

Press Release

Identification of Eligible Persons/Families to Receive Welfare Benefits Payments 2022

The government has decided to identify eligible persons/Families to receive welfare benefit payments, as per the Section 7 (1) of Welfare Benefits Act No.24 of 2002. Accordingly, the beneficiaries who are currently receiving benefits under the welfare programs such as Samurdhi, Elderly Person, Disabled Person and Kidney Disease Livelihood Program and the families and individuals who are on the waiting list for those subsidies and all the people who are affected by the current economic crisis and seeking welfare benefits from the government, have been targeted for this program. Accordingly, it is estimated that nearly 3.9 million families will apply for this program. The program is operated under several steps.

First Step- Calling applications for the program.

The applicants should complete an application prepared in accordance with the model format given in Annexure 1 of the newspaper advertisement published in Sinhala and Tamil in two national newspapers on 30/08/2022 and submit it to their respective Divisional secretariat. The applicant shall submit an application containing the full name of the applicant, address, Telephone Number, NIC Number or other ID Number, Province, District, Divisional Secretariat, Grama Niladhari Division, information on currently benefitted welfare programs, total number of family members, and related information if the waiting list on and information if you are a new applicant. Duly filled applications should be handed over to the Divisional Secretariat through the concerned officer or by the applicant himself along with a certification from Grama/Samrudhi Development Officer or Social Service Officer or Elder Rights Promotion Officer of the respective Grama Niladhari Division.

Second Step- Systematization of applications.

Received applications should be computerized via the given link by Welfare Benefit Information Officers attached at all Divisional Secretariat Divisional level in order to deal with Welfare Benefit Information System developed by the Welfare Benefits Board. A QR code will be allocated for all the applications. Its objective is to carry out the future affairs of the system and the program in more efficient and transparent manner. It is planned to commence this step with effect from 15th September.

Third Step - Collection of data by visiting household units.

The third step is the collection of data by Field Officers (Selection Committees) attached by the Divisional Secretary to collect data at the Grama Niladhari Division level, by using a mobile app and going to the household units of the applicants with the use of their personal mobile phones (3G smart phones) and, systematization of such collected data. All the officers who collect data should be agreed to work as per the Sections 21 and 22 of Welfare Benefits Act (wrong doings by public officials and recovery in case of wrong payments). At the end of collection of data, a sheet containing of the QR Code that certifies the collection of data should be given to the applicant by field officers by setting their signature on that sheet. The applicant also needs to set his signature on the sheet that contains the QR Code to certify that accurate data was given by him. Detailed information about the applicant and family will be collected through a mobile phone application software, in relation to the selection criteria and indicators mentioned in the Gazette No. 2128/24 dated 20.06.2019 published by the Welfare Benefits Board. Once the approval of the Divisional Secretary is given for the list of the applicants whose data was collected at the divisional secretariat level, the said list will be systematized. This step of data collection at the household unit level is to be commenced island wide with effect from 30th September.

Step Four – Giving marks as per selection criteria and indicators.

Poverty calculation is formulated in a formulaic way under 6 main criteria (Education/ Health/ Economic Level/ Assets/ Housing Status/ Family Demography) and related 22 indicators mentioned in the Gazette No. 2128/24 dated 20.06.2019 published by the Welfare Benefits Board. Every applicant will be given marks as per the poverty calculation formula of the Welfare Benefit Information System. The list of those who are eligible for the payment of welfare benefits on the basis of that poverty score will be displayed at the divisional secretariat level. It is expected by the board to complete this step by 15th December.

Fifth Step - Calling of Appeals / Objections.

A public announcement on calling of objections and appeals will be made by the Board under Section 11(1) of the Welfare Benefits Act. An objection or claim can be submitted by any person or applicant against the names mentioned in the name lists displayed in the Divisional Secretariats. The Complainant/Appellant shall duly complete the objection and claim related application form and submit to the Divisional Secretariat. The Board shall appoint Appeal Committees in terms of Section 12(1) of the Welfare Benefits Act in order to inquire into objections or claims. The Appeal Committees shall inquire into the respective objections/ claims and inform the decision to the Divisional Secretary and the Board. Appeals Committees are required to follow the procedures and guidelines issued by the Board.

Sixth Step – Publishing of the Beneficiary Name List.

The final list beneficiaries eligible for welfare benefits should be submitted by the Divisional Secretary for the approval of the Welfare Benefits Board. After having the approval of the board, the list of beneficiaries selected for payment of welfare benefits will be made public.

The co-operation of all media organizations is expected to make the program of “Identification of Eligible Persons/Families to Receive Welfare Benefits Payment -2022” successful and popularize it among the community. The contribution of all media organizations is also expected to succeed in the objective of improving the state welfare concept in a more effective, efficient and transparent manner.

B. Wijayaratne
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Welfare Benefits Board

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Stakeholders- Ministry of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Provincial Councils and Local Government.
Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment
Department of Samurdhi Development
National Council and Secretariat for Elders
National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities
Department of Census and Statistics
Information and Communication Technology Agency (ICTA)