

Brief on

Telecommunications (Authorization for Telecommunication Network) Rules, 2026



Brief on: TELECOMMUNICATIONS (AUTHORISATION FOR TELECOMMUNICATION NETWORK) RULES, 2026

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of Communications, notified the Telecommunications (Authorisation for Telecommunication Network) Rules, 2026 (the Rules) on 20 July 2026, vide notification G.S.R. 644(E), in exercise of powers under sub-section (1) and clauses (a) and (d) of sub-section (2) of section 56, read with clause (b) of sub-section (1) and sub-section (6) of section 3, of the Telecommunications Act, 2023.

Applicability

(1) These rules provide for the terms and conditions of authorization, which shall apply to the following, namely:

(a) Authorization for establishing, operating, maintaining or expanding telecommunication network under subsection (1) of section 3 of the Act; and

(b) the relevant authorization to the terms and conditions of which a new authorized entity has migrated to under sub-section (6) of section 3 of the Act.

(2) Without prejudice to the provisions of sub-rule (1), the provisions of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997 (24 of 1997), and the rules and regulations made thereunder shall continue to apply in respect of a new authorized entity.

Key Definitions

- **Cloud-Hosted Telecommunication Network:** A telecommunication network built using the principles of cloud computing, which virtualizes network functions and run them as software on standard hardware
- **In-Building Solution:** A telecommunication network that is used to extend last mile connectivity for wireline or wireless telecommunication service within a specific area including buildings, stadiums, airports, tunnels or campuses
- **Overlapping License or Authorization:** The license or authorization held by an applicant, the scope and network area of which would be covered in its entirety within the scope and network area of the authorization in respect of which an application is submitted under rule 6.

Authorization for telecommunication network

Any person may apply to the Central Government under rule 6 to obtain authorization to establish, operate, maintain or expand telecommunication network that is within the scope and network area of any authorization specified below:

- Infrastructure Provider Authorization
- Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Provider Authorization
- Internet Exchange Point Provider Authorization
- Satellite Earth Station Gateway Provider Authorization
- Cloud-Hosted Telecommunication Network Provider Authorization
- Mobile Number Portability Provider Authorization (zonal, granted only through a Central-Government bidding process)

Eligibility

- (a) If it is a company: (i) in which foreign direct investment, if any, is in conformity with the policy issued by the Government of India from time to time in respect of foreign direct investment and applicable law; and (ii) the general character of whose management is sound in terms of its track record in providing telecommunication services or in establishing, operating, maintaining or expanding telecommunication networks in a responsible manner.
- (b) It has no pending dues;
- (c) It holds no authorization or license for telecommunication services, the scope and service area of which covers in its entirety, the scope and network area of the authorization that it intends to obtain under these rules.

Application and Grant Process

Application:

- An applicant, other than for MNP authorization, must submit its application on the portal in the prescribed form and manner with the specified documents. An MNP applicant must participate in the bidding process conducted by the Central Government and submit its application in the manner specified in the call for applications.
- Every application must be accompanied by the prescribed non-refundable processing fee and an auditor's certificate, in the prescribed form, certifying compliance with the eligibility criteria.
- Where the applicant has an overlapping license or authorization, it must relinquish such existing overlapping license or authorization as required under the Rules.

- Where pending dues are subject to ongoing legal proceedings and payment has been stayed by a judicial order, the applicant must comply with the conditions of that order, undertake to make payment subject to the outcome of the proceedings, and submit the prescribed auditor's certificate.

Letter of Intent and Grant:

- After making such inquiry as it considers necessary, the Central Government may, if satisfied that the applicant is eligible, issue a Letter of Intent through the portal specifying the requirements for grant of authorization, including payment of the applicable entry fee, submission of an unconditional and irrevocable guarantee and an unconditional and irrevocable undertaking to relinquish any overlapping license or authorization from the effective date of authorization.
- On fulfilment of the requirements in the Letter of Intent, the Central Government may grant the authorization through the portal, specifying its scope, network area, duration and effective date. Infrastructure Provider and Internet Exchange Point Provider authorizations may be granted without prior issuance of a Letter of Intent.
- Every authorization is granted on a non-exclusive basis. Additional authorizations for the same telecommunication network may be granted in the same or another network area without restriction on the number of new authorized entities.
- Grant of authorization does not confer any right to assignment or use of spectrum. Any assignment or use of spectrum is governed by applicable law.

General Conditions

- **Duration and Renewal:**

An authorization may be granted for a maximum period of 20 years. The maximum duration for an MNP authorization is 10 years.

- **Continued Eligibility and Reporting:**

Entities must continue to meet eligibility conditions throughout the authorization period and submit annual auditor-certified disclosures on equity structure, controlling persons and eligibility compliance, along with event-based reporting of shareholding changes (15 days), changes in registered name (30 days), and other material changes (15 days). A nodal person based in India must be designated for regulatory correspondence.

- **Transfer Restrictions:**

- An authorization may be transferred or assigned only with the prior approval of the Central Government and in the circumstances and manner permitted

under the Rules, including permitted corporate restructuring, merger, demerger, acquisition or exercise of security interest by lenders.

