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Maharashtra Updates Child Labour Rules to Regulate Child Artistes

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Mumbai, India – The Maharashtra government has announced amendments to the state's Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Rules, 1997, introducing stricter guidelines for children employed as artistes in the film, television, and entertainment industries. The revised draft was issued on August 7, 2025, with a 30-day window for public suggestions before submission to the Maharashtra labour department.

Under the new rules, children under 14 remain prohibited from employment in any occupation, while adolescents aged 14–18 are restricted from hazardous work. However, the amendments allow children to work as performers under specific conditions. Production houses must obtain permission from the district collector before hiring a child, and television or film productions must include disclaimers confirming that all measures were taken to protect the child during shooting.

The draft also specifies that children cannot work consecutively for more than 27 days and mandates that proper arrangements be made to prevent disruption of schooling. Parents are required to deposit at least 20% of the child's earnings in a fixed deposit account in the

child's name, to be accessed when the child reaches adulthood. Officials said this provision is intended to ensure a portion of the child's income is saved for their future.

Children working to support their families are allowed only in family enterprises. Schools must report any child absent for 30 consecutive days to the district collector's nodal officer.

The government is also creating a Child and Adolescent Rehabilitation Fund, where fines and penalties from violations will be deposited and transferred to the victim at age 18. Each case will include a government deposit of ₹15,000, with interest credited to the child's account, while violators may face fines ranging from ₹20,000 to ₹50,000 and imprisonment from six months to two years.

Child rights activists have criticized the amendments as limited in scope. Santosh Shinde, a Mumbai-based activist, called the rules "insufficient," noting that they do not fully address challenges faced by children working in film and television, including exposure to inappropriate content. Shinde also highlighted the need for rules tailored specifically to Mumbai's entertainment industry rather than generalizing existing model regulations.

Officials emphasized that the amendments aim to balance employment opportunities, child safety, and educational continuity, ensuring that children working as artistes are protected while families benefit responsibly from their earnings.

The Maharashtra labour department stated it will closely monitor implementation through task forces across 36 districts to prevent illegal employment and ensure compliance with the amended regulations.