

CHAPTER - XVI

**SPECIAL ALLOWANCE AND / OR
ADDITIONAL BENEFITS FOR STAFF WORKING
IN RECORD ROOM / PROPERTY ROOM**

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The Commission has received a number of representations from the Staff Associations as well as individuals requesting to provide special allowance for staff working in Record Room / Property Room of the Court, as they have to work in an atmosphere which, in every respect, is unhealthy and unfit for human habitation.

The Commission sought the views on this aspect from the High Courts, State Governments and Associations.

The views received from the High Courts as well as the State Governments are set out below :

HIGH COURT OF ANDHRA PRADESH

It is quite desirable and reasonable to sanction Special Allowance to the Staff working in the Record Room / Property Room as these Rooms are the most congested and dust driven.

ALLAHABAD HIGH COURT

Payment of Rs.200/- p.m. be made to the officials who are posted to Record Room / Property Room.

HIGH COURT OF BOMBAY

Record Room, Strong Room and Property Room can be described as occupational hazard. The Court Staff working in such rooms are susceptible to occupational diseases.

It is, therefore, necessary to improve the condition of the Rooms by providing good ventilation, sufficient light and periodical spray of disinfectant. The staff should be sent for periodical medical check-up. They should be given Special Monthly Allowance.

HIGH COURT OF CALCUTTA

It is desirable and reasonable to sanction Special Allowance to the employees working in District Court, who run the risk of health hazard.

HIGH COURTS OF PATNA AND JHARKHAND

The Staff posted to Record Room / Property Room have to work in the congested dust Room and they may be paid Special Allowance at least at 20% of their basic pay.

PUNJAB AND HARYANA HIGH COURT

Special Allowance should be given to the Staff working in Malkhana and Record Room and there should be such a provision in the Rules.

HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA

The Staff assigned to work in Record Room / Property Room and Library are at a disadvantage to the extent that they have to work in dust driven Room and handle old records and books. In view of insufficient accommodation, alternative spacious work rooms are not provided. It is necessary that they be paid Compensatory Allowance to the extent of 10% of their basic pay.

HIGH COURT OF KERALA

Staff members are reluctant to work in Record Room and Property Room as it creates lot of health problems to them. Risk Allowance equal to 10% of basic pay must

be given to both the categories or Special Pay scale equal to Supervisory staff must be given to them. Further, equipment like vacuum cleaner etc. must be provided.

HIGH COURTS OF MADHYA PRADESH AND CHATTISGARH

It is desirable to give Special Pay or Allowance to such staff members.

HIGH COURT OF ORISSA

10% of the basic pay for those who are engaged in such places is suggested as Compensatory Allowance.

HIGH COURT OF RAJASTHAN

It is desirable to have such provision of payment of Special Pay or Allowance.

GAUHATI HIGH COURT

It is desirable to give some benefits to the persons working in Record Room / Property Room.

HIGH COURT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

Keeping in view the congested rooms with dust laden material, the Special Allowance will have to be allowed to Record / Property Keeper.

High Courts of GUJARAT, JAMMU AND KASHMIR, SIKKIM and UTTARANCHAL are not for paying either Special Pay or Special Allowance.

VIEWS OF STATE / U.T. GOVERNMENTS :

GOVT. OF GOA

It is desirable to give additional benefits in the form of Risk Allowance as the person working in the Record Room is prone to suffer from air borne diseases because of the dust and congestion in Record Room.

GOVT. OF HARYANA

Special Allowance may be given to the staff working in Malkhana and Record Rooms and there should be such a provision in the Rules.

GOVT. OF MAHARASHTRA

Record Room, Strong Room and Property Room can be described as occupational hazard. The Court Staff working in such rooms are susceptible to occupational diseases. It is, therefore, necessary to improve the condition of the Rooms by providing good ventilation, sufficient light and periodical spray of disinfectant. The staff should be sent for periodical medical check-up. They should be given Special Monthly Allowance.

The Administrations of ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS, CHANDIGARH, DAMAN & DIU, and DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI have also stated that it is necessary to give some extra remuneration.

The Commission, with a view to get first-hand information, did visit the Record and Property Rooms of certain Courts and found that the conditions are quite appalling. It may be stated that there cannot be two opinions on the condition of the Record Room and Property Room attached to all Courts. Usually, these branches are housed in basement or cellar and / or at the rear end of the Court building where the natural light and air are

minimal. Added to that, there will be dampness with stinking smell of the dust laden files and / or properties.

It cannot also be denied that the staff in the Record Room / Property Room are isolated from the other staff. They have no interaction of any kind, as the public have no access to these places. Indeed, it is more a punishment and the stay in such places is oppressive in every sense of the word.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

With due consideration of all the facts and circumstances, we recommend the following:

1. Each of the staff posted to Record Room / Property Room shall be paid Compensatory Allowance at the rate of Rs.100/- per month.
2. We further recommend :
 - i) These rooms should be fitted with exhaust fans.
 - ii) There should be adequate lighting arrangement.
 - iii) Every week, disinfectants should be sprayed.
 - iv) The staff should be supplied with Dettol, Soap and other washing ingredients.
 - v) Staff should be given apron.
 - vi) Sufficient number of racks should be provided. No record should be put on the ground.

vii) Dusting should be done regularly. Every Record Room / Property Room should have vacuum cleaner.

AND

viii) The staff shall have compulsory medical check-up once in six months.

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