



**GOVERNMENT OF KERALA**

**Abstract**

Tourism Department - Crisis in the tourism industry due to the out break of COVID-19 - Tourism Houseboats Support Scheme -One time financial assistance for the maintenance of houseboats - Approved-Orders issued.

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**TOURISM (B) DEPARTMENT**

**G.O.(Rt)No.279/2020/TSM Dated,Thiruvananthapuram, 26/08/2020**

- Read:- 1). Letters No. M3-6626/2020 dated 29/07/2020 and 22.8.2020 received from the Director, Department of Tourism.
- 2). Letter No. P4-11064/2019 dated 17/08/2020 and 22.8.2020 received from the Director, Department of Tourism.

**ORDER**

Kerala Tourism has been a significant contributor to the economy of Kerala for decades with revenue of Rs 45019 crores to the sector in 2019 and providing employment to approximately 1.5 million people, directly or indirectly. However, COVID 19 virus pandemic has brought the entire tourism industry to a grinding halt with an estimated loss of Rs 20000 crores. This effect of COVID 19 is expected to affect tourism industry for more than 6 months before the tourists get enough confidence to travel.Tourism stakeholders with no business and no income for almost five months find it difficult to function without support.

2)Among the tourism products in Kerala, the backwaters and the houseboats play a major role in attracting tourists to Kerala. The houseboats provide employment to a large number of people thereby providing livelihood to their families. There are more than 1000 houseboats plying in the backwaters but are at present docked or inoperative for almost five months as a result of COVID 19 pandemic. The investments have become idle creating additional commitments in

the form of overheads and costs in bringing back houseboats to running condition. The house boat entrepreneurs require investment to bring back the houseboats to running condition addressing the damages occurred due to idling of these units in water.

3) Director Tourism as per the letters read above has forwarded a proposal of one time financial assistance to the houseboat owners for maintenance of houseboats. Financial assistance for repair and maintenance of the houseboats shall be provided in three categories up to a maximum of Rs80000, Rs100000 and Rs120000 respectively. The Guidelines regarding eligibility and procedure for implementation of the scheme is appended to this order. The validity period for applying for the financial assistance shall be till 30.11.2020.

4) The financial commitment to provide one time maintenance grant to around 1000 houseboats in different categories is estimated as Rs 9.90 crores. It is proposed that the expenditure in this regard shall be met from the head of account 3452-80-800-90(26)-33 Incentives for creation of Infrastructure facilities and Tourism products in private sector-Subsidies. The Department of Tourism requires an amount of Rs 2 crores initially to provide maintenance grant to the houseboats as initial requirement to meet the expenditure for this scheme. Director Tourism has also formulated guidelines for the one time financial assistance for the maintenance of houseboats to ensure transparency in disbursement of assistance.

5) Government have examined the matter in detail and are pleased to approve the Tourism Houseboats Support Scheme as detailed above and as per the guidelines appended to this order. Sanction is also accorded to meet the amount required to provide one time maintenance grant to the houseboats under this scheme from the subsidies plan head of account "3452-80-800-90(26)-33(P)-Incentives for Creation of Infrastructure facilities and Tourism products in the private sector".

6) Director of Tourism shall furnish to Government resumption proposal from the capital head of account "5452-01-101-99-00-34-03(P) Up gradation, Creation of Infrastructure and Amenities" to provide equivalent amount under the head of account "3452-80-800-90(26)-33(P) Incentives for Creation of Infrastructure Facilities and Tourism Products in the private sector" through additional authorization in order to meet the initial requirement of Rs.2.00 crores

towards this scheme.

7) Director of Tourism shall prepare an online portal for implementation of this scheme and should ensure that the assistance is sanctioned only to those applications which satisfies all the conditions in the guidelines.

(By order of the Governor)

**RANI GEORGE**  
**SECRETARY**

To:

The Director, Department of Tourism, Park View,  
Thiruvananthapuram.

The Principal Accountant General (A&E) Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.

