

NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the 17th June, 2021

G.S.R. 416(E).—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 22 of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation), Act, 1995 (7 of 1995), the Central Government hereby makes the following rules further to amend the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994, namely: -

1. Short title and commencement-

(1) These rules may be called the Cable Television Networks (Amendment) Rules, 2021.

(2) They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

2. In rule 6 of the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994 (hereinafter referred to as the said rules), after sub-rule (6), the following sub-rule shall be inserted, namely: -

“(7) where the Central Government is satisfied that the programme of any channel is not in conformity with the Programme Code, it may, after giving an opportunity of hearing to the cable operator, and by an order in writing, prohibit the transmission or re-transmission of any such channel or programme in accordance with the provisions of section 20 of the Act.

3. In rule 7 of the said rules, after sub-rule (11), the following sub-rule shall be inserted, namely: -

“(12) where the Central Government is satisfied that the advertisement of any channel is not in conformity with the Advertising Code, it may, after giving an opportunity of hearing to the cable operator, and by an order in writing, prohibit the transmission or re-transmission of any such channel or programme in accordance with the provisions of section 20 of the Act.

4. In the said rules, after rule 14, the following rules shall be inserted, namely: -

15. Complaint redressal structure - (1) To ensure observance and adherence to the Programme Code and the Advertising Code by the broadcaster and to address the grievance or complaint, if any, relating thereto, there shall be a three-level structure as under:

- (i) Level I - A self-regulation by broadcasters;
- (ii) Level II - Self-regulation by the self-regulating bodies of the broadcasters; and
- (iii) Level III - Oversight mechanism by the Central Government.

16. Filing and processing of grievance or complaint - (1) Any person aggrieved by the content of a programme of a channel as being not in conformity with the Programme Code or the Advertising Code may file his complaint in writing to the broadcaster:

Provided that where such complaint relates to Advertising Code laid down by the Advertising Standards Council of India, such complaint may be addressed to the said Council and that Council shall deal with such complaint in accordance with the procedure laid down by it:

Provided further that Advertising Standards Council of India shall take a decision on the complaint within sixty days of its receipt, and communicate the same to the broadcaster and the complainant.

- (2) The broadcaster shall, within twenty-four hours of complaint being filed, generate and issue an acknowledgement to the complainant for his information and record.
- (3) Every complaint shall be dealt with in the following manner, namely: -
 - (a) the broadcaster shall dispose of the complaint and inform the complainant of its decision within fifteen days of receipt of such complaint;
 - (b) if the decision of the broadcaster is not communicated to the complainant within the stipulated period of fifteen days, or if the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the broadcaster, he may prefer an appeal to the self-regulating body of which such broadcaster is a member, within fifteen days therefrom;
 - (c) the self-regulating body shall dispose of the appeal within sixty days of receipt of appeal and convey its decision in the form of a guidance or advisory to the broadcaster, and inform the complainant of such decision within a period of fifteen days;
 - (d) where the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the self-regulating body, he may, within fifteen days of such decision, prefer an appeal to the Central Government for its consideration under the Oversight Mechanism referred to in rule 19.

17. Self-Regulation by broadcasters – (1) A broadcaster shall -

- (i) establish a grievance or complaint redressal mechanism and appoint an officer to deal with the complaints received by it;
- (ii) display the contact details related to its grievance redressal mechanism, the name and contact details of its Grievance officer at an appropriate place on its website or interface, as the case may be;
- (iii) ensure that such Officer takes a decision on every grievance or complaint received by it within fifteen days and communicate the same to the complainant within the stipulated time;
- (iv) be a member of a self-regulating body and abide by its terms and conditions.

(2) The Officer referred to in sub-rule (1) shall –

- (i) be the contact point for receiving any grievance or complaint relating to Programme Code and Advertising Code;
- (ii) act as the nodal point for interaction with the complainant, the self-regulating body and the Central Government.
- (3) The broadcaster shall comply with every advisory, guidance, order or direction issued under this rule by the self-regulating body or by the Central Government, as the case may be.

18. Self-regulation by the self-regulating body of broadcasters. – (1) There may be one or more self-regulatory body of broadcasters, being an independent body constituted by the broadcasters or its association:

Provided that every such self-regulating body shall be constituted by a minimum of forty broadcasters.

- (2) Every self-regulating body referred to in sub-rule (1) shall be headed by a retired judge of the Supreme Court or of a High Court or an independent eminent person from the field of media, broadcasting, entertainment, child rights, human rights or such other relevant fields, and shall have other members, preferably not exceeding six, being independent experts in the field of media, broadcasting, entertainment, child rights, human rights and such other relevant fields.
- (3) The self-regulating body shall, after its constitution in accordance with sub-rule (2), register itself with the Central Government within a period of thirty days from the date of publication of these rules, or within thirty days from the date of its constitution, whichever is earlier:

Provided that before granting registration to the self-regulating body, the Central Government shall satisfy itself that the self-regulating body has been constituted in accordance with sub-rule (2) and has agreed to perform the functions specified in sub-rules (4) and (5).

