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**THE PUNJAB ESSENTIAL SERVICES (MAINTENANCE)
ACT, 1958
(XXXIV of 1958)**

CONTENTS

- 1. Short title, extent and commencement**
- 2. Definitions**
- 3. Employment to which this Act applies**
- 4. Power to order persons engaged in certain employments to remain in specified areas**
- 5. Offences**
- 6. Regulation of wages and conditions of service**
- 7. Penalties and procedure**
- 8. Bar of legal proceedings**
- 9. Saving of effect of laws imposing liability to national service**
- 10. Repeal**

TEXT

¹THE ²[PUNJAB] ESSENTIAL SERVICES (MAINTENANCE) ACT, 1958 (XXXIV of 1958)

[25th April, 1958]

An Act

to provide for the maintenance of certain essential services.

Preamble.— WHEREAS it is expedient to provide for the maintenance of certain essential services in ³[the Punjab];

It is hereby enacted as follows:—

1. Short title, extent and commencement.— (1) This Act may be called the ⁴[Punjab] Essential Services (Maintenance) Act, 1958.

⁵[(2) It extends to the whole of the Province of ⁶[the Punjab], except the Tribal Areas.]

(3) It shall come into force at once.

2. Definitions.— In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context—

- (i) “employment” means any service for which remuneration is received;
- (ii) “essential service” means a service to the employment of which this Act applies;
- (iii) “Government” means the ⁷[Provincial Government of the Punjab].

3. Employment to which this Act applies.— This Act shall apply to all employment under the Government or any agency set up by it or a local authority or any service relating to transport or civil defence.

¹For statement of objects and reasons, see Gazette of West Pakistan, (Extraordinary), dated 26th January, 1957 and for proceedings in Assembly, see West Pakistan Assembly Debates, Vol. III, pp.1327-1336.

This Act was passed by the West Pakistan Assembly on 30th March, 1958: assented to by the Governor of West Pakistan on 25th April, 1958; and published in the West Pakistan Gazette (Extraordinary), dated 25th April, 1958, pp.719-722.

²Substituted for the words by the “West Pakistan” by the Punjab Laws (Adaptation) order, 1974 (Pb. A.O. 1 of 1974); and published in the Punjab Gazette (Extraordinary), dated 20.11.1974, pages 1425-A to 1425-PP, see Article 2 and Schedule, Part III, at entry No.14 (w.e.f. 14.8.1973).

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵Substituted by the West Pakistan Laws (Extension to Karachi) Ordinance, 1964 (VII of 1964); and published in the Gazette of West Pakistan (Extraordinary), dated 10.6.1964, pages 1911-1920, see s.2 and Schedule, at serial No.10.

⁶Substituted for the words “West Pakistan” by the Punjab Laws (Adaptation) Order, 1974 (Pb. A.O. 1 of 1974); and published in the Punjab Gazette (Extraordinary), dated 20.11.1974, pages 1425-A to 1425-PP, see Article 2 and Schedule, Part III, at entry No.14 (w.e.f. 14.8.1973).

⁷Substituted *ibid.*, for the words “Government of West Pakistan”

4. Power to order persons engaged in certain employments to remain in specified areas.— (1) The Government or an officer authorised in this behalf by the Government may, ⁸[if the public interest so requires,] by general or special order, direct that any person or persons engaged in any employment or class of employment to which this Act applies shall not depart out of such area or areas and for such period not exceeding three months as may be specified in such order.

(2) An order made under sub-section (1) shall be published in such manner as the Government, or the officer making the order, considers best calculated to bring it to the notice of the persons affected by the order.

5. Offences.— Any person engaged in any employment or class of employment to which this Act applies who—

- (a) disobeys any lawful order given in the course of such employment, or attempts to persuade any person to disobey any such order, or
- (b) without reasonable excuse abandons such employment or absents himself from work, or
- (c) departs from any area specified in an order under sub-section (1) of section 4 without the consent of the Government or the authority making that order, and any employer of a person engaged in an employment or class of employment to which this Act applies, who without reasonable excuse—
 - (1) discontinues the employment of such person, or
 - (2) by closing an establishment in which such person is engaged, causes the discontinuance of his employment, or
 - (3) discontinues or causes the discontinuance of an essential service, is guilty of an offence under this Act.

Explanation I.— The fact that a person apprehends that by continuing in his employment he will be exposed to increased physical danger is not reasonable excuse within the meaning of clause (b).

Explanation II.— A person abandons his employment within the meaning of clause (b) who, notwithstanding that it is an express or implied term of his contract of employment that he may terminate his employment on giving notice to his employer of his intention to do so, so terminates his employment without the previous consent of his employer.

6. Regulation of wages and conditions of service.— (1) The Government may make rules regulating or empowering specified authorities to regulate the wages and other conditions of service of persons or of any class of persons engaged in any employment or class of employment to which this Act applies.

(2) When any such rules have been made, or when any directions regulating wages or conditions of service have been given by the authority empowered by such rules to give them, any person failing to comply therewith is guilty of an offence under this Act.

⁸Inserted by the West Pakistan Laws (Amendment) Ordinance, 1965 (XXXIV of 1965); and published in the Gazette of West Pakistan (Extraordinary), dated 2.11.1965, pages 5607-5614, see s.2 and Schedule, at serial No.13.

7. Penalties and procedure.— (1) Any person found guilty of an offence under this Act, shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year and shall also be liable to a fine.

(2) Where the person accused of an offence under this Act is a company or other body corporate, every director, manager, secretary or other officer thereof shall, unless he proves that the offence was committed without his knowledge or that he exercised due diligence to prevent the commission of the offence, be liable to the punishment provided for the offence.

(3) No court shall take cognizance of an offence under this Act except upon complaint in writing made by an officer empowered by the Government in this behalf.

8. Bar of legal proceedings.— No suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against any person for anything which is, in good faith, done or intended to be done under this Act or the rules made thereunder.

9. Saving of effect of laws imposing liability to national service.— Nothing contained in this Act or in any declaration or order made thereunder, shall have effect in derogation of any provision of law which is or may be for the time being in force, imposing upon a person engaged in an employment or class of employment to which this Act applies any liability to be called up for national service or to undertake employment in the national service.

10. Repeal.— The North-West Frontier Province Essential Services (Maintenance) Act, 1946⁹, and the West Pakistan Essential Services (Maintenance) Ordinance, 1957¹⁰, are hereby repealed.

⁹N.W.F.P XII of 1946.

¹⁰W.P. Ord. VII of 1957.