

Bill Summary

The Punjab Official Language (Amendment) Bill, 2021

- The Punjab Official Language (Amendment) Bill, 2021 was introduced on November 11, 2021 in the Punjab Assembly. The Bill amends the Punjab Official Language Act, 1967. The Act provides for the adoption of Punjabi, written in the Gurmukhi script, as the official language of the state government.
- **Punishment:** The Act mandates that all official correspondence in the state government public sector undertaking boards, local bodies, and offices of educational institutions (schools, colleges, and universities) must be in Punjabi. If any officer from these entities persistently violates the Act, he will be liable for disciplinary action under the Punjab Civil Services (Punishment and Appeal) Rules, 1970. The disciplinary action must be taken by the competent authority, on recommendation by the Director of Languages.
- **Penalties for violating provisions of the Act:** The Bill inserts a provision to penalise any defaulting officer or official. If the Director of Languages finds a prima facie case, he may issue a show cause notice to the concerned officer. If the reply to the show cause notice is found to be unsatisfactory, the Director will impose a fine on the officer (Table 1). The fine must be imposed after providing the officer an opportunity of being heard.

Table 1: Fines for respective violations

Violation	Amount
First time	Rs 500
Second time	Up to Rs 2,000
Third time	Up to Rs 5,000

Sources: The Punjab Official Language (Amendment) Bill, 2021; PRS.

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