NPCI
भारतीय राष्ट्रीय भुगतान निगम
NATIONAL PAYMENTS CORPORATION OF INDIA

AePS CONSOLIDATED CIRCULAR

Version 1.0

AePS
AADHAAR ENABLED PAYMENT SYSTEM

Date of Issue

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VERSION HISTORY

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PART I: PRELIMINARY

1. Scope and Applicability

1.1. National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), as the authorized payment system operator of the Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (hereinafter referred to as **"AePS"**) in exercise of its functions under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 (PSS Act, 2007), is issuing this AePS Consolidated Circular (hereinafter referred to as **"Consolidated Circular"**).

1.2. This Consolidated Circular shall be applicable to all Members and other system participants of AePS based on the nature of their participation in AePS. This Consolidated Circular must be adhered to and complied by each Member and other system participants AePS who have been bound by, or have undertaken to comply with, Operating Circulars / circulars or have agreed or undertaken, for the purposes of participation in AePS, to abide by the Operating Circulars, circulars, rules, and other terms applicable to AePS.

1.3. This Consolidated Circular incorporates and combines the Operating Circulars issued up to August 31, 2026. All Operating Circulars shall continue in substance and effect, remain applicable and be read in consonance with this Consolidated Circular until the same are withdrawn. All Operating Circulars that are identified as withdrawn are listed in Annexure C.

1.4. AePS Procedural Guidelines (AePS PG), Operating and Settlement Guidelines (OSG), Technical Specification Documents (TSD), Operating Circulars, Information Security Policies and Risk Management Directives (RMD), NPCI Brand Guidelines issued by NPCI shall continue to be in effect, be applicable to, and must be adhered to by all Members and all system participants of AePS, to the extent applicable.

1.5. The provisions of this Consolidated Circular shall be in addition to, and not in derogation of, the provisions of the PSS Act, 2007 and other Applicable Laws. Members and other system participants must comply with the Applicable Laws based on their participation in AePS. In the event of any conflict between Consolidated Circular and any Applicable Laws, the relevant Applicable Laws shall govern and prevail.

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PART II: AePS OVERVIEW, PARTICIPATION, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2. Overview

2.1. The Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AePS)is a bank-led model that provides interoperable (Offus) banking services to users using Aadhaar authentication through Business Correspondents or Agents or Customer Service Points (CSPs) as AePS Touchpoint Operators (ATOs), all hereinafter called as ATOs. It was launched in January 2011.

2.2. AePS ecosystem has the following entities:

2.2.1. Unique Identity Authority of India (UIDAI)

UIDAI is the central Statutory body in the country that issues and maintains the Aadhaar details of all residents of India along with their Demographic details like Name, Address, Date of Birth and Gender and biometric information like Fingerprints and Iris and Facial photo as registered during resident's on-boarding on Aadhaar. The guidelines for accessing and storing Aadhaar details have been laid down by UIDAI for all the participants as Requesting Entities (REs) of the Aadhaar ecosystem vide the Aadhaar Act 2016. UIDAI also governs and monitors the Aadhaar authentication related operations of REs through annual Audits.

2.2.2. National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)

NPCI as the Authentication Service Agency under UIDAI has developed the AePS application for the Banks to connect for dispensing the AePS service to their users and perform their Aadhaar authentication for completion of the transactions under the types as mentioned in Section 4.

2.2.3. Acquirer Member Banks

These member banks deploy a network of agents called as the AePS Touchpoint Operators (ATOs) that provide AePS transaction services to users.

2.2.4. AePS Touchpoint Operators (ATOs)

ATOs are the agents on-boarded by the Acquirer Member Banks who operate the AePS Touchpoints for providing AePS based transaction services to users.

2.2.5. Corporate Business Correspondents (CBCs)

At times, ATOs are not on-boarded by the Acquirer Member banks directly but through CBCs who in turn on-board and maintain the network of ATOs as per the guidelines laid down by the Acquirer Member Bank. Such ATOs initiate transactions for the users on the platform provided by the CBCs which are pushed to the Acquirer Member Banks for processing with NPCI through AePS.

