

Government Notice No. 116 of 2026

THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT
Regulations made by the Minister under section 100(1) of
the Occupational Safety and Health Act

1. These regulations may be cited as the Occupational Safety and Health (Refuse Collection) Regulations 2026.

2. In these regulations –

“employer” –

(a) means a person who employs a refuse collector; and

(b) includes his agent or a job contractor;

“high visibility clothing” has the same meaning as in the Road Traffic (Use of High Visibility Clothing) Regulations 2013;

“Ministry” means the Ministry responsible for the subject of occupational safety and health;

“new or expectant mother” means a refuse collector who –

(a) is pregnant;

(b) has given birth within the previous 6 months; or

(c) is breastfeeding;

“receptacle” includes a bin or recipient fitted with a cover, whether fixed or movable, designed to keep, collect and transfer refuse;

“refuse” includes –

(a) household, garden or yard refuse;

(b) waste, whether solid or otherwise, including hazardous waste, clinical waste, pharmaceutical waste, industrial

waste, commercial waste, animal waste and agricultural waste; and

(c) litter or any other thing which is being disposed of;

“refuse collection work” includes –

(a) cleaning drains, watercourses, streets and other public places; and

(b) collecting, loading, transporting and disposing of refuse;

“refuse collector” means an employee whose job mainly consists of –

(a) cleaning drains, watercourses, streets and other public places; or

(b) collecting, loading, unloading, transporting and disposing of refuse in a scavenging vehicle;

“scavenging vehicle” –

(a) means any vehicle licensed by the Ministry responsible for the subject of solid waste and hazardous waste, to be used for the purposes of refuse collection and disposal; and

(b) includes mechanically propelled vehicles or otherwise.

3. These regulations shall apply to all employers and employees involved in refuse collection works.

4. (1) Subject to paragraph (2), the Ministry shall ensure compliance with these regulations.

(2) The Ministry responsible for the subject of solid waste and hazardous waste shall be the authority responsible for compliance with regulation 9(1).

5. (1) Every employer shall conduct a suitable and sufficient assessment of any risk to the safety and health to which any refuse collector, employed by him, is exposed to while at work, for the purpose of identifying and implementing measures to ensure the safety and health of the employee.

(2) The assessment conducted under paragraph (1) shall, for the purpose of ensuring the safety and health of specific persons, including new or expectant mothers, take into consideration such special safety and health needs as may be required to ensure the safety and health of all refuse collectors.

6. (1) An employer shall ensure that every refuse collector employed by him is provided with appropriate and adequate information, instruction and training to ensure his safety and health at work.

(2) Every employer shall ensure that all refuse collection works are carried out under adequate supervision.

(3) No employer shall require a refuse collector, who has not received adequate safety and health information, instruction and training, to carry out or supervise refuse collection works.

7. (1) Every employer shall, based on the risk assessment, provide the refuse collectors employed by him with –

- (a) suitable and appropriate personal protective equipment which shall include suitable and appropriate head, face, eye, hand, foot, respiratory protection;
- (b) hearing protection, wherever required;
- (c) high visibility clothing; and

- (d) adequate information, instruction and training on safe manual handling and the use of appropriate receptacles.

(2) All personal protective equipment and clothing provided under paragraph (1) shall be replaced when they become unserviceable so as to ensure that the refuse collectors are adequately protected at all times.

(3) All personal protective equipment and clothing provided under these regulations shall –

- (a) provide appropriate weather protection, including protection against rain, wind or heat;
- (b) provide adequate cut and puncture resistance, particularly in relation to gloves and footwear to protect against sharp or broken glasses, metal objects or other hazardous materials;
- (c) ensure adequate slip resistance to reduce the risks of slips and falls.

(4) Every refuse collector shall wear or use any personal protective equipment or clothing provided to him during refuse collection works.

(5) Every employer shall ensure that the personal protective equipment and clothing provided are –

- (a) properly worn or used by the refuse collectors; and
- (b) adequately maintained in an efficient and hygienic condition.

8. (1) Every employer shall ensure that all refuse collectors employed by him undergo –

- (a) a complete medical examination at least once every 6 months; and
- (b) immunisation against diseases which refuse collectors are at risk of contracting, which shall include tetanus, hepatitis B and any other disease as recommended by a registered medical practitioner.

(2) Every employer shall keep a register in which shall be entered the name, address, National Identity Card number, date of employment, date of immunisation, date and result of medical examination of every refuse collector, and any action taken following such medical examination.

(3) All expenses related to paragraph (1) shall be borne by the employer.

9. (1) (a) Every employer shall, after the coming into operation of these regulations, ensure that any new vehicle to be used as a scavenging vehicle complies with the following –

- (i) it is fitted with a cabin with secured seating facilities with back-rest for refuse collectors;
- (ii) it is fitted with a separate partition separating the driver's cabin and the cabin for the refuse collectors from the waste body;
- (iii) it is fitted with safe and adequate means of access to and egress from the scavenging vehicle; and
- (iv) it is duly licensed by the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change to be used as a scavenging vehicle.

(b) Paragraph (a)(i) and (ii) shall not apply to scavenging vehicles where the driver's cabin has sufficient seating facilities to accommodate the refuse collectors as passengers.

(2) No refuse collector shall –

- (a) travel in the waste body of a scavenging vehicle; and
- (b) hang, alight from or mount on a scavenging vehicle which is moving.

(3) Every employer shall ensure that the provisions of paragraph (2) are complied with.

10. (1) Every employer shall, so far as is reasonably practicable take appropriate measures to ensure that the refuse collectors do not enter or stand in the waste body of the scavenging vehicle for the purpose of throwing, stacking or compacting refuse.

(2) For the purpose of complying with paragraph (1) the employer may make use of appropriately designed lorries fitted with either mechanical compacting mechanisms, or other appropriate equipment.

11. (1) Every employer shall ensure that all refuse collectors involved in refuse collection works are provided with an adequate and conveniently accessible supply of wholesome drinking water.

(2) Every employer shall ensure that the refuse collectors are provided with a conveniently accessible supply of clean water and soap, clean towels or suitable means of cleaning and drying on the scavenging vehicle.

12. An employer shall ensure that –

- (a) every scavenging vehicle is, at all times, equipped with a first aid kit; and

- (b) at least one refuse collector in every scavenging vehicle has practical knowledge of first aid attention to be provided.

13. (1) Any new or expectant mother shall, following a request made by her and on recommendation of a Government medical practitioner, be offered such work that does not affect her safety and health.

(2) The reassignment of work under paragraph (1) shall not result in any reduction of the remuneration or employment benefit of the new or expectant mother.

14. Every employer who, on the coming into operation of these regulations, has a scavenging vehicle which does not meet the requirements of regulation 9(1)(a)(i) and (ii) may continue to use such vehicle, provided that he takes all necessary measures to ensure the safe transportation of refuse collectors either in the driver's cabin or otherwise.

15. Any person who fails to comply with these regulations shall commit an offence and shall, in respect of an offence committed by him –

- (a) as an employee, be liable to a fine not exceeding 10,000 rupees;
- (b) as an employer, be liable to a fine not exceeding 100,000 rupees, and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years.

16. These regulations shall come into operation on 20 June 2026.

Made by the Minister on 16 June 2026.
