



GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB
SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

ORDER

No. SO(Estt)20-139/2016. WHEREAS, Deputy Director (Admn.), DGSE, Punjab, vide letter dated 23.12.2024, forwarded letters of District Education Officer, Special Education, Lahore dated 13.12.2024 and the Principal, Govt. National Special Education Centre, Johar Town, Lahore dated 12.12.2024 wherein it was informed that **Ms. Fareeha Nawaz**, Speech Therapist (BS-17), Govt. National Special Education Centre, Johar Town, Lahore ('**accused officer**') has been found absent from duty w.e.f. 26.11.2023 to date without intimation and / or approval of leave and it was requested that disciplinary proceedings on the charge of misconduct on account of wilful absence from duty may be initiated against her.

2. **AND WHEREAS**, keeping in view the wilful absence of the accused officer from duty w.e.f. 26.11.2023, other ancillary and related facts of the case and on account of availability of sufficient documentary evidence on record, *while dispensing with regular inquiry*, disciplinary proceedings were initiated against the accused officer vide Show Cause Notice dated 17.01.2025 under Section 7(b) read with Section 5(1)(a) of the PEEDA Act, 2006 ('**Act**') on the following charge of misconduct:

"You have been found wilfully absent from your duties w.e.f. 26.11.2023 till to date without prior permission / approval of leave by the Competent Authority."

3. **AND WHEREAS**, through the above said Show Cause Notice, the accused officer was directed to submit her written / defense reply within 07-days but she did not do so. Therefore, in order to finalize the disciplinary proceedings, the accused officer was afforded an opportunity of personal hearing under Section 7(d) of the Act *ibid* and for said purpose vide letter dated 19.02.2025, she was directed to appear before Deputy Secretary, Special Education Department / Hearing Officer appointed under Section 7(d) of the Act *ibid* on 05.03.2025.

4. **AND WHEREAS**, the Hearing Officer submitted hearing report stating therein that the accused officer failed to appear to attend the personal hearing scheduled on 05.03.2025, despite being duly served with a notice at her residential address and communication through all possible modes of communication. In the interest of justice and to ensure the completion of hearing proceedings, a second opportunity of personal hearing was granted, directing the accused officer to appear on 21.03.2025. But, despite being afforded second hearing, she did not comply with the directive and failed to attend the hearing. The Hearing Officer further indicated that all the hearing notices were duly served to the accused officer at her residential address, with copies forwarded to the concerned District Education Officer (Special Education) and Principal to ensure delivery. In addition to above, the hearing notices alongwith Show Cause Notice were sent to the accused officer on her official email address. Despite the fulfilment of all legal, procedural, and formal requirements, including the provision of adequate notice and opportunity, the accused officer wilfully failed to attend the personal hearing. The Hearing Officer concluded that the charge of misconduct on

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account of absence from duty without intimation / prior approval of leave by Competent Authority stand established against the accused officer. Her deliberate and intentional non-appearance reflects a conscious attempt to evade the disciplinary proceedings and obstruct their timely conclusion.

5. **AND WHEREAS**, upon meticulous examination of all relevant facts, documentary evidence, and the findings presented in the report submitted by the Hearing Officer, it has been noted that the accused officer was appointed as Speech Therapist (BS-17) on contract basis for a period of five (05) years and posted at Government Special Education Centre, Jhang, and was subsequently regularized in service. It has also been observed that the accused officer absented herself from official duties without obtaining prior approval or sanctioned leave, with effect from 26.11.2023 till date. In consequence, disciplinary proceedings were initiated against her under the charge of misconduct due to unauthorized absence from duty. Notably, despite being issued a Show Cause Notice dated 17.01.2025, the accused officer failed to submit any written explanation or response within the stipulated timeframe. Clause 5 of the said Show Cause Notice explicitly states as under:

"5. Your reply to Show Cause Notice should reach the undersigned, within the said period failing which it shall be presumed that you have no defence to offer and you have admitted the charge."

In light of the above, the failure of the accused officer to submit a reply is deemed to be an implicit admission of the charge framed against her, thereby substantiating the allegations of misconduct. Furthermore, a thorough perusal of the record reveals that the accused officer has remained wilfully and continuously absent from duty since 26.11.2023, amounting to an uninterrupted period exceeding sixteen (16) months. Such prolonged, unauthorized absence constitutes a grave dereliction of duty and is demonstrative of persistent and deliberate indiscipline. The conduct of the accused officer is not only inconsistent with the standards expected of a Government servant but also reflects a flagrant disregard for professional obligations and administrative norms.