2.2.6. Issuer Member Banks

Issuer Member Banks are the banks where the users have their accounts and linked their Aadhaar for carrying out their transactions through AePS.

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2.2.7. Users

Users in AePS are individuals who wish to perform their basic banking transactions through an assisted mode.

2.3. AePS presently serves the users through assisted mode for their basic banking needs.

2.4. Banks participating as Issuer Member Banks and/or Acquirer Member Banks are called as AePS Member Banks.

3. Participation in AePS

3.1. Banks from any categories – Private Sector Banks, Public Sector Banks, State Co-operative Banks, District Central Co-Operative Banks, Urban Co-operative Banks, Regional Rural Banks, Payments Banks, Small Finance Banks – can get on-boarded as AePS Member Banks.

3.2. Direct Members:

3.2.1. These AePS Member Banks have direct connectivity with NPCI for all online requests

3.2.2. They also have their RTGS Settlement Accounts linked with the NPCI's AePS Settlement system for passing the settlements towards transactions carried out in AePS.

3.3. Sub-Members:

Banks may also on-boarded as a sub-member under the sponsorship of an existing Direct Member Bank for either or both of the following. The direct member bank here is called the Sponsor Bank.

3.3.1. Connectivity with NPCI may be made through the Sponsor Bank

3.3.2. Settlement through the Sponsor Bank

3.4. All AePS Member Banks shall refer to the applicable NPCI requirements for detailed onboarding, registration, activation and offboarding procedures.

4. AePS Transaction Types

4.1. All AePS Member Banks shall mandatorily enable and support all AePS Off-us transaction types as made available by NPCI.

4.2. Further, any new or future AePS transaction types introduced by NPCI shall be implemented and enabled by all AePS Member Banks.

4.3. Transaction Types in AePS are broadly categorized into Financial, Non-Financial and Value Added Services (VAS). For any transaction types under the Financial or Non-Financial categories, if the Acquirer and Issuer Member Banks are different then the transaction mode shall be called as an Offus or an Interoperable mode and if the Acquirer and Issuer Member Banks are the same then the transaction mode shall be called as the Onus mode.

4.3.1. Financial Transaction Types:

4.3.1.1. Cash Withdrawal: Users can visit an ATO to withdraw cash from their Aadhaar linked account by providing Aadhaar Biometric Authentication.

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4.3.1.2. Cash Deposit: Users can visit an ATO to deposit cash in their Aadhaar linked account by providing Aadhaar Biometric Authentication.

4.3.1.3. Aadhaar to Aadhaar/Account Funds Transfer: Users can visit an ATO onboarded by the same Bank where their Aadhaar linked account is maintained to initiate a Funds transfer by providing Aadhaar authentication and credit to the beneficiary having account with any AePS Member Bank by giving the beneficiary's Aadhaar or Account number along with the beneficiary's bank name.

4.3.1.4. BHIM Aadhaar Pay: This is a payment transaction for any purchase where users can visit any merchant enabled to accept this transaction type and pay from their Aadhaar linked account by providing Aadhaar Biometric Authentication. Such BHIM Aadhaar Pay transactions are initiated by Merchants onboarded by the Acquirer Member banks (as given in Section 6) to accept payment from users against any purchases by debiting their Aadhaar linked bank accounts maintained with any Issuer Member banks, with help of Aadhaar biometric authentication.

4.3.2. Non-Financial Transaction Types:

4.3.2.1. Balance Inquiry: Users can visit an ATO to check balance in their Aadhaar linked account by providing Aadhaar Biometric Authentication

4.3.2.2. Mini-Statement: Users can visit an ATO to get upto last 10 transactions in their Aadhaar linked account by providing Aadhaar Biometric Authentication

4.3.2.3. Onus Authentication: Users can visit an ATO or their Bank branch and provide their Aadhaar Biometric authentication to avail any banking services provided by their bank in their bank account like service requests, account statement etc or any transactions in Onus mode.