The Accountant General (Audit-I&Audit-II) Kerala,  
Thiruvananthapuram.

Finance Department (Vide U.O.(F)No. 1549488/EXP.B3/211/2020-  
FIN dated 14.08.2020).

Planning & Economic Affairs Department (Vide U.O.(F) No. PLGEA-  
A2/131/2020-PLGEA dated 19.08.2020).

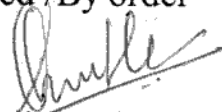
Information & Public Relations (Web & New Media)  
Department (For publishing in the Government Website). Stock  
File / Office Copy

Copy to :- PS to Minister (Tourism)

PA to Secretary (Tourism)

CA to Additional Secretary (Tourism)

Forwarded /By order

  
Section Officer

## **Guidelines in respect of COVID 19 Relief Scheme- Financial Assistance to House Boat Sector**

Kerala Tourism has been a significant contributor to the economy of Kerala for decades with revenue of Rs 45,019 crores to the sector in 2019 and providing employment to 1.5 million people (directly or indirectly). Kerala received more than 1.19 million foreign tourists and 18.4 million domestic tourists last year with an impressive annual growth of 8.52% and 17.81% respectively. However, COVID-19 virus pandemic has brought the entire Tourism industry to a grinding halt with an estimated loss of Rs 20,000 crores. The ban of all domestic and international flights, cancellation of trains and all local transport has made the Tourism industry bookings to almost zero. All the stakeholders – Tour operators, Hotels/resorts, Ayurveda centres, Home stays, Houseboats, restaurants, tourist guides, transport providers etc – are losing their daily bread due to this problem. This effect of COVID-19 is expected to hit Tourism industry for more than 6 months before the tourists get enough confidence to travel. Many of the staff in these tourism establishments are facing lay off/unpaid leave/reduced wages due to nil business and they are facing lot of hardships.

House Boats are one of the most sought after products of Kerala Tourism and there are more than one thousand house boats plying in the backwaters of Kerala. Like all other segments in the tourism industry, house boats are also facing severe setback as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. As the entire house boats are off the water for almost five months inoperative, the vessels are already exposed to severe damages. Even though urgent measures are to be taken by the owners for repair and maintenance of the house boats, they find it very difficult to mobilise money for the same at this juncture. As a token of solidarity to one of the most imperative segments of the industry, the Department of Tourism has envisaged a Financial Assistance scheme to support the house boat sector.

## 1. Purpose:-

The travel and tourism industry is one among the worst affected sectors as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown. In order to provide them a relief at a time when they are going through unparallel crisis, the Department of Tourism has initiated several schemes. House boat industry is one among the most severely affected segment and the entrepreneurs are finding it difficult to keep the vessels operational due to financial crunch. The scheme intends to provide a Financial Assistance to the houseboat owners so as to enable them to execute urgent repairs and maintenance to the assets.

## 2. Eligibility:-

Owners of house boats plying in the backwaters of Kerala provided that they satisfy the following conditions.

- a. House Boats which are having valid registration from the Port Department.
- b. Vessels which are having survey report from the Port Department with validity in between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020.
- c. Vessels should have been ready to operate on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020, but remained in-operational due to the fall in booking due to Covid-19. (Affidavit with self-certification to this effect to be submitted)

## 3. Financial Assistance from Government

The Department of Tourism will be providing a nonrefundable Financial Assistance to the house boat owners to get the vessels repaired and maintained.

As per this scheme, Financial Assistance for repair and maintenance of the house boats will be provided as follows.

