

CHILD FRIENDLY TOURISM CODE FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Over a decade ago the Goa Children's Act, 2003 was passed to safeguard the rights of all the children residing in Goa. This Act is a unique law that looks at children holistically. The Act has specific provisions with regards to tourism related child sexual abuse. It prohibits adults from keeping unrelated children with them and entrusts hotels with the responsibility of ensuring that no child is abused in the hotel premises. As per section 8 (22) of the Goa Children's Act the Tourism Department shall evolve a Child Friendly Tourism Code for the State of Goa to ensure that all children are protected at tourist destinations.

Tourism is the mainstay of Goa economy. A large number of foreign and Indian tourists visit Goa every year. The Department is concerned about ensuring that tourism is conducted in a responsible manner and that children are not adversely affected by tourism. The frequent reports about children being used for beggary, child labour and commercial sexual exploitation raise concerns about the affected children while adversely affecting the reputation of tourism. The Department would also like to ensure the protection of children of tourists. The Tourism Department would like to formulate a Code in order to protect children in the State of Goa.

Recognizing that the tourism infrastructure and facilities can be used to exploit women and children in various forms, the Union Ministry of Tourism along with all stakeholders, including the tourism departments of all states adopted the Code of Conduct for Safe and Honorable Tourism on 1st July 2010. The Code included certain safety measures pertaining to children and women in tourism. It is a set of guidelines to encourage tourism activities to be undertaken respecting the basic rights of women and children to dignity, safety and freedom from exploitation. By developing and adopting the Code the Tourism Department is committed towards practicing tourism in a socially responsible manner.

Features of the code

This code comprises guidelines to ensure that children are protected at all times in the tourism industry.

1. This Code will ensure that the tourism activities will be undertaken, keeping in mind the rights of the child as per the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child thereby upholding the dignity, ensuring the safety and protection of children and freedom from exploitation of *all* children who may be impacted by tourism in any way i.e. children of tourists, locals or the itinerant workers.
2. The Code will include training of staff in the tourism industry. All hoteliers, tour operators, shack owners, guest house owners, taxi drivers, life guards, tourist police and all other stakeholders related to the tourism industry will be provided information on different laws, child protection and child friendly procedures to be used while dealing with children.
3. The Code will include measures to prevent prostitution, sex tourism, child beggary, child labour and all forms of sexual exploitation to safeguard the safety of children.

Role and Responsibilities

- Messages to be displayed on the board by Department of Tourism at tourist locations on keeping children safe.
- Information to be provided to travelers by means of positive messages in their in-house magazines, brochures, pamphlets, and other material of the Tourism Department. These pamphlets may be distributed at the airports and other tourist destinations.
- Trainings to be organized for different stakeholders like taxi owners, shack owners, hoteliers, airport authorities in collaboration with Police, Panchayats, the Women and Child Development Department and other government departments.
- A message to be included on the boards displayed by the Department of Tourism at tourist locations like airports, shacks, hotels, guest houses on

keeping children safe along with the number of the Goa Police or Childline so that cases could be reported.

- The Tourism Department to display messages on child protection with contact numbers of Goa Police and Childline at Sulabh toilets.
- The website of the Tourism Department to create awareness on keeping children safe through the messages it displays.
- The Department to ensure that all parks, play areas on beaches and other tourist destinations are safe for children. The contact numbers of Police and Childline will be displayed in these areas.
- Inspections to be carried out at tourist destinations to ensure that no child is employed by any of the stakeholders of the tourism industry with the help of the Police /Tourist Police.
- Awareness to be created among Indian and foreign tourists not to encourage children to beg by giving money to them and not to buy items from child vendors on the beaches or any tourist destinations.
- IEC material related to child abuse, child labour, trafficking, serving alcohol to minors to be printed and distributed to the different stakeholders like shack owners, hoteliers, tour operators, life guards and other stakeholders to be displayed at tourist places.
- Awareness to be spread by the Tourism Department through radio, television, social media, mobile apps etc

Applicability

- This code shall be applicable to the Tourism Department, all stakeholders in the tourism industry including shack owners, taxi owners, guest houses, small and medium establishments, hoteliers, tour operators, taxi drivers of the Tourism Department, travel agents, tour operators, life guards, tourist police, hotels and organizations running water sport activities, any other stakeholder directly related to the tourism industry.
- By developing and signing the Code the Tourism Department is committed to socially responsible and child friendly tourism.

- The Tourism Department has agreed upon this Code which is against commercial sexual exploitation or any form of abuse on children. The staff and different stakeholders of the Tourism Department will be made aware of this Code at the time of enrolment of membership or while registering with the tourism department or through presentations during meetings.
- At the time of employment of staff in the Tourism Department, they will be informed about the Child Friendly Code and its contents.
- This Code makes it mandatory for all the stakeholders in the tourism industry to sign the Child Friendly Tourism Code and obey the guidelines.

Guidelines for stakeholders in the Travel and Tourism Industry

- Hotels/ guest houses to ensure that the tourists do not leave their children unsupervised and locked in their rooms.
- Hoteliers to display posters provided by the Tourism Department on child protection and safety at the entrance of their hotels.
- Hoteliers /guest house owners to report any case of suspected travelling sex offender or if the hotelier suspects any suspicious behaviour of the guest towards the child it shall report the matter to the nearest police station.
- Boards and posters to be displayed at the entrance of shacks on child protection, stating that child labour is illegal.
- Boards /stickers /posters with a child friendly message provided by the Department of Tourism to be displayed by shops, different transport facilities, travel agencies, tour operators railways, rent a bike-car agents, cybercafés, lifeguards, etc.
- Shack owners to prevent any child from entering their shacks if he/she is a child labourer and using the shack or the area outside the shack to work e.g. selling items, making mehndi designs or tattoos, massage, performing circus acts etc. Such cases should be brought to the notice of Childline or authorities like the Child Welfare Committee.
- Taxi owners and all taxis of the Tourism Department to display messages of child protection on their vehicles.
- Shack owners to display posters on child abuse /child labour provided by the Tourism Department on their shacks. These posters shall be given to the shack owners during shack allotment.
- Shacks / restaurants /shops not to serve alcohol, cigarettes and substances including tobacco and gutka to minors.

- All liquor shops/bars/restaurants/shacks at tourist destinations to display posters prohibiting the sale of liquor to any minor.
- Employing of minors for water sports activities to be prohibited.
- Each association such as shack owners' associations, associations of hotel owners, taxi owners can organize awareness programs or trainings for their own staff.

**COMPILED BY CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN GOA
AND ADOPTED BY DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM.**

Certificate of Commitment



*This is to certify that this establishment is committed to
the Child Friendly Tourism Code developed by
the Travel and Tourism Association of Goa.
It is committed to the Protection of Women and Children
from commercial sexual exploitation.*

Signature