4.3.3. Value Added Services (VAS)

4.3.3.1. eKYC: AePS Member Banks and other Non-Banking Entities on-boarded for eKYC can initiate this transaction, based on user's Aadhaar OTP/Biometric based Authentication, to fetch the user's Aadhaar demographic details as maintained by UIDAI.

4.3.3.2. Demographic Authentication: AePS Member Banks initiate this transaction to verify the user demographic details with the details as maintained with UIDAI against the user's Aadhaar.

4.3.3.3. Tokenization: UIDAI maps an Aadhaar Token for an Aadhaar associated with respective Bank. AePS Member Banks can fetch the Aadhaar Token mapped against the user Aadhaar for their Bank.

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4.3.3.4. Aadhaar Seeding Status: This service is extended by NPCI to AePS Member Banks for their users to get Bank name where their Aadhaar is currently seeded to receive DBT by taking user's Aadhaar and Biometric information for authentication.

4.3.3.5. Best Finger Detection: This service helps the user to identify their finger, which when used for Aadhaar Biometric authentication, that would give the best match.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1. Issuer Member Banks

5.1.1. User On-boarding and Enablement Lifecycle:

5.1.1.1. During new user on-boarding, the Issuer Member Bank shall take explicit user consent to 'Enable' or 'Not to enable' AePS interoperable AePS debit transactions (Cash Withdrawal / Funds Transfer / BHIM Aadhaar Pay) as part of the account opening process.

5.1.1.2. Issuer Member Bank shall keep AePS Debit transactions enabled in user accounts, subject to:

- Explicit user consent/request from the user,
- The disablement framework as given in Section 5.1.1.6 for inactive accounts where AePS would otherwise be disabled, the following remain eligible categories for continued AePS service: accounts that have received APBS (DBT) credit; PMJDY accounts; and BSBDA accounts.

5.1.1.3. Duration and Validity: AePS debit service remains enabled on a user account indefinitely, subject to the disablement triggers, user-initiated disablement, and user-initiated re-enablement requests as mentioned in Section 5.1.1.5.

5.1.1.4. Modification — User-Initiated Enable / Disable: Banks shall provide multiple options for users to Enable or Disable AePS debit transactions. Options to include Mobile Banking, SMS Banking (short code), Net Banking, WhatsApp Banking, IVR, customer support, or any such medium which is convenient to users — including the bank's own BC outlet — in addition to the Branch. Implementation timeline for multiple options: at least one option (in addition to Branch) was by 31 December 2023, with other options to be made available in the subsequent three months.

5.1.1.5. Re-enablement after disablement on account of a fraud transaction: AePS can be again enabled on user request after carrying out necessary internal process laid down by the Issuer Member bank.

5.1.1.6. Suspension or Temporary Deactivation — Mandatory Disablement Triggers

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- Disablement for fraud history: The Bank shall disable AePS debit transactions for accounts in which the only AePS debit transaction in the past 12 months was reported as a fraud transaction. It can again be enabled on user request after carrying out necessary authentication.
- Disablement for dormancy: The Bank shall disable AePS debit transactions for accounts with NO AePS debit transactions in the preceding 12 months, excluding (i) accounts that have received APBS (DBT) credit, and (ii) PMJDY and BSBDA accounts. For accounts with vintage less than 12 months, time from account opening can be considered. Implementation timeline: 30 November 2023.

5.1.1.7. Bank shall not de-seed Aadhaar from the bank account under any circumstances as part of these disablement measures.

5.1.1.8. Disablement under this Section shall not affect future DBT credits or AePS credits, Aadhaar-based UPI onboarding, eKYC, or any other such services.

5.1.2. Transaction Processing:

5.1.2.1. The Issuer Member Banks shall ensure that its switch and related systems remain connected, have adequate capacity and are always available to receive and process AePS transactions. The Issuer shall maintain appropriate business continuity and disaster recovery arrangements in accordance with applicable NPCI requirements.