Sl No	Category	Rate of financial assistance
1	House Boats with 01-02 Bed Rooms	Up to a maximum of Rs.80,000/-
2	House Boats with 03-04 Bed Rooms	Up to a maximum of Rs.1,00,000/-

3	House Boats with 05 & above Bed Rooms	Up to a maximum of Rs.1,20,000/-
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**Note:- 1. A single entity with multiple units in the category of House Boats will be eligible for a cumulative maximum of Rupees five lakhs for all the units.**

#### **4. Documents to be submitted along with the application.**

- a. Valid Registration Certificate from the Port Department, Govt of Kerala
- b. Survey Report from the Port Department having validity during the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020.
- c. Estimate for the repair & maintenance from a licensed maintenance yard/dry dock duly certified by the Asst Exe Engineer, Inland Navigation Dept/Port Officer/Surveyor of Boats.
- d. Certification by the Asst Exe Engineer, Inland Navigation Dept/Port Officer/ Surveyor of Boats that repair and maintenance as per the estimate/ bill has been done.

#### **5. Procedure of implementation**

- The establishment/beneficiary, as detailed in clause 2 above, shall file a formal application along with the required documents online to the Deputy Director, Department of Tourism of the respective District. The applicant establishment/beneficiary should submit the formal application in the online platform hosted in [www.keralatourism.org](http://www.keralatourism.org) along with the required documents.
- A committee consisting of the following members should physically verify the house boat before recommending the application to the Director, Department of Tourism.
  - a. Deputy Director, District Office, Department of Tourism (Convener)
  - b. Secretary, DTPC of the concerned District (Member)
  - c. One representative of house boat sector to be suggested by KTM Society (Member)

- The Deputy Director, Department of Tourism of the concerned District will forward the application to the Director, Department of Tourism, if the application is satisfactory in all respect, for approval. The applicant establishment/beneficiary will get a notification by email/SMS once the application is approved by the Director, Department of Tourism.
- Deficiencies, if any, would be communicated to the establishment/beneficiary within a period of five days by the Deputy Director and the applicant should be given sufficient time to rectify the deficiencies.
- Financial Assistance will be released only on completion of the works and as certified by any one officer as mentioned in clause 3(d) above.
- Sanction of Financial Assistance under this scheme will be the sole discretion of the Director, Department of Tourism, Thiruvananthapuram.

## **5. Appeals**

Appeals, if any, shall be filed before the Director, Department of Tourism, Thiruvananthapuram within a period of 15 days from the date of declining of the application by the Deputy Director. No appeal after this period will be entertained. The appeal shall be disposed off as early as possible within one month of receipt of the appeal after giving the appellant an opportunity of being heard, if necessary.

## **6. Recovery & Penalty**

a. Any assistance under this scheme shall be liable to be refunded by the beneficiary concerned with interest @ 14% p.a from the date of receipt of the same, on account of obtaining the assistance by any misrepresentation, forgery or deception.

b. Legal action will also be initiated against the applicant/beneficiary in the event of proving that the Financial Assistance is received on account of any misrepresentation, forgery or deception.

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## COVID 19 Relief Scheme- Financial Assistance to House Boat Sector Application Form

1	Name of the Establishment/Owner	
2	Address	
3	Telephone No	
4	Email ID	
5	KIV Registration No of the Vessel	
6	Documents Submitted a. Registration Certificate from Port Department b. Survey Report from Port Department c. Affidavit with self-certification that the Vessels were ready to operate as on 29 <sup>th</sup> February 2020, but remained in-operational due to the fall in booking due to Covid-19.	
7	Amount of Financial Assistance sought for	
8	<b>Bank Account details of the Establishment/Owner</b>	
	Account Holders Name	
	Account No	
	Name of Bank & Branch	
	IFS Code	

- *Documents as mentioned in the eligibility condition are to be uploaded in the portal along with the online application.*

I/We hereby certify that the above facts are true to the best of my/our knowledge. Further certify that I/We have neither availed any assistance under this scheme nor applied for assistance before.

Place:  
Date:

Signature:  
Name:  
Designation:



**Certification by the Deputy Director, District Office, Department of Tourism, Govt of Kerala**

The Committee has verified the above application and supporting documents submitted by ..... (Name & address of the establishment/Beneficiary), and certify that the application is eligible to be considered for availing the Financial Assistance under this scheme.

Signature:

Name Seal of the Deputy Director