

# Centre revised Cadre allocation policy, introduced a new grouping structure

As per the new policy, the allocation of “insider” candidates – those opting for their home state cadre – will strictly follow the order of merit and vacancy availability.

Written by [Mahender Singh Manral](#)

New Delhi | Updated: January 24, 2026 08:33 PM IST

5 min read

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As per the new guidelines, the cadre controlling authorities – the Department of Personnel and Training for IAS, the Ministry of Home Affairs for IPS, and the Ministry of Environment for IFS – will determine the number of vacancies each year. (File photo)

In a significant administrative reform, the central government has revised the cadre allocation policy for the three All-India Services – the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Forest Service (IFoS) – introducing a new grouping

structure as per alphabetically that replaces the earlier zonal arrangement for allocation of cadres to successful candidates of the civil services examination.

The new framework, notified by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) after consultations with state governments, revises the system that had been in place since 2017. It introduces a new grouping structure that replaces the earlier zonal arrangement for allocation of cadres to successful candidates of the civil services examination. “To ensure a fair and transparent system, all State Cadres and Joint Cadres have been arranged alphabetically and divided into four groups,” the DoPT said in the notification. The allocation will now be based on these four groups, with candidates expressing preferences among them.

### **According to the new grouping:**

- Group I: AGMUT (Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territories), Andhra Pradesh, Assam-Meghalaya, Bihar, and Chhattisgarh.
- Group II: Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, and Madhya Pradesh.
- Group III: Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, and Tamil Nadu.
- Group IV: Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.

Earlier, Zone-I had seven cadres – AGMUT, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Rajasthan and Haryana. Zone-II consisted of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha, while Zone-III comprised Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam-Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura and Nagaland constituted Zone-IV, while Zone-V had Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Officials said the restructured framework seeks to maintain national integration within the civil services while addressing concerns raised by several state governments regarding uneven vacancy distribution under the previous policy.

Sources in the DoPT indicated that the Centre expects the new allocation model to streamline administrative processes and enhance inter-state exposure for young officers, in line with the original spirit of the All-India Services.

Under the revised guidelines, the cadre-controlling authorities – DoPT for IAS, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) for IPS, and Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) for IFS – will annually determine the number of vacancies in each service. These

vacancies will be distributed among various categories, including Unreserved (UR), Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Other Backward Classes (OBC).

The new framework, issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), aims to bring greater transparency and consistency to the system of vacancy determination and cadre allocation.

### Time-bound exercise

“The vacancies so determined would be communicated to the State governments and published on the concerned Ministry’s websites. Both the results of the Civil Services Examination/Indian Forest Service examinations on the basis of which the recruitment is to be made. Since this would be a time bound exercise, the requisition received from the State governments after the deadline, as prescribed by the Central government, would not be considered while determining the vacancies,” Yashu Rustagi, Director, DoPT, said in the new policy issued on January 23.

According to the new policy, the principles for the maintenance of rosters for determination of vacancies for category-wise reservation and insider/outsider distribution would be as per the established procedure.

“The determination of vacancies will be based on the cadre gap as of January 1 of the year following the Civil Services Examination (CSE). States must submit their vacancy requisitions by January 31 of the same year. The new norms also clarify that vacancies earmarked for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) will be treated as part of the Unreserved category and reflected accordingly in the cadre roster,” an official said.

The policy reiterates that allocation of “insider” candidates – those opting for their home state cadre – will strictly follow the order of merit and vacancy availability. “A candidate’s willingness to serve in their home State is now a mandatory condition for eligibility against an insider vacancy,” the official said.

### Rotational cycle system

Under the new policy, an official said now cadre allocation will proceed through a rotational cycle system – corresponding to the 25 states and joint cadres – with each cycle covering 25 candidates in merit order. “If multiple candidates fall within the same cycle, allocation priority will go to the one with the higher rank, while the others move to subsequent cycles,” the official added.

An official said after insiders are placed, allocation for outsider candidates will be done per the roster system in two stages – first for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities (PwBD) and then for others. “The move is expected to bring greater objectivity to the cadre allocation process, which has long been a sensitive subject among aspirants and state governments alike. **The revised system aligns with the government’s broader goals of promoting fairness and administrative efficiency in the all-India services,”** the official said.



**Mahender Singh Manral**