5.1.2.2. The Issuer Member Banks shall ensure that:

- Every response to an AePS transaction contains all mandatory and conditional data elements as the case may be under the applicable NPCI requirements;
- Transaction response codes are used strictly in accordance with the applicable NPCI requirements;
- Response messages accurately reflect the outcome of the transaction; and
- Transaction responses are sent within the timelines prescribed under the applicable NPCI requirements.

5.1.2.3. Where an AePS transaction is approved by the Issuer Member Banks, the Issuer Member Bank shall ensure that the relevant account is appropriately debited, credited or updated, as applicable to the transaction or service.

5.1.2.4. Issuer Member Bank shall comply with all applicable risk management, fraud mitigation, transaction control, and security requirements as prescribed under Applicable Laws for all AePS, and shall implement necessary controls to safeguard the integrity, security, and reliability of AePS transactions.

5.1.2.5. Issuer Member Banks shall ensure compliance with the NPCI Requirements which shall be enforced through self-attestation activity.

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5.1.2.6. Issuer Member Banks shall perform reconciliation, settlement and dispute management of all AePS transactions as specified in the NPCI Requirements.

5.1.2.7. The Issuer Member Banks shall maintain transaction records, authentication records, system logs, reconciliation records, user complaints and dispute-related documents for the period prescribed under Applicable Laws and shall make such records available for audit, investigation and dispute resolution, for purpose of settlement reconciliation and or similar purposes as may be requested by NPCI from time to time.

5.1.2.8. Partial denial of services by Issuer Member Banks to specific Acquirer Member Banks is not permitted.

5.1.2.9. In case Issuer Member Banks intend to implement per-user, per-day, and per-month volume- and value-based transaction limits at the Issuer Member Bank's end, in addition to the standardized limits set out in Annexure D, in accordance with their risk appetite and the guidelines provided by regulators, shall present such rules, and not implement the same until approved by the AePS Steering Committee.

5.1.2.10. Issuer Member Banks shall submit any such requests to NPCI in a format (Bank Name | Per Day Limit (Number / Value) | Per Month Limit (Number / Value)), addressed to the Head – Product (AePS), NPCI.

5.1.2.11. Decline response codes (system-level notifications between participants): Issuer Member Banks shall mandatorily use the following response codes while declining AePS transactions under specified scenarios:

5.1.2.11.1. Response Code '61 – Exceeds Withdrawal Amount Limit': To be used where a transaction is declined on account of breach of the cumulative monthly withdrawal limit.

5.1.2.11.2. Response Code '78 – AePS Debit Transactions Disabled': To be used where AePS debit transactions are disabled at the Issuer Member Bank level.

5.1.2.11.3. Response Code 'UW': To be used where a transaction is declined due to breach of Issuer Member Bank-defined limits, including per-day and/or per-month transaction limits.

5.1.2.11.4. For all other decline scenarios, Member Banks shall adhere to the response codes as per NPCI requirements.

5.1.2.12. Notification of rules set by Issuer Member Bank to NPCI: Whenever Member Banks update their per-user / per-day / per-month rules, they shall notify NPCI of the change.

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5.1.3. User Notifications

5.1.3.1. SMS Notifications to be sent to users regarding transactions processed in their account as per the format given in Annexure F

5.1.3.2. Account statement narrations of users to be standardized as in Annexure G.

5.1.3.3. Disablement of AePS: Banks shall mandatorily send communication to users whose AePS debit transactions have been disabled, along with the process and options available to enable it.

5.1.3.4. Decline due to disablement: The Bank shall send a notification (SMS/Email) to the user whose transaction is declined due to disablement, informing the reason of decline and the available options to enable AePS.

5.1.3.5. Notification regarding charging for Mini Statement beyond the prescribed monthly minimum: Banks shall duly notify their users if they wish to charge users for Mini Statement services above the prescribed monthly limit of transactions as given in Annexure D.

5.2. Acquirer Member Banks

5.2.1. ATO On-boarding and Management:

5.2.1.1. The Acquirer Member Banks shall be responsible for the ATOs, the front-end application used by ATOs for AePS transactions, operations of the ATOs and, availability of service at the AePS Touchpoints.

