

Revised Guidelines for Grant of Guide Licence for Regional Level Guides by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India

1. Introduction:

Guides play a vital role in bringing satisfaction to tourists visiting a country or region/state. The opportunity of direct interaction with the tourists makes them all the more responsible for projecting the correct image of the country/region, giving factually correct information about the destination, ensuring the safety and well being of the tourists as well as pleasant and satisfying stay for them during their visits.

The institution of guides is a basic component of the infrastructural requirement both for International and Domestic tourism. There has been a steady increase in the international tourist arrivals. Further, as a result of increasing affluence, there is also a significant increase in domestic tourist movement. In order to meet the increasing demand for guides both for international and domestic tourists, it has been decided to introduce a regional level guide training course, both original and refresher on a regular basis to train and induct guides so as to serve different market segments. The guidelines for the Regional level Guide Training Course are as under:

1. **(a)** Regional level guides shall be trained by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India through the Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (IITM) or their chapters or any other recognized institute in coordination with the concerned Regional Director and Indiatourism offices located in that region.

(b) Part-Time Guide:-

In order to encourage scholars, linguists and proven experts from the fields of Indian history, architecture, and culture to join this profession there would be a special category of regional level guides known as Part-Time guides. These guides would have academic qualifications of doctorate levels or have published papers in their specialized fields of activity at national/international levels.

Since there are acute shortages of guides speaking some of the foreign languages such as Chinese, Russian, Korean, Thai, Arabic, Hungarian, Polish, Hebrew etc., linguists with specialized qualifications/proven skill and fluency in these languages may also be approved under this category. Guides under this category could hold regular employment in any other field other than in shopping

establishments. They would however, undergo an abridged special training of 8 weeks successfully before they are certified as guides.

2. Frequency of guide training courses/refresher courses and Procedure for induction of guides.

(a) The guide training course would be held by IITTM minimum once in two years. IITTM would conduct refresher courses initially once in three years and subsequently after every five years, which will be mandatory to attend by licensed guides. The licensed guides would be required to successfully pass the refresher courses for renewal of their licenses.

The main emphasis for training these guides would not only be to cover touristic aspects of the States within the region, but also to impart fair knowledge of social, political and economic policies etc., of the entire country as per syllabus evolved by IITTM.

3. The guide Training courses will be advertised in select media by IITTM on behalf of Ministry of Tourism.

4. Educational qualification & Age Limit

The following educational qualifications and age limit are prescribed for the direct selection of guides:

- (i) Minimum: Graduate of a recognized University or three years degree holder in tourism/ Hospitality from a recognized University/Institute or Diploma in Archaeology from the Institute of Archaeology under the Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi or from any other recognized Institution/University.
- (ii) Fluency in English language is essential.
- (iii) Preference would be given to candidates having knowledge and fluency in a non-English foreign language. Candidates should have completed at least a six month regular course in the foreign language from a recognized university/approved institution/the Embassy or consulate concerned or their cultural centre.
- (iv) For the category of part-time guides holding employment in any field:

- a) Doctorate level qualifications in Indian History/Architecture/Culture or scholars/experts who have papers published in national/international journals of repute.
- b) Linguists with proven skills, proficiency and fluency in languages in which there are acute shortages of guides. They should either hold certificates/diplomas as mentioned at (iii) above or pass a written exam and oral test conducted by the Ministry of Tourism through IITTM. A lecturer/professor of the language concerned at the local university and an official of the embassy concerned would be members on the selection panel among others.

(v) Age Limit

- (i) The applicant should be at least 20 years of age on the date of the first advertisement appearing in the media for selection of guides.

5. Selection for Guide Training course

Candidates desiring to work as Regional Level Guides will have to be regular residents of any one of the States that come under the jurisdictions of the Regional Director where the Guide training course is to be held and proof of domicile will have to be submitted at the time of application.

Screening of applications:

- (a) A Screening committee consisting of Director, IITTM or his representative, Director Tourism of the State or his representative and representatives from Indian Association of Tour Operators and Travel Agents Association of India will be set up in order to screen the applicants. All applicants who fulfill the qualifications shall appear in a written test which will be confined primarily to the following subjects:
 - (i) Knowledge of monuments/tourism destinations around the area 50 marks
 - (ii) Questions on history 50 marks
 - (iii) General Knowledge 100 marks.

The candidates scoring at least a minimum of 50 percent marks in written test will be selected for training programme.

