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GOVERNMENT OF PUNJAB
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
(WORKS BRANCH)
NOTIFICATION

The 24th September, 2026

No.WR-IRWR014/2/2026-IW2/461.-Whereas the Punjab Canal and Drainage Act, 2023 (Punjab Act No. 11 of 2023) has been enacted to regulate irrigation, navigation and drainage in the State of Punjab;

And whereas Section 51 of the Punjab Canal and Drainage Act, 2023 empowers the State Government, by notification published in the Official Gazette, to establish Water Users' Associations (WUAs) with the objective of inculcating a sense of ownership amongst stakeholders and to assist the Canal Officers in matters specified therein;

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 51 of the Punjab Canal and Drainage Act, 2023 (Punjab Act No. 11 of 2023), and all other powers enabling him in this behalf, the Governor of Punjab is pleased to establish Water Users' Associations for the Canal outlets in the State of Punjab in accordance with the following provisions:

1. Short title and commencement

- (1) This notification may be called the "Punjab Water Users' Associations Notification, 2026."
- (2) It shall come into force on and with effect from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

2. Establishment of Water Users' Associations

- (1) Water Users' Associations shall be established for the appropriate levels of the canal system, comprising the water users/shareholders falling within the command area served by the concerned canal, distributary, minor, outlet, watercourse or other irrigation system, as may be determined by the competent Canal Officer.
- (2) The jurisdiction, area of operation and membership of each Water Users' Association shall be determined with reference to the culturable command area (CCA) of the concerned outlet.

3. Functions of Water Users' Associations

- (1) Subject to the provisions of the Punjab Canal and Drainage Act, 2023 and the Punjab Canal and Drainage Rules, 2025 and the orders issued thereunder, every Water Users' Association may assist the concerned Canal Officers in the following matters:
 - (a) Resolution of disputes amongst shareholders;
 - (b) Preparation of water conservation plans and promotion of efficient use of surface water;
 - (c) Recommendation of maintenance schedules for water bodies;
 - (d) Identification and assistance in removal of encroachments from canal infrastructure;

- (e) Recommendation of schedules for release of water in canals;
- (f) Facilitating the use of village ponds and drains for irrigation purposes, wherever permissible under rule 22 of the Punjab Canal and Drainage Rules, 2025;
- (g) Identification of sources of pollution affecting canal systems, water bodies or irrigation water and taking appropriate action in coordination with the concerned authorities; and
- (h) Implementation of warabandi.

(2) Without prejudice to sections 15 and 19 of the Punjab Canal and Drainage Act, 2023, every Water Users' Association shall maintain the watercourses, field channels, field drains and structures falling within its jurisdiction.

4. Assistance to Canal Officers

- (1) The Water Users' Associations shall assist the concerned Canal Officers in the discharge of their statutory functions and shall facilitate coordination between the Department of Water Resources and the water users and shareholders.
- (2) The Water Users' Associations shall provide local-level information, recommendations and assistance to the Canal Officers in matters relating to distribution, conservation, maintenance and efficient utilization of canal water.
- (3) Nothing contained in this notification shall be construed as conferring upon a Water Users' Association any power, authority or jurisdiction which is vested by the Punjab Canal and Drainage Act, 2023 in a Canal Officer or any other authority.

5. Dispute resolution

- (1) The Water Users' Associations shall endeavour to facilitate amicable resolution of disputes amongst shareholders at the local level.
- (2) Where a matter requires determination by a statutory authority under the Punjab Canal and Drainage Act, 2023, the Water Users' Association shall refer the matter to the Competent Canal Officer for appropriate action.

6. Meetings and records

- (1) Every Water Users' Association shall maintain proper records of its meetings, decisions, recommendations, water distribution-related matters and other activities undertaken under this notification.
- (2) The records shall be made available to the concerned Canal Officer whenever required.

7. Supervision and guidance

- (1) The Water Users' Associations shall function under the overall guidance and supervision of the concerned Canal Officers.
- (2) The Canal Officers may issue such directions, consistent with the Punjab Canal and Drainage Act, 2023 and the rules made thereunder, as may be necessary for effective functioning of the Water Users' Associations.

8. Constitution and further procedure

Out of the total number of farmers in the command of the water course minimum 51% shall be the members of the Water Users' Association (WUA), covering 51% of the command of the WUA. Accordingly, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) shall be executed between the concerned Divisional Canal Officer and the WUA. The Water Users' Association shall be registered as a corporate body under the applicable Co-operative Act or as a Society Act of the State.

Sd/-

KRISHAN KUMAR, IAS

Principal Secretary to Government of Punjab,
Department of Water Resources.

Chandigarh

The 23rd September, 2026

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