5.2.1.2. The Acquirer Member Banks shall ensure that all ATOs giving AePS services comply with regulatory requirements and the applicable NPCI requirements.

5.2.1.3. ATO geo-location capture at onboarding: The Acquirer Member Bank shall capture the geo-location of all AePS touchpoints, in accordance with RBI's 'Framework for Geo-tagging of Payment System Touch Points' dated 25 March 2022.

5.2.1.4. ATO’s written consent for PAN transmission: Acquirer Member Banks shall obtain written consent from their ATO for passing the PAN of the ATO in online transactions to NPCI, to be used by NPCI for processing AePS transactions and for risk management (including detecting and mitigating fraudulent transactions).

5.2.2. Transaction Processing

5.2.2.1. The Acquirer Member Banks shall ensure that a transactions are initiated only through an approved ATO and that the transaction request accurately represents the selected transaction type and the action performed by the user at the terminal.

5.2.2.2. The Acquirer shall ensure that:

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- Every transaction request sent to AePS contains all mandatory and conditional data elements prescribed under the applicable NPCI requirements;
- Transaction messages accurately reflect the transaction initiated or performed at the ATO;
- The appropriate transaction type, processing code, Merchant Category Code and terminal identifiers and accurate terminal location and address details are populated as per NPCI requirements
- Confidential user and transaction data are transmitted securely in accordance with the applicable security requirements.
- Any other details in accordance with NPCI requirements.

5.2.2.3. The Acquirer Member Banks shall accurately configure, maintain and update the following details for every ATO terminal connected to AePS and shall share such details with NPCI in accordance with the applicable NPCI requirements:

- Terminal identifier;
- Terminal address and geographical location;
- Acquirer Member Bank code and routing details;
- such other parameters as may be prescribed under the applicable NPCI requirements.

5.2.2.4. Acquirer Member Banks shall comply with all applicable risk management, fraud mitigation, transaction control, and security requirements as prescribed under Applicable Laws for all AePS transactions, and shall implement necessary controls to safeguard the integrity, security, and reliability of AePS transactions.

5.2.2.5. AePS transactions are initiated at AePS Touchpoint by the ATO (or, for BHIM Aadhaar Pay, at a merchant terminal) for the user using Aadhaar authentication.

5.2.2.6. The Acquirer Member Banks shall ensure that the ATO provides clear and accurate transaction-status messages to the user. A receipt, screen message or acknowledgement shall not indicate that a transaction has been completed successfully where the terminal has not performed the corresponding action.

5.2.2.7. Acquirer Member Banks shall perform reconciliation, settlement and dispute management of all AePS transactions as specified in the NPCI Requirements.

5.2.3. Handling Process for Execution Failure / Fraud reporting

5.2.3.1. Issuer Banks shall decline the transaction with the appropriate response code 61 (for Exceeds monthly withdrawal amount limit), 78 (for AePS debit transactions disabled) , or 'UW' (for other limits set by Issuer Member Banks)

5.2.3.2. On suspected fraud or fraudulent transactions: Member Banks shall submit investigation reports in the format prescribed (covering Case Details, User Details,

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Transaction Details, Modus Operandi, FIR Details, ATO Details, Corporate BC Details (if any), and Investigation Details), on the bank's letter-head, addressed to the Head – Risk Management, NPCI. The investigation report format to be as per the NPCI requirement.

5.2.3.3. Data retention for investigation — Geo-location data: The transaction location data shall be purged within T + 4 days ('T' being the transaction date) by all those entities in the ecosystem who have access to the same.

6. Data Privacy, Data Protection and User Information Management

Members, Sub-Members and system participants of AePS shall ensure that the processing, including collection, access, use, storage, transmission, sharing and disposal, of any personal data or payment-related information, including any User information, is undertaken in a secure, lawful and accountable manner, in compliance with Applicable Laws. Further, Members, Sub-Members and system participants of AePS network shall implement applicable, required governance and compliance frameworks, including no less restrictive than industry standard controls and measures, for such processing.