6. Guide Training Courses

(a) **Duration:** The duration of the Guide Training course would be as follows:

(i) 16 weeks training (theoretical + practical)

Once a candidate is selected for the training, it will be the responsibility of the training authorities to equip him/her with all kinds of knowledge as per the syllabus laid down by IITM.

(ii) The guide training course will be for a period of 16 weeks. Eminent Lecturers/Professors will be engaged or requisitioned to give talks on the subjects as listed in the syllabus.

(b) **Written Examination at the end of training programme:**

On completion of the training course, a written examination of 100 marks would be held on subjects covered by the entire syllabus during the training course and the guide -trainees must secure minimum 50% marks.

(c) **Viva-Voce at the end of training programme:**

After completion of the written examination the candidate will undergo a viva voce test where his guiding skills, knowledge of the monuments/destinations fluency etc. would be tested, and in order to come out successfully a candidates has to secure minimum of 50% marks in the viva voce test also.

(d) **Supplementary Examination for candidates who fail in the viva voce after attending the training programme:**

In case the candidate does not secure 50% in viva-voce in the final examination after training: he would be given two opportunities to appear at an interval of three months' each, failing which no license would be issued to him/her. Then he will have to reappear in written as well as interview.

(e) Attendance:

A minimum of 80 per cent attendance would be essential before taking the final examination. However, relaxation up to 5% can be given by the Director, IITTM in genuine cases of sickness, specific family circumstances or other-wise satisfactory reasons.

(f) Practical Training

- (i) Special practical training as well as visits to important landmarks, places of interest etc. in the region will be organized for a minimum period of 1 week.
- (ii) During the training course frequent group discussions shall be arranged to improve their interactive and relational abilities.

(g) Verification of antecedents:

Prior to issuing of guiding licence the candidates will have to undergo a verification of their antecedents from their local police station and any adverse report will lead to immediate disqualification of the candidate.

7. Issuance of Guide Licence & renewal

On successful completion of their training course the Regional Level Guides would be issued guide Licence by the Regional Indiatourism Office, Government of India.

The trained guide will be given a guide Licence valid for a period of 03 years by the Indiatourism Office for Regional Level Guides. These will be renewed every three years and would be subject to their performance and other conditions which may stipulate the need for their appearance and passing in refresher courses. The refresher course would be initially organized once in three years and later every five years. The guide must submit the card for renewal 30 days prior to date of expiry of its validity.

8. Other Conditions

Preference will be given to candidates who are not employed except those recruited under the category of part time guides

Guides can take-up full time/ part-time employment with Tour operators/ travel Agents/ Hotels/ Airlines/Service providers except shopping establishments.

9. Signing of Regulatory Terms and Conditions:

Regional Level guides will be required to sign their acceptance and observance of rules and regulations as prescribed by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India in the Terms and Conditions regulating the conduct and performance of Approved Guides prior to their being issued a guide license (Annexure-I).

10. Cancellation of Guide Licence:

Regional Level Guides who violate the conditions will be de-recognized by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and their guide license will stand cancelled.

11. Course fee:

The selected candidates will be required to pay the course fee including examination fee. The fees will be decided by the IITM. The fee structure may vary from course to course. This would also include the fee for issue of guide licence. The fees thus collected would be non-refundable.

The fees for renewal of identity cards/licence and issue of duplicate Identity Card will be determined by the Regional Director in consultation with the Ministry of Tourism.

12. Transfer of Guides

No transfer will be permitted for a period of 5 years after completing the course. Thereafter, the request for transfer from one region to another can be considered only when they undergo a refresher course and pass the written examination conducted by the Director, IITM, for the region to which transfer is sought.

The guides will not be required to seek transfer from one place to another within the same region as they will be eligible to operate in the entire designated region irrespective of the place where they have been issued guide licence. However, they will be eligible to pick up assignments only from the place/state mentioned in the guide licence issued to them.

The number of transfers from one region to another would be limited to two in the entire life time.

13. Guide Fees:

The fees to be charged by the guides will be fixed / revised from time to time by the Tourist Guide Federation of India (TGFI) in consultation with IATO/TAAI representatives.

14. Identity Cards:

The identity card for Regional Level guide would be in the specific colour as per the colour schemes predetermined by the Ministry of Tourism.

15. Jurisdiction

The area of operation of the Regional-Level guides would be as under:

(i) Northern Region

Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Union Territory of Chandigarh.

(i) Southern Region

Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Union Territory of Pondicherry, Lakshadweep.

(ii) Western Region

Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chattishgarh, Gujarat, Goa, Union Territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu.

(iii) Eastern Region

West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

(iv) North-Eastern Region

Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland , Sikkim & Tripura.

