



Supreme Court on Free Testing of Covid-19

Why in News

- The [Supreme Court](#) modified its April 8, 2020 order to clarify on free testing for [Covid-19](#).

Key Points

- Private labs would continue to **charge the [Indian Council of Medical Research \(ICMR\)](#) rates of up to ₹4,500** for tests from people who can afford to pay.
- **Free testing for Covid-19** shall continue to be made available to the poor eligible under the [Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana](#).
- Free testing would also be made available to any other category of **economically weaker sections of society as notified by the government from time to time**.
- The Supreme Court directed the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare to identify beneficiaries among the weaker sections of society.
 - This includes workers belonging to low income groups in the informal sectors and beneficiaries of [Direct Benefit Transfer](#) who can be made eligible for free testing.
- It also directed the Ministry to issue **appropriate guidelines** in this regard within a week.

Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya

- PM-JAY offers a sum insured of **Rs.5 lakh per family** for secondary care (which doesn't involve a super specialist) as well as tertiary care (which involves a super specialist).
- It is an entitlement-based scheme that targets the beneficiaries as identified by latest **Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) data**.
 - Once identified by the database, the beneficiary is considered insured and can walk into any empanelled hospital.
- The insurance cost is shared by the **centre and the state mostly in the ratio of 60:40**.
- **Packaged rates (Rates that include everything so that each product or service is not charged for separately):**
 - They also mention the number of average days of hospitalization for a medical procedure and supporting documents that are needed.
 - They are flexible, but they can't charge the beneficiary once fixed by the hospitals.
 - The scheme also has prescribed a daily limit for medical management.
- **The National Health Agency** has been constituted as an autonomous entity under the Society Registration Act, 1860 for effective implementation of PM-JAY in alliance with state governments.
- **The State Health Agency (SHA)** is the apex body of the State Government responsible for the implementation of AB PM-JAY in the State.

[Source : TH](#)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/supreme-court-on-free-testing-of-covid-19>

