



# SANCHAR NIGAM EXECUTIVES' ASSOCIATION

CENTRAL HEAD QUARTERS

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All Communications  
to the General Secretary

To,

Shri. Arvind Vadnerkar ji,  
Director HR, BSNL Board,  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Bharat Sanchar Bhavan,  
H.C. Mathur Lane, Janpath, New Delhi.

**Letter No. SNEA CHQ/Corr/Dir HR /2022-23**

**Dated 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023.**

**Sub: Request for kind intervention in the Problems being faced by the EPF serving and retired Members in the submitting EPF Higher Pension Options.**

Ref: Letter No. BSNLCO-CA/30/2022-CA ERP-FICO Dated 24/04/2023

**Respected Sir,**

We are happy to see that under your directions BSNL HQ is working in close coordination with EPFO and associations for timely resolutions of the issues at HQ Level. With your great efforts and initiatives certain problems related to exercising higher pension option on EPFO website have been solved by Suo Moto actions by BSNL. We convey thanks and gratitude to you and entire team of BSNL working for resolution of majority of issues related to Higher Pension option by prompt response to any query by Associations /Field units.

Even though serious efforts are taken by BSNL, following issues are still unaddressed and hence needs your kind intervention and directions to below line officers so that all the issues related to Higher Pension are resolved and all the EPF members can submit EPF Higher Pension Options within a given date i.e. latest by 03/05/2023.

1. As per the letter under reference, the AO/CAO posted in Circle office is the only authorized person to sign the form on the behalf of BSNL. There is a shortage of time and one has to collect this signed copies from Circle level, then it will take time and many could not submit the option. There is lack of coordination in field units to arrange signed copies of Joint declaration for employees of Field units. DDOs/AO(Tax/EPF) are sitting at the circle office, and hence every EPF Member in BAs and OAs has to travel hundreds of Kilometers to get this joint declaration form signed by the Employer. In the last online meeting through video conference, your good self has already addressed this issue that required certificate will be available in

ESS of the Employee, but practically, one has to collect it from Circle Office. We have discussed this issue with the CA team and they have informed us that this is to be decided by Circle Heads as they are the employer in this case. Some Circles have made signed copies available online but it is not uniform among all Circles. As such, it is requested to issue directions either to the CA section or to Circle Heads to make some provision so that the declaration copy signed by the employer is made readily available in the ESS portal as available for Form-16 to the employees as decided by your good self. This will reduce major hurdles faced by the executives in submission of Higher Pension Option.

2. Now 26(6) is issued without counting Training Period and it is directly impacting some of the EPF Members. This should be issued from the date of joining Training in BSNL but barring a few hundred cases it has been issued from the date of appointment and BSNL has already deposited EPF of Training Period. Not adding training period, will not only reduce the length of service of an employee while calculating the higher pension but in few cases those who joined training before 01/09/2014 and joined after 01/09/2014 will make them ineligible for higher pension option. It is requested to issue directions for issuing 26(6) Certificate by including the training Period.
3. Some of EPF Members are having more than one UAN Number and they are facing issues with submission of Higher pension option as they are not getting any solution for it. Though UAN Number is issued by EPFO, there is no proper response from concerned offices and hence there is need of intervention from BSNL. It is requested to direct concerned officers of BSNL to take up matter with EPFOs and extend active support to the suffering EPF Members.
4. There are issues in getting the Pass book printed from website of EPFO as this service has been not working for the last fortnight. Though it is available from the Umang app, many of EPF Members are not aware about it and hence are unable to get this very important document required for submission of Higher Option. It is requested to direct concerned officers to take up this issue with EPFO officially, so that immediate action is taken by EPFO by restoring this important service.
5. Recently DoPT has issued guidelines for old pension to the employees recruited during the period of DoT but joined in period of BSNL due to transformation of Telecom



Operation services from DoT to BSNL. This letter has been endorsed by DoT on 17/04/2023 and till action is to be taken by BSNL. As per these guidelines, about 2000 Executives & NON Executives will be beneficial with this old pension. Now these Executives and Non-Executives are under confusion, where they have to wait for Old Pension or submit the option for Higher Pension. It is requested to look into this issue and direct concern to clear the confusion by issuing clarification well within time so that concerned individuals can take decision on it.