The jurisdiction of each region mentioned above would consist of the States/Union Territories, which are covered by the respective Regional Office of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

- 16. Retirement:** There will be no retirement age prescribed for guides. However, after the attaining the age of 65 they have to undergo a physical-cum-mental fitness test before their license is renewed.
- 17. Guide Licence for Retired Employees of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India/India Tourism Development Corporation/Archaeological Survey of India:**

All Retired Employees of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India/India Tourism Development Corporation/Archaeological Survey of India/State Tourism Departments and State Tourism Corporations would also have to appear for the written test and follow the guidelines.

18. Note:

The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India reserves the right to issue clarifications, modify or amend the guidelines without assigning any reasons, from time to time.

Shoeb/TT-MOT/2007

Annexure - I

Terms and conditions regulating the conduct and performance of Approved Guides

1. The approved guide will wear on his person the laminated card issued to him/her by the Ministry of Tourism and also wear the name tag while accompanying tourists.
2. The approved guide will not lend his/her identity card or any other document which may have been issued to him/her by the Ministry of Tourism to any other person(s). Any violation of his rule will make him/her liable to disciplinary action and withdrawal of the license granted to him/her.
3. In case of loss or damage to the identity card the guide will immediately inform the tourist office concerned and the nearest police station. He will apply afresh for the duplicate card on the basis of first information report and statement that the card has been lost. The guide will be responsible for the safe custody of the identity card/license.

A nominal fee to be determined by the concerned Regional Director in consultation with the Department of Tourism from time to time will be charged for issue of duplicate ID Cards.

4. The guide will not solicit tips or testimonials from tourist. In cases where the foreign travel agent of his own accord includes gratuity for the guide in payments, the guide will be entitled for gratuity in addition to his normal fees. The guide will not solicit any kind of testimonials or valuable material or other wise such as free passage overseas, scholarships or subscriptions to any religious classes, etc. for himself/herself or any other person in his/her family dependent on him/her.
5. The approved guide will dress in a presentable manner to uphold the dignity and honour of the profession to which he/she belongs and of the country.
6. The guides will charge guide fees to be fixed from time to time by Tourist Guides Federation of India in consultation with Indian Association of Tour Operators.
7. The guide will not canvass business of any kind on behalf of the business houses, travel agents, hoteliers, paying-guest houses, shop-keepers,

transport operators, etc. nor he would accept commission from them or indulge in any other unethical practices.

8. The guide will not enter into any other business arrangements with any of the establishments either by way of partnership or on commission basis.
9. Guides can take up employment with Tour operators/ Travel Agents/ Hotels/ Airlines/ Service providers except shopping establishments. Guides found to be canvassing for shopping establishments like shops selling handicrafts etc., the guide license stands cancelled with immediate effect.
10. The guide will take tourists only for sightseeing to monuments and public buildings, which are part of the sightseeing tour included in the itinerary of the tourists. Under no circumstances should any guide accompany the tourists to shops. In case any guide is found to have contravened this provision his license will be cancelled.
11. The guide will not refuse without valid reasons any assignments given to him/her by the tourist Offices of the Central/State Governments or other agencies such as travel agents /tour operators/hoteliers,etc.
12. The guide will not act as driver for the vehicle while acting as guide.
13. The guide will maintain good conduct and courteous behavior towards tourists or other officials with whom he/she comes into contact during the course of his/her assignment.
14. The guide will be liable to following penalties in case of late arrival:-
 - (a) First late arrival warning in writing.
 - (b) Second late arrival deduction of 25% of fees.
 - (c) Third late arrival disqualification for one month when the second and third late arrivals are within a period of six months.
 - (d) Total absence-disqualification for a period of three months.

Note: The above penalty will apply to a guide who after having accepted an assignment does not report for duty at all except in such cases where late arrival/absence was due to circumstances beyond his/her control. In such cases if the Regional Director/Director/Manager concerned is not satisfied with the explanation given by the guide, he is fully empowered to withdraw the identity card and name tag issued to the guide. Complaints regarding habitual late arrivals for assignments, etc. will be viewed seriously and can lead to cancellation/withdrawal of approval.

