

Copyright (Amendment) Rules, 2021 notified

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- **Amendments will bring the existing rules in parity with other relevant legislations;**
- **New rules will encourage accountability and transparency**

The Government of India has notified Copyright (Amendment) Rules, 2021 vide Gazette notification under reference G.S.R. 225(E) dated 30th March, 2021. In India, the copyright regime is governed by the Copyright Act, 1957 and the Copyright Rules, 2013. The Copyright Rules, 2013 were last amended in the year 2016.

The amendments have been introduced with the objective of bringing the existing rules in parity with other relevant legislations. It aims to ensure smooth and flawless compliance in the light of the technological advancement in digital era by adopting electronic means as primary mode of communication and working in the Copyright Office. A new provision regarding publication of a copyrights journal has been incorporated, thereby eliminating the requirement of publication in the Official Gazette. The said journal would be available at the website of the Copyright Office.

In order to encourage accountability and transparency, new provisions have been introduced, to deal with the undistributed royalty amounts and use of electronic and traceable payment methods while collection and distribution of royalties. To reinforce transparency in working of copyright societies a new rule has been introduced, whereby the copyright societies will be required to draw up and make public an Annual Transparency Report for each financial year.

The amendments have harmonised the Copyright Rules with the provisions of Finance Act, 2017 whereby the Copyright Board has been merged with Appellate Board.

The compliance requirements for registration of software works have been largely reduced, as now the applicant has the liberty to file the first 10 and last 10 pages of source code, or the entire source code if less than 20 pages, with no blocked out or redacted portions.

The time limit for the Central Government to respond to an application made before it for registration as a copyright society is extended to one hundred and eighty days, so that the application can be more comprehensively examined.