

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
STATE DISASTER RESPONSE AND FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

From
The Director General
State Disaster Response and Fire Services
Andhra Pradesh, Vijayawada.

To
The Registrar (Administration),
Hon'ble High Court of AP,
Amaravathi.

Rc.No.5268/Genl/2024, Dt: 13.12.2024

Dear Sir,

Sub: A.P.State Disaster Response and Fire Services Department- General Section- Infrastructure Facilities in District Judiciary -Firefighting/Disaster Response Service in District Courts premises -Regarding.

Ref: 1. ROC No.742/2024-DII(BLDGS), Dt: 02.12.2024 of the Registrar (Administration), Hon'ble High Court of AP, Amaravathi.
2. Govt.Memo No.2646448/P&F/A2/2024, Dt: 06.12.2024.

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Hon'ble Supreme Court direction in the case of **Pradyuman Bisht VS Union of India** in Para 10(i) :

"It may be ensured that emergency measures like ambulances, medical facilities and firefighting services are immediately available and modernised within court complexes and unimpeded access of such vehicles to the premises is assured at all times. This includes ensuring unhindered movement and keeping the court complex vicinity free from traffic and parking congestion"

In this connection, thank you for your attention in recognizing the hazards of fire in courts. It is widely acknowledged that all courts are susceptible to fire risks. In this regard and with references to the above cited, the District Officers of this department have been instructed to conduct inspections with respect to fire safety measures across all District Courts.

As per the information received from the districts, the inspections focused on ensuring proper access for fire vehicles, emergency exits, and the installation of fire safety systems in critical areas such as Judge's Chambers, Court Halls, and Record Rooms and computer rooms demand special attention due to their sensitive nature and potential fire hazards.

All District Courts are having Entry and Exit access to the fire vehicle and having two staircases so as to carryout firefighting operations in case of any fire accident and court buildings are within a reasonable distance from fire stations to allow fast response.

In view of the above, to mitigate the risk of fire accidents and improve fire safety, it is respectfully suggesting that the following measures be adopted in all district courts:

1) Root causes of Fire:

- (a) Electrical Short Circuit.
- (b) Kitchen with Gas Cylinders (If present).

2) Therefore, the following prevention precautionary measures are recommended.

i) Ensure Electrical Safety :

- a) Install MCBs (Miniature Circuit Breakers)
- b) Proper grounding and lightening protection.
- c) Use of FRLS cables.
- d) Install Co₂/Clean Agent/Aerosol flooding system in all electrical panels.

ii) Ensure Kitchen Safety (If applicable):

- a) Piped LPG **or** Flameless cooking **or** electrical cooking.
- b) Kitchen shall be separated from other areas with minimum one hour fire rated wall.
- c) Smoke Exhausts.
- d) Periodic checking of LPG pipes and stoves by authorized Mechanic.

iii) Ensure Exits:

Minimum two Staircases widely separated from each other for all floors. They should be pressurized and automatically closed type to provide "Smoke free" passage to all occupants of the building in case of any accident.

iv) Installation of Fire Detection and Alarm Systems:

Each district court be equipped with fire alarms and smoke detectors, particularly in high-risk areas such as the judges' chambers, record rooms, and areas with electrical equipment.

3) Fire Fighting Tools:

These tools to be useful to the occupants of the building during "**Golden hour**" to put off initial fires without any training, before the fire engine arrives which is expected to reach within 20 minutes.

a) Co₂ Extinguishers:

- 4.5 Kg Co₂ Fire Extinguishers are to be provided for every 100 Sqm in clearly marked, visible and accessible locations.

b) Water Availability:

- (i) 5 HP Plunger pumps with wheels are to be provided in each floor, connected to gravity water pipeline properly put in a visible, marked and in an accessible box. These pumps to be energized by normal electrical power and emergency power backup.
- (ii) Normal overhead tank can be used for Fire Fighting by letting fire pipe outlet @ bottom and normal water use pipeline @ middle to ensure minimum water availability for firefighting.
- (iii) In Parking or in Open Space, we can use pressure water through 8 HP pumps connected to water source and also use ABC 50 Kg trolleys to put off any vehicle fires.

c) Automatic Aerosol Extinguishers for record rooms (having valuable documents):

- i) Aerosol is highly effective in suppressing the fire in any closed room.
- ii) Aerosol fire suppression systems contain a solid chemical compound extinguishing agent, which disrupts the fire's chemical chain reaction by removing the oxidants from the burning process. It may be used without any training and is maintenance free.
- iii) Pressure less Aerosol fire extinguishers are to be provided in each room in a clearly marked, visible and accessible location.
- iv) Based on room volume, Aerosol extinguishers quantity should be derived.

4) How the above fire safety design is helpful in case of Fire accident?

In case of fire, alarm gets sounded in all parts of the building public announcement of **“not to panic.... and evacuate safely through staircase”**...

- a) The origin of fire in Court Buildings is mostly due to electrical short circuits and the preventive measure such as MCBs in each floor, Fire resistant cables will prevent such fires from happening in the first instance.
- b) The initial small fires can be put off by available CO₂ extinguishers.
- c) Initial fire during **“Golden Hour”** can be put off by using ISI certified 5 HP pumps. These pumps can be easily handled by any staff/workers without any special training.
- d) In the record room, the available Aerosol Extinguisher extinguishes the fire. And Aerosol available in other rooms may also be utilized to put off the fire by simply throwing them in to the room where fire broke out. So, throwing multiple Aerosol extinguishers would effectively put off the fire.

Therefore, the above meets the **“reasonable fire safety criteria”**

5) By implementing the above fire safety measures, we can significantly reduce the risk of fire hazards in district courts, protect lives, and safeguard important legal documents and assets. I sincerely hope these suggestions will be given due consideration.

6) In view of the above, it is requested that the above fire safety measures may be communicated to the Roads & Buildings (R&B) Department for necessary action, as they are responsible for the construction of court buildings.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

[Handwritten Signature]
13/12/2024

Director General,

State Disaster Response & Fire Services,
Andhra Pradesh, Vijayawada.

Copy submitted to the Chief Secretary to Government, A.P. Secretariat, Velagapudi, Guntur District.
Copy submitted to the Principal Secretary to Government Home (Prisons & Fire) Dept.,
A.P. Secretariat, Velagapudi, Guntur District