

Government extends ECHS Facilities for Medically Boarded-Out Officer Cadets from military training

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Reaffirming its commitment to the dignity and well-being of the armed forces, the Government has approved the extension of Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) facility to officer cadets who are invalidated from training on medical grounds attributable to or aggravated by military training. Cadets who join prestigious institutions like NDA, OTA and IMA with the aspiration to serve the nation, often suffer lifelong disabilities but are currently not eligible for ECHS as they are not granted ex-servicemen (ESM) status.

This measure is applicable to cadets who have been medically boarded out prior to completion of training and is also extendable to future similar cases. Considering the humanitarian nature and financial burden on families, the Government has approved quality medical care for such cadets without creating a precedent for other categories. The grant of ECHS facilities shall be subject to the following conditions:

1. Apply for membership of ECHS and accept ECHS rules
2. Avail facility for individual only
3. Avail free OPD services from ECHS Polyclinics
4. Avail cashless OPD/IPD/Investigations in ECHS empanelled Hospitals
5. Should not be member of any other Government Health Scheme

The one-time subscription fee (i.e Rs1.20 lacs currently applicable to ESM officers) will not be charged from the officer cadets towards joining the ECHS Scheme.

While a small number of cadets annually are affected, the financial and emotional burden on their families is significant. In such instances, the practice is to extend a monthly ex-gratia payment to such cadets. In addition, based on the extent of disability (20% to 100%), a monthly ex-gratia disability award is also made available to such cadets. With this approval, these cadets will now be eligible for availing cashless and capless healthcare facilities under ECHS.

ECHS was launched in April 2003 for Ex-servicemen and their dependents by utilizing the existing medical infrastructure of Armed Forces and private empanelled/ government hospitals across the country. It has 30 Regional Centres (RC) and 448 Polyclinics (PCs) pan India with a total beneficiary base of approximately 63 lakhs. It has 3000+ Empanelled Health Care organisations under its network.

VK/SR/PC

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