequent meeting and shall be recorded in the Minutes of that meeting.

6.5 Inspection of Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Gram Panchayat and its Standing Committees shall be open for inspection by any person, at the office of the Gram Panchayat and a certified copy of the Minutes or an extract thereof may be issued to any person on his request, in accordance with the applicable laws.

6.6 Preservation of Minutes

6.6.1 Minutes Book shall be kept in the custody of the Secretary or a person authorised by the Government for this purpose.

6.6.2 Minutes of all Meetings shall be preserved permanently in physical or electronic form.

6.6.3 The Minutes Book shall be kept at the office of the Gram Panchayat.

7. MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

All the documents and records relating to the meetings of Gram Panchayats shall be maintained in the official/local language of the State.

8. FUNCTIONS OF THE SECRETARY

The Secretary of a Gram Panchayat is expected to perform the following functions:

- Take necessary steps to execute and implement the decisions taken by the Panchayat at its meetings.
- Communicate the decisions concerning persons of respective Panchayat area to them.
- Convene Meetings of the Gram Panchayat and its Committees.
- Attend every Meeting of the Gram Panchayat and its Standing Committees including the Gram Sabha Meetings.
- Write the proceedings of every Meeting in the Minutes Book either in physical or electronic form.
- Place all the correspondence received by him, especially various schemes of the Government and instructions issued by the Government, before the Sarpanch and also for the information of all the Members during the meeting.
- Receive all correspondence on behalf of the Gram Panchayat and take appropriate action on the same.
- Finalise, in consultation with the Sarpanch or in his absence the Up-Sarpanch, the Agenda and Notes on Agenda of every meeting.
- Maintain all the registers and records prescribed under the applicable laws.
- Report to the Block Development Officer any vacancy in the office of the Sarpanch/Up-Sarpanch or a Member.

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- Be responsible for the safe custody of Panchayat funds, assets and the records maintained by the Gram Panchayat.
- Report to the Block Development Officer about any suspected illegal act or misconduct or misuse or abuse of powers, any infringement of the legal provisions by the Sarpanch or Up-Sarpanch or the members of the Gram Panchayat, as soon as the same come to his knowledge.
- Comply with the instructions issued by the Government from time to time.
- Maintain cordial relations with the elected representatives of the Gram Panchayat.

Annexure-A

Notice for ____ Meeting of Gram Panchayat

(Name of Panchayat & Block/ District))

Date:

To

Name & Address of the Member

Madam/Sir,

This is to inform you that the Meeting of (name of Gram Panchayat) is scheduled to be held on (Day & Date) from (time) onwards at (place) to discuss and transact the following matters:

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)
- (iv)

The detailed Agenda and Notes on Agenda are enclosed.

You are requested to kindly make it convenient to attend the meeting.

Yours faithfully

(Signature)

(Name of Secretary/ Authorised Officer)

Annexure-B

Standard List of Agenda Item

The following items shall invariably be included in the Agenda of Meetings:

- To grant Leave of Absence
- To take note of the Minutes of the previous Meeting
- Follow up and Action Taken Report (ATR) on the decisions of the Previous Meetings
- To take note of the Minutes of the Meetings of Standing Committee(s)
- Approval/Concurrent review of Gram Panchayat Budget and Annual Plan implementation/utilisation
- Statement of Income and Expenditure and the reasons for fluctuations in the financial statements, if any
- Approval of new Works and Schemes
- Review of utilisation of funds under various schemes
- Review of physical progress of construction work, other projects and activities
- Review of Village Sanitation, Street Lighting, Rural Roads, Drinking Water, Anganwadi, Fair Price Shops, Maintenance of School Buildings; Health Centre, etc.
- Any other matter

Annexure-C**Attendance Register of Members**

(Name of the Gram Panchayat) (Block) (District)

No. & Date of the Meeting:

Place:

Time:

Type of meeting (Ordinary/Special/Urgent)

Sl. No.	Name of Member Present	Ward No.	Sign/Thumb Impression	In Time	Out Time	Attested by Secretary/Sarpanch (in case of Thumb impression)
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
1)						
2)						
3)						
4)						
5)						
6)						
7)						
8)						
9)						
10)						
11)						
12)						

Annexure-D**Minutes Book of Gram Panchayat Meeting**

(Name of the Gram Panchayat) (Block) (District)

No. & Date of the Meeting:

Place:

Time:

Type of meeting (General/Emergency/Specially convened)

Members Present

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Designation</i>	<i>Representing Ward</i>
(i)			
(ii)			
(iii)			
(iv)			
(v)			
(vi)			

Minutes/Record of Proceedings:**Item No. 1**

.....

.....

.....

Issue discussed:**Decision:****Item No. 2**

.....
.....
.....

Issue discussed:

Decision:

Item No. 3

.....
.....
.....

Issue discussed:

Decision:

Item No. 4

.....
.....
.....

Issue discussed:

Decision:

**Meeting concluded at_00:00_ with a Vote of Thanks to the
Chair.**

Date: .../.../.....

(Signature)

Place : (Name of Sarpanch/Presiding Authority)

