

**CHAPTER 557**

**DISEASES AMONG LABOURERS**

*Ordinances* AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE PREVENTION OF THE SPREAD OF DISEASES AMONG  
 Nos.10 of 1912, LABOURERS.  
 27 of 1921,  
*Act*  
 No. 12 of 1952.

[1st January, 1913.]

Short title. **1.** This Ordinance may be cited as the Diseases (Labourers) Ordinance.

Interpretation. **2.** In this Ordinance—

" disease " means any disease which may, from time to time, be notified by the Minister under this Ordinance ;

" district medical officer " means a duly qualified medical practitioner registered under the Medical Ordinance, and attached to a Government hospital or dispensary;

" labourer " includes *kangany* and female labourer, and any child or other relative of any labourer resident upon the same estate;

" prescribed " means prescribed by rules made under this Ordinance ;

" superintendent " means any person in the immediate charge of any estate.

Application of Ordinance. **3.** This Ordinance shall apply to all agricultural estates of which ten acres or more are cultivated :

Provided that in any case in which a provincial surgeon is satisfied that any disease in fact prevails upon an agricultural estate with a lesser area of cultivation, he may, by written notice under his hand addressed to the owner or superintendent of the estate, direct that the provisions of this Ordinance shall apply to such estate, and upon the service of such notice upon the owner or superintendent the said provisions shall apply accordingly;

Provided further that in any case in which the Minister is satisfied that the labourers employed by any Government department or by any employer of labour other than a superintendent are housed under such conditions that the provisions of this Ordinance are capable of application to their residential quarters, he may, by Order notified in the Gazette, apply the provisions of this Ordinance to the residential quarters of such labourers with such modifications as may be necessary for the purpose.

**4.** Where any superintendent has reason to believe that any disease prevails among the resident labourers of his estate, he shall give notice in writing in the prescribed manner to the district medical officer and request his assistance in the treatment of the disease.

Notification by superintendent of prevalence of disease.

**5.** Where a district medical officer receives a notice under section 4, or where he has otherwise reason to believe that any disease is prevalent upon an estate he may enter upon the estate and inspect all the labourers and the sanitary condition of the labourers' lines of the estate, and give such directions as he may consider necessary for the treatment of the disease.

Inspection of infected estate by district medical officer.

**6.** In any such case the district medical officer may—

Treatment of labourers on infected estate.

(a) require any labourer to be removed to hospital;

(b) require the superintendent to treat the labourers in the prescribed manner in such convenient batches as he may indicate ;

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(c) by notice in writing require the superintendent to treat in the prescribed manner all the labourers of the estate,

and it shall be the duty of the superintendent to carry out all such requirements.

Exceptional measures where disease prevalent to aggravated extent.

7. (1) Where the Director of Health Services is satisfied that any disease prevails upon an estate to such an extent or under such conditions that it cannot be effectively treated under the provisions of section 6, he may direct a medical officer of his department to inspect the estate.

(2) In any such case the medical officer so authorized shall enter upon the estate and inspect the labourers, labourers' lines, latrines, bathing places, and water supply, and do all things necessary to enable him to report to the Director of Health Services as to the measures to be taken for the treatment of the disease upon the estate.

(3) The Director of Health Services upon receiving the said report may thereupon, by a notice in writing, require the superintendent to carry out such measures, not being measures provided for by section 9, as in the opinion of the Director of Health Services are necessary for the purpose aforesaid, and it shall thereupon become the duty of the superintendent to carry out all such measures accordingly:

Provided that where the expense involved by any such notice exceeds an amount of two rupees per cultivated acre of the estate, an appeal shall lie to the Minister.

Power of Minister to carry out such measure at expense of estate.

8. (1) If within three months from the date of the receipt of the said notice the superintendent shall not have carried out the measures required by the said notice to the satisfaction of the Director of Health Services, it shall be lawful for the Minister, on receiving a report to that effect from the Director of Health Services, to cause the said measures to be effectively carried out upon the estate.

