

## **MINIMUM WAGES ACT, 1948**

This Act aims at securing minimum rates of wages in those categories of employment where wages are low, in order to prevent exploitation of unorganized labour. It also lays down the procedure for regulating the hours of work and payment of wages, including overtime, so far as to ensure prompt payment, and specifies the deductions that can be made from the wages of the Workers. So far as Railway Administrations are concerned, the Minimum Wages Act applies to casual workmen in employment:-

- i) on the construction or maintenance of roads or in building operations ;
- ii) in stone breaking or stone crushing.
- iii) employment in the maintenance of building ; and
- iv) employment in loading and unloading in Railways goods sheds, Store-houses.

The Act holds the employer in-charge as responsible for payment of wages to persons employed under him and any Contractor is responsible to the person he employs. The important provisions made in the Rules framed under the Act are as follows:

**(a)**Wage periods should be fixed for the payment of wages at intervals not exceeding one month or such other larger period as may be prescribed;

**(b)**Wages should be paid on a working day, within 7 days of the end of the wage period or within 10 days, if 1,000 or more persons are employed;

**(c)**The wages of persons discharged should be paid not later than the second working day after the discharge but the retrenchment compensation due, if any, shall be paid at the time the of retrenchment of the workmen concerned in accordance with the provisions of the industrial Dispute Act, 1947 ;

**(d)** the wages of an employed person should be paid to him without deductions of any kind except those authorized under the Act.

**HOURS OF WORK:-** The hour of work for adult, not more than 9 hours a day and shall not be spared for more than 12 hrs., and child not more than 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>hours it should not exceeds 48 hrs. in a week. If an employee works more than the maximum limits fixed for daily working hrs., he shall be paid over time allowance at double the normal rate of wages.

**MINIMUM WAGES FIXATION:-**The rate of wages admissible to workers in the various localities are fixed by the Central Govt., Ministry of Labour and are to be reviewed by the authority at suitable intervals not exceeding 05 years. This rates, if appear to be less than prevailing rates in the locality, are also reviewed by Rly. Admn. (Mostly at Divisional level) from time to time i.e. yearly.

**METHOD OF PAYMENT:-**The wage period should be fixed not exceeding 01 month. The wages shall be paid on working day of the end of the wage period or within seven days at the end of the wages period where less than 1,000 persons are employed or within 10 days where more than 1,000 persons are employed.

**OVERTIME** :- Where a worker governed under M.W.Act works on any day in excess of the maximum number of hours of work fixed i.e. 9 hrs per day or 48 hrs. per week, he will be paid for such excess hrs. at double the ordinary rate of wages.

**REGISTER TO BE MAINTAINED**:- The following registers are to be maintained;-

- a) Register of wages,
- b) Muster Roll,
- c) Register of overtime,
- d) Damage or loss register and
- e) Register of fines.