



The Puducherry Eyes (Authority for use for Therapeutic Purposes) Act, 1988

Act 11 of 1988

Keyword(s):

Lineal Consanguinity

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THE PUDUCHERRY EYES (AUTHORITY FOR USE FOR THERAPEUTIC
PURPOSES) ACT, 1988

(Act No. 11 of 1988)

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

SECTION

1. Short title, extent and commencement.
 2. Definitions.
 3. Authority for removal of eyes of deceased persons.
 4. Removal of eyes not to be authorised in certain cases.
 5. Authority for removal of eyes in case of unclaimed bodies in hospital or prison.
 6. Authority for removal of eyes from bodies sent for post-mortem examination for medico-legal or pathological purposes.
 7. Removal of eyes to be made by registered medical practitioner and in the presence of police officer.
 8. Preservation and deposit of eyes removed from dead bodies.
 9. Saving.
 10. Protection of action taken in good faith.
 11. Power to make rules.
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**THE PUDUCHERRY EYES (AUTHORITY FOR USE FOR THERAPEUTIC
PURPOSES) ACT, 1988**

(Act No. 11 of 1988)

(19-5-1988)

AN
ACT

to provide for the use of eyes of deceased persons for therapeutic purposes and for matters connected therewith.

BE it enacted by the Legislative Assembly of Puducherry in the Thirty-ninth Year of the Republic of India as follows:-

Short title, extent and commencement.

1. (1) This Act may be called the Puducherry Eyes (Authority for Use for Therapeutic Purposes) Act, 1988.

(2) It extends to the whole of the Union territory of Puducherry.

† (3) It shall come into force on such date as the Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

Definitions.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,-

(a) "Government" means the Administrator of the Union territory of Puducherry appointed by the President under article 239 of the Constitution;

(b) "near relative", in relation to a deceased person, means any person related to him as spouse, parent, son, daughter, brother or sister and includes any other person who is related to him-

(i) by lineal consanguinity within three degrees or by collateral consanguinity within six degrees; or

(ii) by marriage with any of the relatives aforesaid.

Explanation:- The expressions "lineal consanguinity" and "collateral consanguinity" shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the Indian Succession Act, 1925 (Central Act 39 of 1925), and degrees of relationship shall be computed in the manner laid down in that Act;

† This Act has come into force w.e.f 01-05-1989 vide Notification published in the Gazette of Puducherry No.20 dated 16-05-1989.

(c) "prescribed" means prescribed by rules made under this Act;

(d) "registered medical practitioner" means a medical practitioner who possesses any recognised medical qualification as defined in clause (h) of section 2 of the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 (Central Act 102 of 1956), and who is enrolled on a State Medical Register as defined in clause (k) of the said section.

Authority for removal of eyes of deceased persons.

3. (1) If any person had, either in writing or orally, in the presence of two or more witnesses (at least one of whom is a near relative of such person) unequivocally authorised, at any time before his death, the use of his eyes, after his death, for therapeutic purposes (such person being hereafter in this sub-section referred to as the donor), the person lawfully in possession of the dead body of the donor shall, unless he produces sufficient evidence before the registered medical practitioner to the effect that the donor had subsequently revoked the authorization aforesaid, grant to a registered medical practitioner all reasonable facilities for the removal, for therapeutic purposes, of the eyes from the dead body of the donor.

(2) Where no such authorisation as is referred to in sub-section (1) was made by any person before his death but no objection was also expressed by such person to his eyes being used after his death for therapeutic purposes, the person lawfully in possession of the body of the deceased person may, unless he has reason to believe that any near relative of the deceased person has objection to the deceased person's eyes being used for therapeutic purposes, authorise the removal of the eyes of the deceased person for their use for therapeutic purposes.

(3) The authority given under sub-section (1), or, as the case may be, under sub-section (2), shall be sufficient warrant for the removal, for therapeutic purposes, of the eyes from the body of the deceased person.

Removal of eyes not to be authorised in certain cases.

4. (1) No facilities shall be granted under sub-section (1) of section 3 and no authority shall be given under sub-section (2) of that section for the removal of the eyes from the body of a deceased person if the person required to grant such facilities or empowered to give such authority, has reason to believe that an inquest may be required to be held in relation to such body in pursuance of the provision of any law for the time being in force.

(2) No authority for the removal of eyes from the body of a deceased person shall be given by a person to whom such body has been entrusted solely for the purpose of interment, cremation or other disposal.

