



# Autism: Government Schemes and Programmes

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## Introduction

The Constitution of India includes persons with disabilities generically within the universal categories of person and citizen; it does not even mention disability in the prohibited grounds. Consequently, in accordance with The Constitution of India, and Rights of Persons with Disability Act 2016, there are several government schemes and programmes that can be availed by a person with disability in India. Mentioned below are the schemes and programmes that are relevant to people with autism and their families. To avail all the schemes mentioned below it is mandatory to have a disability certificate. Though currently there is no disability certificate being issued just for autism, people who want to avail any schemes can opt to take the disability certificate for Autism with MR (Mental Retardation).

## **The National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities**

The National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities was constituted by the Central Government as a legal entity. This was set up in the year 2000. The objectives of the Trust is to enable and empower persons with disability, facilitate support to registered organizations, deal with problems of disabled persons who do not have family support, promote measures for their care and protection in the event of loss of parents and guardians, evolve a procedure for appointment of guardians and trustees so that equal opportunities, protection of rights and full participation of such persons is ensured. The National Trust has several schemes and programmes available for persons with autism and their families. Some basic information about some of these schemes are detailed below. The details are accessible at <https://nationaltrust.nic.in/>

### **Samarth Scheme**

This is a Scheme for residential services, both short term (Respite Care) and Long Term (Prolonged Stay). This scheme provides for residential facilities. In addition, activities include early intervention, special education or integrated schools, open schools, pre-vocational and vocational training, employment oriented training, recreation, sports etc. To know more, [click here](#).

### **GHARAUNDA (Group Home And Rehabilitation Activities for Disabled Adults)**

The National Trust was setup in the context of parents' worries that what will happen to their children with special needs when they are no more. In order to provide a sustainable solution to this rather difficult problem, GHARAUNDA -a scheme of Lifelong Shelter & Care was conceived. GHARAUNDA seeks to provide an assured minimum quality of care services for persons with autism throughout the life at an affordable price on a sustainable basis; encourage assisted living with independence and dignity and facilitate establishment of requisite infrastructure for the assured care system throughout the country. To know more, [click here](#).

### **Niramaya (Health Insurance Scheme)**

This is a unique health insurance scheme for persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities. This scheme provides comprehensive cover irrespective of type of disability, without any selection or exclusion criteria of the pre-existing condition. An applicant may receive insurance cover up to Rs. 1 lakh with a single premium across age bands. Services covered range from regular medical check-up to hospitalization, therapy to corrective surgery, transportation, repetitive medical intervention as an in-patient, pre & post hospitalization expenses, and cashless hospitalization in empanelled hospitals, reimbursement of claims in case of OPD services and treatment through non-empanelled hospitals. To know more, [click here](#).

### **VIKAAS Day Care**

A day care scheme for persons with autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation and multiple disabilities, above 10 years for enhancing interpersonal and vocational skills. To know more, [click here](#).

### **Income Tax concessions**

Under Section 80U, in case of Person with Disability (at least 40%) deduction of Rs 75,000 /- is allowed. In case of Person with Severe Disability (80% of one or more disabilities) deduction of Rs. 1,25,000/- is allowed.

Under Section 80DD – Deduction of Rs 75,000 (Person with Disability of atleast 40%) and Rs 1,50,000 (Person with Disability of 80 % or more) in respect of maintenance including medical treatment of a dependant who is a person with disability.

To know more, [click here](#).

### **Travel Concessions**

Railways allow disabled persons to travel at concession fares up to 75% in the first and second classes. Escorts accompanying blind, orthopedically and mentally handicapped persons are also eligible to 75% concession in the basic fare. Submission of disability certificate may be required.

### **Hotel Discounts**

All India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) hotels in India offer 50% discount on room rent, and do not charge extra for the accompanying person / attendant i.e. 50% on single room tariff for double room. In addition, there is a 30% discount on food on the a-la-carte menu. It would be necessary to carry a disability certificate to the hotel.

## Rehabilitation Council of India

The Rehabilitation Council of India Act 1992 (amended 2000), has set up an apex body to enforce uniform standards for human resources development in the field of rehabilitation of persons with disabilities in the country, enhancing the responsibilities of standardizing and regulating the training including a component on research in the area of rehabilitation and special education. To know more, [click here](https://data.vikaspedia.in/short/lc?k=K8sKnPCbGHx3mTekKOCh3g).

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