



In The Pakistan Information Commission, Islamabad

Appeal No 1149-06/21

Suhaib Qaiser

(Appellant)

Vs.

Workers Welfare Fund

(Respondent)

Order

Date: August 30, 2021

Zahid Abdullah: Information Commissioner

A. The Appeal

1. The Appellant filed appeal with this commission on June 15, 2021, stating that he Submitted information request dated April 09, 2021 under the Right of Access to Information Act 2017 to the Director / Public Information Officer, Workers Welfare Fund but did not receive the requested information.
2. The Appellant on April 25, 2021 requested following information:
 - I. *“The certified copy of the latest death grant policy of the Workers Welfare Fund, Islamabad.*
 - II. *The certified copy of the latest policy regarding entitlement of deceased worker’s widowed sister for death grant.”*

B. Proceedings:

3. Through a notice dated June 25, 2021, sent to Director / Public Information Officer, Workers Welfare Fund, the Commission called upon the Respondent to submit reasons for not providing the requested information.
4. The Respondent through a letter vide No. WWF/Edu/5(15)/2021 dated July 09, 2021 submitted response which is as under:

“In response to Mr. Suhaib Qaiser’s request on 9-4-2021, the Fund Secretariat, vide its letter dated 3-5-2021 (Annex-1) provided certified copy of relevant extracts of the decisions of the Governing Body regarding death grant and its SOPs to Mr. Suhaib Qaiser. However, Mr. Suhaib Qaiser was not satisfied and requested again on 17-5-2021 to provide the correct information.

In order to recheck the information earlier provided to Mr. Suhaib Qaiser, the policies of Workers’ Welfare Fund regarding entitlement of deceased worker’s family were being re-examined by this office which caused delay in provision of the information sought again by Mr. Suhaib Qaiser. However, even after examining all relevant policies, the Fund Secretariat has come to the conclusion that the information earlier provided was correct. The reply of the same will be provided to Mr. Suhaib Qaiser shortly.”

5. Response submitted by the public body was shared with the Appellant on July 16, 2021.
6. The Appellant on August 03, 2021 submitted rejoinder to the information shared with him which is as under:

“It is regretfully conveyed that the undersigned is not satisfied with the response of the Workers Welfare Fund (WWF), Islamabad. The undersigned categorically requested the following documents:

I. The certified copy of the latest Death Grant Policy of the Workers Welfare Fund, Islamabad.

II. The certified copy of the latest policy regarding entitlement of deceased worker’s widowed sister for Death Grant.

The WWF is again and again providing wrong/misleading/irrelevant information. The undersigned is seeking the certified copy of Death Grant Policy whereas the WWF is providing SOPs for Death Grant. Similarly, the undersigned requested for the provision of certified copy of latest policy regarding entitlement of deceased worker’s widowed sister for Death Grant whereas the WWF is answering in the manner as if I had asked some question. The undersigned never requested the WWF to examine policies and give outcome/conclusion regarding entitlement of deceased worker’s widowed sister/family. The WWF is wasting time in examining and re-examining policies instead of providing the policies.

In view of foregoing, the PIO/Designated Official of the WWF may very kindly be directed to provide the requisite exact/accurate information in hard form as soon as possible.”

C. Issues

7. The question for the consideration of the commission is as under:

should a citizen have access to the certified copies of latest death grant policy of the Workers Welfare Fund, Islamabad and latest policy regarding entitlement of deceased worker’s widowed sister for death grant in accordance with the provisions of the Right of Access to Information Act 2017, hereafter referred to as Act?

D. Discussion and Commission’s View on Relevant Issues

8. This commission is of the view that both the letter and the spirit of the Right of Access to Information Act 2017 dictate the provision of certified copies of latest death grant policy of the Workers Welfare Fund, Islamabad and latest policy regarding entitlement of deceased worker’s widowed sister for death grant to the Appellant. The disclosure of the requested policies is warranted under Section 6 (a) of the Act.
9. It appears from the record available on the file that the PIO interpreted from the request for information that the Appellant has sought information about a specific case. Whereas the Appellant has sought access to the certified copy of the ‘latest policy regarding entitlement of deceased worker’s widowed sister for death grant’ framed by the Respondent and applicable in such cases.
10. This commission maintains that disclosure of the requested information will help achieve the stated objectives of Act enunciated in its Preamble which are as under:
 - a. Making government more accountable to citizens’;

- b. Greater level of participation of citizens in the affairs of the government’;
- c. ‘Reducing corruption and inefficiency’;
- d. Promoting sound economic growth’; and
- e. Promoting good governance and respect for human rights.

D. Order

- 11. The appeal is allowed. The Public Information Officer, Workers Welfare Fund, Islamabad is directed to share certified copies of latest death grant policy of the Workers Welfare Fund, Islamabad and latest policy regarding entitlement of deceased worker’s widowed sister for death grant to the Appellant The within 10 working days of the receipt of this Order, with intimation to this commission.
- 12. Copies of this order be sent to The Public Information Officer, Workers Welfare Fund and the Appellant for information and necessary action.

Mohammad Azam

Chief Information Commissioner

Fawad Malik

Information Commissioner

Zahid Abdullah

Information Commissioner

Announced on:

August 31, 2021

This order consists of 3 (three) pages, each page has been read and signed.