

Main Provisions of the Indian Factories Act, 1948

The **Factories Act, 1948** is one of the most important pieces of labour legislation in India. It was enacted to ensure the **health, safety, welfare, and proper working conditions** of workers employed in factories.

1. Objectives of the Act

- To ensure **adequate safety measures** in factories.
 - To promote the **health and welfare** of workers.
 - To regulate the **working hours, rest, and employment conditions** of adults and young persons.
 - To prevent **exploitation of labour** and improve productivity through better working conditions.
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2. Scope and Applicability

- Applicable to **the whole of India**.
 - Applies to:
 - **Factories using power** and employing **10 or more workers**, or
 - **Factories not using power** and employing **20 or more workers**.
 - It covers **both manufacturing processes and premises** where such processes occur.
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3. Key Definitions

- **Factory:** Any premises where a manufacturing process is carried on with the aid of power (10 or more workers) or without power (20 or more workers).
 - **Worker:** A person employed (directly or through any agency) in any manufacturing process.
 - **Occupier:** The person who has ultimate control over the affairs of the factory.
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4. Main Provisions of the Act

A. Health Provisions (Sections 11–20)

To ensure cleanliness and prevent diseases:

1. **Cleanliness:** Factory to be kept clean and free from effluvia.
 2. **Disposal of wastes:** Proper arrangements for waste and effluent disposal.
 3. **Ventilation & Temperature:** Adequate ventilation and temperature control.
 4. **Dust & Fumes:** Measures to prevent inhalation of dust/fumes.
 5. **Artificial Humidification:** Standards to prevent excessive humidity.
 6. **Overcrowding:** Sufficient space per worker.
 7. **Lighting:** Proper natural and artificial lighting.
 8. **Drinking water:** Safe and sufficient drinking water supply.
 9. **Latrines and urinals:** Clean and conveniently located sanitary facilities.
 10. **Spittoons:** Provided at convenient places and maintained properly.
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B. Safety Provisions (Sections 21–41)

To ensure protection from workplace hazards:

1. **Fencing of machinery:** Dangerous machinery parts must be fenced.
 2. **Work on or near machinery in motion:** Restricted to trained adults only.
 3. **Employment of young persons:** Not allowed on dangerous machines.
 4. **Safety of hoists and lifts:** Regular inspection and maintenance.
 5. **Protection against dust, fumes, and explosive substances.**
 6. **Precautions against fire:** Proper exits and firefighting equipment.
 7. **Safety Officers:** To be appointed in factories employing 1,000 or more workers.
 8. **Emergency measures:** Safety training and drills for workers.
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C. Welfare Provisions (Sections 42–50)

To ensure comfort and basic amenities for workers:

1. **Washing facilities** — adequate and separate for men and women.
 2. **Storage and drying of clothing.**
 3. **Sitting arrangements** for workers obliged to stand.
 4. **First-aid appliances** — at least one first-aid box for every 150 workers.
 5. **Canteens** — compulsory in factories employing 250 or more workers.
 6. **Shelters, restrooms, and lunchrooms** — for factories with 150+ workers.
 7. **Crèches** — in factories employing 30 or more women workers.
 8. **Welfare officers** — in factories with 500 or more workers.
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D. Working Hours and Employment (Adults)

1. **Weekly hours:** Maximum **48 hours per week**.
 2. **Daily hours:** Not more than **9 hours per day**.
 3. **Interval for rest:** At least **½ hour rest after 5 hours of work**.
 4. **Weekly holiday:** One day off every week (usually Sunday).
 5. **Spread over:** Not to exceed **10½ hours** in a day (including rest).
 6. **Night shifts:** Proper intervals and records to be maintained.
 7. **Overtime:** Paid at **twice the ordinary rate of wages**.
 8. **Restriction on double employment:** Workers cannot work in two factories on the same day.
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E. Employment of Young Persons (Sections 67–77)

1. **Children below 14 years** — **prohibited** from employment.
 2. **Adolescents (15–18 years)** — allowed only with a **fitness certificate** from a certifying surgeon.
 3. **Working hours for adolescents:** Not more than **4½ hours per day**, and **no night work**.
 4. **Registers** to be maintained of all young workers.
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F. Employment of Women (Sections 66, 87)

1. **Prohibited** from working between **7 p.m. and 6 a.m.** (may vary by State).
 2. **No lifting of heavy loads** likely to cause injury.
 3. **Separate toilets and washing facilities.**
 4. **Crèche facilities** if 30 or more women workers are employed.
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G. Annual Leave with Wages (Sections 78–84)

1. Workers who have worked for **240 days or more in a calendar year** are entitled to leave.
 2. **One day leave for every 20 days worked** (adults).
 3. **One day leave for every 15 days worked** (children).
 4. Unused leave can be **carried forward** (up to 30 days for adults).
 5. Wages for leave days must be paid before the leave begins.
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H. Inspecting Staff and Administration (Sections 8–10)

- **Inspectors** appointed by the government to enforce provisions.
 - **Certifying surgeons** ensure medical fitness of workers.
 - **Occupier and manager** are responsible for compliance.
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I. Penalties and Offences (Sections 92–99)

- Non-compliance may result in **fine up to ₹1,00,000 or imprisonment up to 2 years**, or both.
 - Repeat offences attract heavier penalties.
 - **Responsible officers** (occupier/manager) are liable for violations.
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5. Importance of the Act

- Protects **workers' health, safety, and welfare**.
 - Regulates **employment conditions** and **working hours**.
 - Promotes **industrial harmony** and **efficiency**.
 - Prevents **exploitation** of labour, especially women and children.
 - Ensures **legal compliance** and **social justice** in industrial settings.
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Summary Table

Category	Main Provisions
Health	Cleanliness, ventilation, safe water, lighting, toilets
Safety	Fencing of machinery, fire precautions, safety officers
Welfare	Canteens, restrooms, crèches, first-aid
Working Hours	48 hrs/week, 9 hrs/day, overtime @ 2x
Women & Young Workers	Restrictions on hours and nature of work
Leave	1 day leave for every 20 days worked
Penalties	Fine up to ₹1,00,000 or imprisonment