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GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB
LAW AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

NOTIFICATION

19 February 2026

No. Legis:13-07/2025.- The following Ordinance promulgated by Governor of the Punjab is hereby published for general information:

THE PUNJAB PUBLIC UTILITIES INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION ORDINANCE 2026

(IV OF 2026)

An

Ordinance

to provide for prevention of theft, unauthorized removal, damage, repair and maintenance of public utilities infrastructure in Punjab.

It is necessary to prevent theft, unauthorized removal, damage, repair and maintenance of public utilities infrastructure in Punjab and provide for effective mechanism for enforcement, punishment, protection of public utilities infrastructure and the matters connected therewith and ancillary thereto.

Provincial Assembly of the Punjab is not in session and Governor of the Punjab is satisfied that circumstances exist which render it necessary to take immediate action.

In exercise of the powers conferred under clause (1) of Article 128 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Governor of the Punjab is pleased to make and promulgate the following Ordinance:

1. Short title, extent, and commencement.- (1) This Ordinance shall be cited as the Punjab Public Utilities Infrastructure Protection Ordinance 2026.

(2) It shall extend to whole of the Punjab.

(3) It shall come into force at once.

2. Definitions.- In the Ordinance:

(a) "Authority" means the Punjab Enforcement and Regulatory Authority established under the Punjab Enforcement and Regulation Act 2024 (XI of 2024);

(b) "Code" means the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (V of 1898);

(c) "Government" means the Government of the Punjab;

(d) "deformed" means any permanent and non-reversible alteration of a public utilities infrastructure or its components by the relevant authority whereby the item is rendered incapable of being reused, reinstalled, or resold in its original or functional form, and includes, but not limited to:

(i) cutting, breaking, or fragmenting the item into pieces; or

(ii) shearing, crushing, or mechanical destruction that alters its original dimensions and load-bearing capacity;

(e) "Ordinance" means the Punjab Public Utilities Infrastructure Protection Ordinance 2026;

(f) "person" includes an individual, gang of individuals, company, partnership, contractor, association, or any other legal entity;

(g) "prescribed" means prescribed by the rules or regulations;

(h) "public utilities infrastructure" means such public utilities infrastructure as provided and notified under section 3 of the Act;

(i) "relevant authority" means any Department of the Government, its authority, public utilities infrastructure service provider or any local government;

(j) "re-rolling" means the industrial process of reshaping metal or scrap metal by heating and re-rolling through mechanical mills to produce semi-finished or finished metal products;

(k) "rules" means the rules made under the Ordinance;

(l) "regulations" means the regulations framed under the Ordinance;

(m) "scrap dealer" means any person, dealer or entity engaged in the business of purchasing, selling, recycling, re-rolling or processing public utilities infrastructure;

(n) "theft" means dishonest taking or removal of public utilities infrastructure without lawful authority;

(o) "unauthorized removal" includes removal, displacement, possession, transportation, unauthorized sale or purchase without permission of the relevant authority; and

(p) "whistle-blower" means the person who, in the public interest, discloses an actual or suspected offence under the Ordinance.

3. Declaration of public utilities infrastructure.- The public utilities infrastructure shall include manhole cover, streetlight, protective fence and such other article, substance, any thing or infrastructure as may be declared by the Government, by a notification in the official Gazette, as public utilities infrastructure for the purposes of the Ordinance.

4. Theft of public utilities infrastructure and its punishment.- The theft of public utilities infrastructure shall be an offence under the Ordinance and punishable with imprisonment which may extend to three years but not less than one year or fine up to three million rupees but not less than two hundred thousand rupees or both.

5. Unauthorized removal or possession of public utilities infrastructure and its punishment.– No person shall remove, possess, transport, sell or purchase public utilities infrastructure without lawful authority and violation thereof shall be an offence under the Ordinance and punishable with imprisonment which may extend to three years but not less than one year or fine up to three million rupees but not less than five hundred thousand rupees or both.

6. Wilful damage to public utilities infrastructure.- No person shall wilfully damage the public utilities infrastructure and violation thereof shall be an offence under the Ordinance and the offender shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to one year but not less than three months or fine up to two hundred thousand rupees but not less than fifty thousand rupees or both.

7. Liability of a scrap dealer.- (1) No scrap dealer shall purchase, receive, possess or deal in public utilities infrastructure, unless it has been deformed.

(2) A scrap dealer shall, before purchasing public utilities infrastructure, verify and ensure that the item is so deformed.

(3) Any contravention of the provisions of sub-sections (1) and (2), shall be an offence under the Ordinance and the offender shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to three years or fine up to ten million rupees but not less than one million rupees or both.

8. Liability of an owner of re-rolling plant.- (1) No owner or operator of a re-rolling plant shall purchase, receive, possess or process public utilities infrastructure, unless it has been deformed.

(2) The owner or operator of a re-rolling plant shall, before purchasing a public utilities infrastructure from a scrap dealer or any other person, verify and ensure that it is deformed and incapable of being used as public utilities infrastructure.

