

Government suggests nine hour working day in draft labour code

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It, however, stayed away from fixing a national minimum wage to avoid trade union anger.

New Delhi: The labour ministry has suggested nine-hour regular working day in its draft wage code as against eight hours now but stayed away from fixing a national minimum wage, which may draw wrath from trade unions.

“The number of hours which shall constitute a normal working day... shall be of nine hours,” said the draft rules, floated for public opinion.

Like the Labour Code on Wages, the draft rule has left a decision on minimum wage to an expert committee.

An internal panel of the Labour ministry had said in its report in January that “the single value of the national minimum wage for India should be set at Rs.375 per day as of July 2018”. In addition to the minimum monthly wage of Rs.9,750, the seven-member panel had also suggested that a housing allowance of Rs.1,430 should be provided for city-based workers.

The draft rule will be finalised in December after it receives public comments for a month.

The country will be divided into three geographic categories – metropolitan area with a population of 40 lakh or more, non-metropolitan area with a population of 10-40 lakh and rural areas – to set the minimum wage, said the draft rules.

House rent will be 10% of the minimum wage, said the rules, without classifying whether it would be higher based on the category of the cities people live in.

The rules said that expenditure on fuel, electricity and miscellaneous items will constitute at 20% of the minimum wage.

While calculating the wage, an intake of 2,700 calories per day and 66 meters of clothing per annum for a standard family will be taken into account. These were part of the first minimum wage Calculation done in 1957