- No transfer or arrangement may result in an unauthorized person obtaining rights or interests in the authorization contrary to the Rules.

- **Revocation, Surrender and Breach:**

- The Central Government may revoke an authorization where representations, submissions or documents provided with or during processing of the application are found to be false, where the authorized entity is directed to be liquidated or wound up, or where revocation is recommended by TRAI in accordance with the Act.
- The authorized entity must be given an opportunity of being heard where required under the Rules.
- The revocation order is published on the portal and becomes effective from the 61st day from publication. The authorized entity must give public notice of the revocation within 48 hours of publication and must maintain its telecommunication network until the effective date.

- **Set-Off and Recovery:**

The Central Government may set off any amount owed by an entity against amounts owed to it, and unpaid dues are recoverable as arrears of land revenue.

Technical, Operational and Security Conditions

Technical and Operational Conditions

- **Standards and Testing:** Networks, equipment and identifiers must conform to standards notified under section 19 of the Act; the Central Government/designated agency may performance-test equipment, and entities must supply test tools and support on demand.
- **Self-Arranged Infrastructure:** Entities must independently arrange right of way and all infrastructure for their networks; unavailability or delay in right of way is not a valid ground for non-compliance, and exclusive right-of-way arrangements are prohibited.
- **Data Localization:** All systems of the telecom network and associated data, logs and information must be stored within India, with no copies routed, shared or made available outside India.

- **Clock Synchronization and Location Reporting:** Network system clocks must synchronize with the national clock, and entities must report system locations and technology deployed, with prior Central Government approval required before establishing networks in security-sensitive areas.
- **Inspection and Audit:** The Central Government may, generally after reasonable notice (dispensed with where urgent public interest requires), inspect sites including user premises and audit compliance processes, including through a designated agency, subject to safeguards against disclosure of competitively sensitive information.

Security Conditions

- **Indian Management and Residency:** A majority of board directors must be Indian citizens, and the security-in-charge officer, core-network-in-charge officer and system administrator must be resident Indian citizens. Foreign nationals appointed as chairman, managing director, CEO or CFO, or deployed on the network, require Ministry of Home Affairs security vetting, renewed annually where applicable.
- **Record-Keeping:** Entities must preserve equipment/software documentation, software update logs (reported within 15 days), supply-chain details, and operation/command logs the latter accessible in real time for twelve months and in digital non-real-time form for a further twenty-four months.
- **Lawful Interception and Cyber Security:** Entities must keep communications secure and confidential, subject to providing message records and data to authorized agencies under applicable interception law, and must support investigations into misuse of telecom resources, clandestine networks, or cyber-security threats.
- **Trusted Sources and Trusted Products:** The National Cyber Security Coordinator, as designated authority, specifies categories of equipment subject to trusted-source/trusted-product requirements, and entities must procure only approved equipment, register on the designated website, and report procurement details and deployment locations.
- **Remote Access from Outside India:** Providing remote access to the network from a location outside India requires prior Central Government permission, is limited to approved locations and stated purposes, may not extend to lawful-interception systems, CDRs or call content, requires a mirror-image monitoring capability at an approved Indian location, and a six-month audit trail must be retained in India.

- **Overlapping Authorization Prohibited:** No new authorized entity may hold an overlapping license or authorization; relinquishment on migration or fresh authorization does not affect obligations, penalties or resources already accrued, unless the Central Government determines otherwise in the public interest.

Fees and Financial Obligations

Processing, entry fee and initial guarantee requirements are prescribed by authorization category in Schedule A.

The processing fee for the specified authorizations is ₹10,000.

Authorization	Entry Fee	Initial Guarantee
Infrastructure Provider	Nil	Nil
Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Provider	₹10 lakh	Nil
Internet Exchange Point Provider	Nil	Nil
Satellite Earth Station Gateway Provider	₹10 lakh	Nil
Cloud-Hosted Telecommunication Network Provider	₹10 lakh	Nil
Mobile Number Portability Provider	₹50 lakh	₹40 lakh

Category-Specific Scope

Authorization	Scope / Key Conditions
Infrastructure Provider	Passive telecom infrastructure, right of way, and in-building solution infrastructure (national area).
Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Provider	Wireline terrestrial network, radio access network, wireless local area network, transmission link and in-building solution equipment; cannot operate core network, provide leased circuits, or use spectrum beyond limited configuration purposes.

Internet Exchange Point Provider	Establishment, operation, maintenance or expansion of internet exchange points; interconnection/peering of India-originated and India-destined internet traffic.
Satellite Earth Station Gateway Provider	Gateway and baseband systems for satellite/space-segment capacity authorized by the Department of Space or a designated agency.
Cloud-Hosted Telecommunication Network Provider	Establishment of cloud-hosted telecom networks and provision of the same 'as a service' (physical infrastructure, equipment, or network functionality) to other authorized entities/licensees.
Mobile Number Portability Provider	Provision of MNP as a service in a zonal area to access-service entities, granted only through a Central-Government-run bidding process. Subject to entry fee, guarantee and annual authorization fee.