(3) Any contravention of the provisions of sub-sections (1) and (2), shall be an offence under the Ordinance and the offender shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to three years or fine up to ten million rupees but not less than one million rupees or both.

9. Attempt, abetment and repeat offence.- (1) Whoever attempts or abets for commission of the offences under sections 4 to 8, shall be punished with the same punishment as provided for the principal offence.

(2) In case of repetition of offences under sections 4 to 8 and sub-section (1) of this section, the offender shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to six years but not less than three years or fine up to ten million rupees but not less than three hundred thousand rupees.

10. Duty to maintain public utilities infrastructure.- (1) The relevant authority shall ensure that all public utilities infrastructure situated on public highways, roads, streets and public places are properly covered, maintained and kept in a safe condition.

(2) The relevant authority shall conduct periodic inspections and maintain records of public utilities infrastructure within its jurisdiction.

(3) The relevant authority shall create and maintain at least 10% reserve stock of essential materials, components and public utilities infrastructure.

11. Immediate securing and replacement of missing or damaged public utilities infrastructure.- (1) If the relevant authority, on its own information or on the information by any person, finds a public utilities infrastructure missing, displaced or damaged, it shall immediately secure the site by barricading or warning signage and replace or repair the public utilities infrastructure without delay.

(2) Any failure, by the relevant authority, to take action under sub-section (1), shall amount to neglect of statutory duty and misconduct and shall attract disciplinary proceedings against the responsible person.

12. Duty of relevant authority to deform the public utilities infrastructure prior to disposal or auction.- (1) The relevant authority shall not dispose of, sell, or auction a public utilities infrastructure unless it has been deformed prior to such disposal, selling or auction.

(2) Any officer or official who authorizes or permits disposal, selling or auction of any such public utilities infrastructure in contravention of this section, shall be liable to disciplinary action.

13. Presumption regarding unlawful possession.- The possession of unauthorized or unlawful public utility infrastructure and its subsequent recovery from a person, scrap dealer or owner or operator of re-rolling plant, shall be a sufficient cause to prove him guilty of the offence under the Ordinance, unless it is proved otherwise.

14. Enforcement.- The Government may designate the Punjab Enforcement and Regulatory Authority or any other authority or agency for enforcement of the provisions of the Ordinance.

15. Complaint and reward.- (1) A whistle-blower may submit a complaint to the relevant authority in such manner as provided by the relevant authority, concerning the commission of any offence under the Ordinance.

(2) The whistle-blower shall be eligible to receive such reward in such manner as may be prescribed.

16. Powers of inspection, seizing and sealing.- (1) The Authority or an officer authorized by the relevant authority may inspect premises, require records, seize suspected property, seal the premises, and take necessary measures to enforce provisions of the Ordinance.

(2) In case, property is seized or premises are sealed under sub-section (1), it shall only be de-seized or de-sealed by the competent court.

17. Bodily injury or death.- Any offence under the Ordinance resulting in bodily injury or death, shall be punished as provided in Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 (XLV of 1860).

18. Trial.- (1) The offences under the Ordinance, shall be cognizable, non-bailable and triable under the Code.

(2) The trial of the offences under the Ordinance shall be concluded within three months, from its commencement.

(3) Unless explicitly provided otherwise, the procedural safeguards in the Code shall govern arrest, search, seizure, investigation, appeal and other matters provided under the Ordinance.

19. Indemnity.- No legal proceedings shall lie against the Authority or authority or relevant authority and its authorized officer for actions taken in good faith under the Ordinance.

20. Overriding effect.- The provisions of the Ordinance shall have effect notwithstanding anything inconsistent contained in any other law for the time being in force.

21. Power to make rules.- The Government may, by notification in the official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of the Ordinance.

22. Power to frame regulations.- Subject to the provisions of the Ordinance, Additional Chief Secretary, Punjab may, by notification in the official Gazette, frame regulations for carrying out the purposes of the Ordinance.

23. Removal of difficulty.- If any difficulty arises in giving effect to any of the provisions of the Ordinance, the Government may make such order, not inconsistent with the provisions of the Ordinance, as it may deem necessary for the purposes of removing such difficulty.

STATEMENTS OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The theft, unauthorized removal, and damage of public utilities infrastructure, together with failure to promptly repair or replace such covers pose a grave threat to public safety and frequently result in loss of life, bodily injury, and damage to public utilities infrastructure. It is, therefore, expedient to prevent such acts and provide for effective enforcement mechanism, penalties and protection of the public utilities infrastructure. Further, it is necessary to mandate the immediate repair or replacement of removed or damaged public utilities infrastructure by the relevant authority responsible for the maintenance of such infrastructure, upon being reported or identified under the Ordinance. Hence, this Ordinance.

(SARDAR SALEEM HAIDER KHAN)
GOVERNOR OF THE PUNJAB

Dated: 19/02/2026

(MUHAMMAD ASIF BALAL LODHI)
Secretary
Government of the Punjab
Law and Parliamentary Affairs Department