Authority for removal of eyes in case of unclaimed bodies in hospital or prison.

5. (1) In the case of a dead body lying in a hospital or prison and not claimed by any of the near relatives of the deceased person, the authority for the removal of the eyes from the dead body which so remains unclaimed may be given, subject to the provisions of sub-section (2), in the prescribed form, by the person in-charge, for the time being, of the management or control of the hospital or prison or by an employee of such hospital or prison, authorised in this behalf by the person in-charge of the management or control thereof.

(2) The authority referred to in sub-section (1) shall not be given except after the expiry of such time as may be prescribed.

(3) No authority shall be given under sub section (1) if the person empowered to give such authority has reason to believe that any near relative of the deceased is likely to claim the dead body even though such near relative has not come forward to claim the body of the deceased within the time specified.

Explanation:- For the purpose of this section. "hospital" includes a nursing home, medical or teaching institution for therapeutic purposes or other like institution.

Authority for removal of eyes from bodies sent for post-mortem examination for medico-legal or pathological purposes.

6. Where the body of a person has been sent for post-mortem examination:-

(a) for medico-legal purposes by reason of the death of such person having been caused by accident or any other unnatural cause; or

(b) for pathological purposes,

the person competent under this Act to give authority for the removal of the eyes from such dead body may, if he has reason to believe that the eyes will not be required for the purpose for which such body has been sent for post-mortem examination, authorise the removal for therapeutic purposes, of the eyes of such deceased person provided that he is satisfied that the deceased person had not expressed, before his death, any objection to his eyes being used for therapeutic purposes after his death or, where he had granted an authority for the use of his eyes for therapeutic purposes after his death, such authority had not been revoked by him before his death.

Removal of eyes to be made by registered medical practitioner and in the presence of police officer.

7. No removal of eyes under this Act shall be made,-

(i) by any person other than a registered medical practitioner who had satisfied himself, before such removal, by a personal examination of the body from which eyes are to be removed, that life is extinct in such body; and

(ii) except in the presence of a police officer not below the rank of a Sub-Inspector of Police.

Preservation and deposit of eyes removed from dead bodies.

8. After the removal of the eyes from the body of a deceased person, the registered medical practitioner shall take such steps as may be prescribed for the preservation of the eyes so removed and deposit the same in such eye banks as may be specified in the rules.

Saving.

9. (1) Nothing in the foregoing provisions of this Act shall be construed as rendering unlawful any dealing with the body or with any part of the body of a deceased person if such dealing would have been lawful if this Act had not been passed.

(2) Neither the grant of any facility or authority for the removal of eyes from the body of a deceased person in accordance with the provisions of this Act nor the removal of eyes from the body of a deceased person in pursuance of such authority shall be deemed to be an offence punishable under section 297 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860.

Protection of action taken in good faith.

10. No suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against any person for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done under this Act.

Power to make rules.

11. (1) The Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the provisions of this Act.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may provide for all or any of the following matters, namely:—

- (a) the form in which removal of eyes, from unclaimed bodies may be authorised, as required by section 5;
- (b) the preservation of removed eyes, as required by section 8;
- (c) the publicity which may be given to the provisions and objects of this Act;
- (d) any other matter which is required to be or may be prescribed.

(3) All rules made and all notifications issued under this Act shall, as soon as possible after they are made or issued, be placed on the table of the Legislative Assembly of the Union territory and shall be subject to such modifications by way of amendment or repeal as the Legislative Assembly may make within fourteen days on which the House actually sits either in the same session or in more than one session:

Provided however that any modifications or annulment shall not affect the validity of anything already done and acted upon under such rules and notifications.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS FOR ACT NO. 11 OF 1988

Corneal grafting is quite often resorted to as therapeutic measure to cure blindness. Persons enlivened by consciousness to provide relief to the blind come forward to donate their eyes after their death for use for therapeutic purposes. It is therefore necessary to vest necessary authority in the qualified registered medical practitioners to remove the eyes of such donors after their death. It is also necessary to vest such authority for removal of eyes in the case of unclaimed dead bodies in hospital and prisons and also in certain circumstances from bodies sent for post-mortem examination for medico-legal or pathological purposes. The eyes so removed have to be deposited for preservation in the eye banks prescribed for the purpose.

The Bill seeks to achieve the above objects.