15. The guide will accept all assignments including those for FIT's, groups, coach tours, excursion, etc. These will be accepted as per the rules and on prescribed proforma.
16. The guide will submit a quarterly statement indicating the number of assignments handled including handling of VIPs, groups, FITs in the prescribed proforma.
17. An approved guide will be compulsorily required to attend any short-term training, refresher courses that may be directed by the Indiatourism Office concerned Director, IITM from time to time.
18. The guide will be required to submit a medical certificate of fitness on entry into the profession and thereafter whenever required by the Indiatourism Office.
19. Absence of more than one month from the guiding profession must be reported to the Tourist Office in writing.
20. The guide will report to the Indiatourism Office in the event of their trips abroad for a period exceeding three weeks.
21. The identity card of a guide who is arrested by the police for offence of misconduct involving moral turpitude shall be withdrawn during the pendency of the case against him/her. In the event of his conviction by a court of law the identity card will be forfeited forthwith.
22. The guide will be responsible for warning foreign tourists against taking photographs of places which are prohibited by law or which may reflect adversely the country's image.
23. On receipt of any complaint against an approved Regional Level Guide, the concerned Indiatourism Office will issue a show cause notice to the said guide giving him/her an opportunity to submit a representation in defense of the allegations leveled against him/her within a period of 30 days from the date of receipt of show cause notice. In such cases, the show cause notice by the concerned Director/Manager of Indiatourism Office would be issued with the prior approval of the concerned Regional Director.

The final decision on such representation would be made with the prior approval of Additional Director General, Ministry of Tourism,

Government of India within 45 days from the date of receipt of the reply to the show cause notice.

In case the guide is found guilty, his/her Identity Card shall be suspended for a period of six months.

In case any guide is held guilty for the 2nd time his/her identity card shall be suspended for one year and in case of 3rd default, the identity card shall be withdrawn permanently. However, final decision on all such occasions would rest with the Additional Director, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

24. The approved guide will accept assignments only to the region for which a guiding license has been granted by the Indiatourism Office. He will be entitled to accompany tour groups on all-India basis as on escort on payment of fees by travel agents to be mutually negotiated. On escort duty, a guide will only conduct sight-seeing of monuments under the area of jurisdiction which will be spelled out in his guiding license. At all other places the services of approved guides of that relevant region/area shall have to be engaged.
25. If a guide remains absent from active guiding service for a period exceeding two years due to reasons of health, absence from country, etc. he/she shall be deemed to have left the profession and in that event the identity card/license issued to the guide shall stand cancelled. However, in case a guide wants to rejoin the profession after an absence of up to 2 years he/she will have to undergo a refresher course to be conducted by IITTM or its chapters in coordination with the Ministry of Tourism will determine the fee for the refresher course.
26. The guide will abide by the existing rules and any other rules and conditions that may be framed from time to time by the Ministry of Tourism and the Archaeological survey of India, failing which the identity card issued to his/her shall be withdrawn.

"I hereby solemnly agree to abide by and accept all the above 'Terms & Conditions". I have also read and understood the 'Code of Ethics for Tourist Guides' annexed hereto and I undertake to uphold them faithfully in the discharge and conduct of my profession."

Place :

Date :

Signature :

Code of ethics for Tourist Guides

The Tourist Guide shall always be aware of projecting a good and positive image of India adhering to the ancient Indian concept of "Atithi Devo Bhava".

The Tourist Guide shall consider himself a friend of the tourists, be courteous and helpful and never betray the trust placed in them by the tourists and carry out his ethical and moral responsibilities with dignity.

The Tourist Guide will, therefore, bear in mind that "word of mouth" publicity and comments have a tremendous impact on the creation of an image for the country. This is several times more valuable than the most expensive advertisement that can be put out.

The Tourist Guide will always be courteous, efficient, tactful, kind understanding and project the warm and hospitable nature of Indians.

The Tourist Guide will ensure that he will give correct and all possible information of the latest developments in the country and keep himself up to date. He will understand and convey the positive aspects of his culture and tradition, and be well versed with matters relating to local customs, habits and traditions to ensure that both the tourists and the local people respect each other.

The Tourist Guide will always be punctual, well groomed, presentably dressed, well mannered, sober and cultured. His dedication and conduct should ensure that the image of the profession or that of the country is never tarnished.

The Tourist Guide shall at all times be reliable with the entrusted duties and be of exemplary conduct, not only, in dealing with tourists but, with others such as Govt. Officers and members of the public.

The Tourist Guide shall refrain from unethical or discriminatory conduct and deal with propriety and impeccable honesty. He will refrain from entering into shady deals for monetary and other gains nor will he intentionally mislead the tourists.

The Tourist Guide shall refrain himself from all possible arguments and remember that the customer is always right.

The Tourist Guide shall uphold his/her status and reputation with a view to foment closer cooperation, understanding and collaboration with his/her counterparts through out India.

The Tourist Guide will respect and safeguard our heritage, monuments and ecology.