(2) The cost of any such measures so carried out shall be a debt to the State recoverable from the owner of the estate, and shall constitute a charge on the estate.

(3) The sum so due shall be recoverable in the manner prescribed by Chapter V of the Medical Wants Ordinance.

9. (1) In any case in which any medical officer charged with the duty of the inspection of estates shall report that any set of labourers' lines is constructed in such a position or under such conditions that any disease prevalent or liable to become prevalent therein cannot be effectively controlled, and that the said set of labourers' lines is not capable of adaptation for its effective control, it shall be lawful for the Minister to condemn such set of labourers' lines, and to order its reconstruction to his satisfaction upon such site and under such conditions as shall be suitable for the purpose of the prevention of the spread of the disease, and it shall be the duty of the superintendent to carry out such order.

Power of Minister to condemn insanitary labourers' lines.

(2) If within three months of the communication of such order to the superintendent, or such further time as may be directed in the order, the superintendent shall not have complied therewith, it shall be lawful for the Minister to carry out the measures directed by such order, and the expenses thereof shall be a debt to the State recoverable from the owner of the estate, and shall constitute a charge upon the estate.

(3) The sum so due shall be recoverable in the manner prescribed by Chapter V of the Medical Wants Ordinance.

10. (1) A superintendent may require any labourer employed upon an estate, whether resident upon the estate or otherwise, to submit to such treatment as may be prescribed or otherwise lawfully directed under this Ordinance.

Superintendent may require labourers and others to submit to treatment.

(2) It shall be the duty of every such labourer, when so required by the superintendent, to attend at all reasonable times and places and to submit to such treatment.

11. It shall be the duty of a superintendent to notify the district medical officer if he has reason to believe that any disease prevails in the immediate vicinity of his estate.

Superintendent to notify medical officer.

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Rules,

**12.** (1) The Director of Health Services, with the approval of the Minister, may make rules for the whole of Sri Lanka, or for any portion of Sri Lanka, for the treatment of diseases under this Ordinance, and for the sanitation of labourers' lines with a view to the prevention of the spread of diseases, and in particular for the following purposes:—

- (a) prescribing the location of labourers' lines, the manner of, and plans for their construction, and the materials to be used in their erection;

providing for the alteration, enlargement, or removal of labourers' lines not built according to the rules made under this section;

- (b) providing for such alteration, enlargement, or removal by order of the Director of Health Services when there is any contravention of any such rules, and for the recovery of the expenses thereof before the prescribed court;

providing for the inspection of labourers' lines and their surroundings, and for the protection of the water supply of such lines;

- (e) for the provision and regulation of latrines;
- (f) for the removal and disposition of excreta and line refuse;
- (g) for the provision of a surrounding area round each set of labourers' lines clear of vegetation;

(h) for the drainage of labourers' lines and their surrounding area;

(i) for the proper construction and drainage of bathing places;

(j) for the provision of water supply.

(2) All such rules shall be laid as soon as conveniently may be before Parliament, and if a resolution is passed by Parliament within forty days of their being so laid praying that any rule shall be annulled, such rule shall thenceforth be void, but without prejudice to anything done thereunder.

**13.** There shall be submitted to the medical wants committee for consideration and advice all rules proposed to be made under the Ordinance.

Rules to be submitted to medical wants committee.

**14.** (1) Any person who without reasonable excuse, the proof whereof shall lie upon such person, shall—

Offences.

(a) make default in the performance of any obligation imposed upon him by this Ordinance, or any rule or order made under this Ordinance ;

(b) wilfully obstruct any medical officer or any person lawfully acting under his direction in discharge of the duties of such medical officer under this Ordinance, or any rule or order made under this Ordinance,

shall be guilty of an offence, and liable to a fine not exceeding five hundred rupees, or to imprisonment of either description not exceeding one month.

(2) Such fine shall be recoverable before a Magistrate, notwithstanding any limitation of his ordinary jurisdiction.