6. There are still many employees whose final settlement of EPF amount of training period is pending to either to them or at BA/Circle, since this is not just the matter of EPF contribution but also the matter of length of their service while calculating the pension hence it is requested to please again issue suitable directions to concerned officers/offices so that pending cases can be settled.
7. It is crystal clear that there are many issues and hurdles in submission of Higher pension Option by EPF Members and many may not be able to get all the required documents/ certificates so as to submit the Higher Pension Option successfully by given date i.e. 03/05/2023. As such, BSNL also has to make request to EPFO for extending time for submission of Options by one month so that all can submit the options with proper documents.
8. Further there is a serious issue that if someone submits an HPS option on the website of EPFO with some mistake or wrong data then all such cases are directly rejected by the Nodal Officer of BSNL as there is no provision for corrective action in it. Important point is that once Nodal Officer rejects the HPS application, there the concerned EPF member cannot submit the corrected or fresh option once it is rejected by employer and, in such cases, he has to approach to EPFO and due to heavy rush at EPFO, no response is given by EPFO and if given then option cannot be submitted in given time. As such it is requested to take up matter with EPFO for authorizing BSNL Nodal officers to make necessary corrections for matching the information correctly and instead of direct rejection, the applications/options returned by Nodal Officer to EPF members for corrections. Also all such application submitted before 03/05/2023 may be taken as officially accepted application/option submitted in given time and corrective actions may be taken within prescribed time after the last date for submission of EPF HPS option.


9. Difficulties faced by EPF Members who served at multi locations all over India as the Higher Pension option is going to multiple locations throughout India where he/she has served. But at present all the EPF accounts of SSA level have been already closed. Hence there is question, who will approve it as competent signatory. It is requested to nominate central nodal officer for all accounts of Circle where he/she has worked i.e. the present Nodal officer.
10. Further, after submitting joint Declaration on EPFO website, the submitted data is transferred to employer's login for approval where employer has to provide Salary and EPF Contribution details of entire service period of concerned EPF member. As this data is not available in digital format earlier year 2007 and if it is available it is not available for entire period for many of executives. Due to this some of EPF Nodal Officers of Circles are facing problem in approval of options. There is need to make this data available centrally available to all EPF Nodal Officers, so that the process is expedited and completed in given time.
11. There is much confusion among EPF members as are different Circulars are issued by different authorities from EPFO to Nodal officers of BSNL at Circle level. The recent Circular issued by BSNL CO are also creating further confusing and hence there is need of uniform guidelines to all EPF Nodal officers of BSNL so that Uniform procedure is followed all over India.
12. Your good self has assured during video conference with all recognized Unions and Associations that Helpdesk will be made functional in Circle/ BA to facilitate the employees. But same is not being established anywhere as special case EPF Nodal Officers are getting repeated calls. The EPF members are facing a lot of issues for want of certain clarifications on disputed issues and if Nodal officers continue replying queries, they cannot complete the time bound work of checking and approval of Higher pension Options for entire Circle. Hence, it is once again requested to have at least a help desk other than EPF Nodal officer at each Circle so that all the queries and issues are resolved well within time. Please make it uniform and issue the directions and corrective actions from BSNL Corporate office itself by involving one DGM /GM level officer as nodal officer with sufficient team in each circle to resolve all issues with joint declaration and forms submission well within time.

Sir, these are the critical issues in relation to Higher Pension Option by BSNL Recruited Executives as well as Non-Executives. This is issue of life time pension of thousands of BSNL Executives and Non-Executives and hence needs to be handled with proper care so that none of willing EPF Member miss this important opportunity for Higher Pension. It is good to see that many of EPF Members have submitted the Higher Pension Option successfully, but till some of EPF members and Nodal officers of BSNL are struggling to submit and approve the Higher pension Options.

Hence, we solicit your kind intervention and mainly to take up important issues with EPFO at Higher level. We are hopeful for kind and immediate intervention and giving relief to suffering EPF Members by taking firm actions for clearing these hurdles.

With Warm Regards,

Sincerely Yours,

  
27/04/2023  
**M. S. Adasul**  
**General Secretary**  
**SNEA CHQ**

**Copy to:**

1. CMD BSNL for kind information please.
2. Director Finance for kind information please.
3. PGM SR BSNL CO for kind information please
4. GM CA BSNL CO for kind information please.