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6. **AND WHEREAS**, the accused officer was afforded multiple and adequate opportunities to be personally heard, with clear and unequivocal directions to appear before the Hearing Officer on the dates fixed for the hearing proceedings. Despite such opportunities, the accused officer consistently failed to appear before the Hearing Officer, thereby indicating a lack of any credible defence, evidence, or justification to refute the charge of misconduct arising from her wilful absence from duty. It is observed that this repeated non-compliance to attend the hearing proceedings is a further manifestation of her indifference towards the disciplinary process and a gross neglect of her professional responsibilities. No mitigating or extenuating circumstances have been placed on record to suggest that her continued absence from duty was occasioned by factors beyond her control. It is a settled principle that unauthorized absence from duty, without sanctioned leave or prior approval from the Competent Authority, constitutes misconduct. In this regard, reference is made to Section 2(n)(vii) of the PEEDA Act, 2006, which defines such conduct as culpable wrongdoing. The available record incontrovertibly establishes that the accused officer has remained continuously absent from duty since 26.11.2023 without obtaining the requisite permission or leave from the Competent Authority, spanning over a period exceeding sixteen (16) months. Moreover, Section 7(f) of the PEEDA Act, 2006 stipulates as under:

“(f) impose any one or more penalties mentioned in section 4, by an order in writing, if the charge or charges are proved against the accused:

Provided that-

- (i) where charge or charges of grave corruption are proved against an accused, the penalty of dismissal from service shall be imposed, in addition to the penalty of recovery, if any; and
- (ii) where charge of absence from duty for a period of more than one year is proved against the accused, the penalty of compulsory retirement or removal or dismissal from service shall be imposed upon the accused.”

In view of the above, the charge of unauthorized absence from duty for a period exceeding one year stands fully proved against the accused officer, thus attracting the application of mandatory penalties as prescribed under the law.

7. **NOW, THEREFORE, I, Shahida Farrukh Naveed**, Secretary, Special Education Department and the Competent Authority in this matter, having conducted a comprehensive and judicious examination of all facts, documents, and findings on record, am firmly of the considered view that the charge of misconduct on account of absence from duty for a period exceeding 16 (sixteen) months stands conclusively established against the accused officer. The record irrefutably demonstrates that the accused officer has wilfully and continuously absented herself from duty without any sanctioned leave or prior approval from the Competent Authority, for a period commencing **26.11.2023** and continuing uninterrupted to date, a duration exceeding **sixteen (16) months**. Accordingly, in view of the gravity of the proven misconduct, and in exercise of the powers vested in me under **Section 7**, read with **Section 4** and **Section 7(f)(ii)** of the Punjab Employees Efficiency, Discipline and Accountability Act, 2006, major penalty of **“Removal from Service”** is hereby imposed upon the accused officer, with immediate effect.

Dated Lahore the
April 21, 2025

Shahida 21/4/2025
(SHAHIDA FARRUKH NAVEED)
SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB
SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT /
COMPETENT AUTHORITY

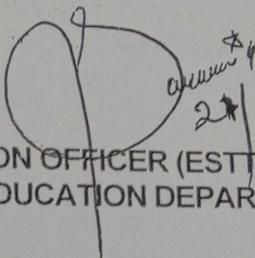
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A copy is forwarded for information and necessary action to the:

1. Accountant General, Punjab, Lahore.
2. Director General, Special Education, Punjab, Lahore.
3. Statistical Officer, Directorate General of Special Education, Punjab, Lahore.
4. District Education Officer (Special Education), Lahore **to ensure delivery of this order to the accused officer on her official and residential address under intimation to this department.**
5. Principal, Govt. National Special Education Centre, Johar Town, Lahore **to ensure deliver of this order to the accused officer on her official and**

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- residential address under intimation to this department.
6. Accused officer concerned / **Ms. Fareeha Nawaz**, Speech Therapist (BS-17), Govt. National Special Education Centre, Johar Town, Lahore. Resident of 499-D, Phase 5, D Block, DHA, Lahore AND House No. p-655, Street No. 10, Mohallah Muhammad Abad, Faisalabad.
 7. P.S. to Secretary Special Education Department.
 8. Office File.


SECTION OFFICER (ESTT.-I)
SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

21/4/25

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