- (4) The self-regulating body shall perform the following functions, namely: -
 - (i) oversee and ensure the alignment and adherence by the broadcaster to the Programme Code and the Advertising Code;
 - (ii) provide guidance to the broadcaster on various aspects of the Programme Code and the Advertising Code;
 - (iii) dispose of grievances which have not been disposed of by the broadcaster within the specified period of fifteen days;
 - (iv) hear appeals filed by the complainant against the decision of the broadcaster;
 - (v) issue such guidance or advisories to a broadcaster, including those specified in sub-rule (5), for ensuring compliance to the Programme Code and the Advertising Code.
- (5) A self-regulating body while disposing complaint or an appeal referred to in sub-rule (4) may issue the following guidance or advisories to the broadcaster, namely: -
 - (i) advisory, warning, censure, admonish or reprimand; or
 - (ii) an apology to be telecast by the broadcaster; or
 - (iii) include a warning card or a disclaimer; or
 - (iv) in case of any content where it is satisfied that there is a need for taking action to delete or modify content, refer it to the Central Government for the consideration of the oversight mechanism referred to in rule 19 for appropriate action.
- (6) Where the self-regulating body is of the opinion that there is no violation of the Programme Code or the Advertising Code, it shall convey such decision to the complainant and the broadcaster.
- (7) Where the broadcaster fails to comply with the guidance or advisory of the self-regulating body within the time specified in such guidance or advisory, the self-regulating body shall refer the matter to the Oversight Mechanism referred to in rule 19 within fifteen days of expiry of the stipulated period.

19. Oversight Mechanism. - (1) The Central Government shall coordinate and facilitate the adherence to the Programme Code and the Advertising Code by the broadcaster, develop an Oversight Mechanism, and perform the following functions, namely: -

- (i) publish a charter for self-regulating bodies, including Codes of Practices for such bodies;
- (ii) establish an Inter-Departmental Committee for hearing grievances or complaints;
- (iii) refer to the Inter-Departmental Committee grievances or complaints arising out of the decision of the self-regulating body under rule 17, or if no decision has been taken by the self-regulating body within the stipulated time, or on receipt of such other complaints or references relating to violation of Programme Code or Advertising Code as it may consider necessary;
- (iv) issue appropriate guidance and advisories to broadcasters;
- (v) issue appropriate orders and directions to broadcasters for maintenance and adherence to the Programme Code and the Advertising Code;
- (vi) take action for non-compliance of its orders or directions and that of the self-regulating body.

20. Inter-Departmental Committee. - (1) The Central Government shall constitute an Inter-Departmental Committee, chaired by the Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Defence, and representatives of such other Ministries and Organisations, including experts, as the Central Government may decide.

- (2) The Inter-Departmental Committee shall devise its own procedure for hearing grievances or complaints.
- (3) The Committee shall meet periodically and hear complaints regarding violation or contravention of the Programme Code and the Advertising Code that may -
 - (i) arise out of appeal against the decisions taken at the Level I or Level II, as the case may be, or where no such decision is taken within the specified time;
 - (ii) be referred to it by the Central Government.
- (4) The Inter-Departmental Committee shall examine complaints or grievances received by it and make any of the following recommendations to the Central Government, namely: -
 - (i) advising, warning, censuring, admonishing or reprimanding such broadcaster; or
 - (ii) requiring an apology of such broadcaster; or
 - (iii) requiring such broadcaster to include a warning card or a disclaimer; or
 - (iv) requiring such broadcaster to delete or modify content or take the channel or a programme off-air for a specified time period where it is satisfied that such action is warranted, for reasons to be recorded in writing.
- (5) The Central Government may, after taking into consideration the recommendations of the Committee, issue appropriate orders and directions under sub-section (3) of section 20 of the Act for compliance by the broadcaster.

21. Disclosure of Information. - (1) A self-regulating body and a broadcaster shall make true and full disclosure of all grievances or complaints received by it, the manner in which the complaints are disposed of, the action taken on such complaints, the reply sent to the complainant, the orders or directions received by it and action taken on such orders or directions.

- (2) The information referred to in sub-section (1) shall be placed in public domain, and updated quarterly.
- (3) Subject to any law for the time being in force, the broadcaster shall preserve record of the content telecast by it for a minimum period of ninety days and make it available to the self-regulating body or the Central Government, or any other Central Government agency as may be requisitioned by it.

[F. No. N-3104/29/2003-BC-III]

VIKRAM SAHAY, Jt. Secy.