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PART III: BHIM AADHAAR PAY FEATURES AND SERVICES

7. BHIM Aadhaar Pay

7.1. Overview

BHIM Aadhaar Pay is an Aadhaar-based merchant payment service. The provided circulars reference its operation through Omni-channel applications of member banks and its availability for active Merchant Pay business operated by member banks.

7.2. Classification

BHIM Aadhaar Pay service is available to: (a) individuals; and (b) Corporate entities (extension).

7.3. Limits and Authentication

Compliance with Omni-channel directives: Banks having an Omni-channel app shall ensure that the BHIM Aadhaar Pay section complies with the directives regarding the BHIM Aadhaar Pay limits and Merchant authentication on their Omni-channel applications.

7.4. Merchant Onboarding and Monitoring

Merchant Onboarding and Monitoring by the Acquirer Member Banks shall be as per the prevailing guidelines as issued by the regulator from time to time. Merchants shall be on-boarded by the Acquirer Member Banks either directly or through Payment Aggregators only as per the guidelines issued from the regulator from time to time. Merchants should not be on-boarded through any other unauthorized partners.

7.5. Transaction Execution

Merchant Pay transactions shall be presented as Aadhaar Pay transactions and shall not be processed as AePS Cash Withdrawal.

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PART IV: SETTLEMENT, RECONCILIATION AND DISPUTE MANAGEMENT

8. Settlement

8.1. The AePS Member Banks' settlement obligation arises once the transaction is successfully processed in AePS. The payment obligations with respect to settlement among the Members shall be determined through netting procedure, i.e. the net debit/credit position based on the total debit and credit transactions for a particular Member including disputes & adjustments, interchange fees, fees and charges payable to NPCI, etc. Once the netting procedure is complete, the settlement shall be final and irrevocable.

8.2. For each settlement cycle, an AePS Member Bank (Member) may be in either a net debit position or a net credit position. In case of a net debit position, the Member's payment obligation in respect of Settlement shall arise towards other Members. As part of the settlement process, the Settlement Account of all the Members that are in a net debit position is debited and Settlement Account of all the Members in net credit position is credited, through AePS Reconciliation Clearing and Settlement System (ARCS) in the Real-Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) system. To affect this payment obligation, the Members who are in net debit position shall ensure that they maintain sufficient funds in their respective Settlement Accounts. The settlement cycles and time of settlement file posting in RTGS are given in Annexure E for reference.

8.3. The Sponsor bank shall be responsible for fulfilling the payment obligations of its Sub-Members with respect to settlement. The net settlement amount payable by a sub-member is included as part of the settlement file of its Sponsor bank while posting the file for settlement.

8.4. In case the Settlement Account of a Member having a net debit, position does not possess adequate funds, the Member shall be in breach of its payment obligations with respect to settlement, leading to a cascading effect on other Members' payment obligations and successful completion of the settlement.

8.5. The settlement is governed under the Settlement Guarantee Mechanism communicated by NPCI from time to time.

8.6. Sponsor banks shall manage Net Debit Cap (NDC) limits for its and its Sub Members transactions within the overall NDC limits approved by NPCI for the Sponsor Bank. The Sponsor Bank shall maintain adequate controls, approvals and governance around NDC limit management.

8.7. Members shall refer and be guided by the Procedural Guidelines (PG) Operations and Settlement Guidelines document (OSG) for detailed settlement procedures, reports availability, operational processes and exception handling, for transactions, for adherence.

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9. Reconciliation

All Members are responsible for daily reconciliation of their AePS transactions. Members shall have processes and systems for reconciliation of AePS transactions, which shall be automated to the extent practicable and shall accord top priority to carry out reconciliation. The Member shall follow the procedures set out in the AePS OSG for reconciliation of declined, timed out and exception transactions.

10. Dispute Management

10.1. Members are responsible for addressing and resolving the complaints raised for AePS transactions. Members shall set up and clearly communicate a dedicated and easily accessible grievance redressal mechanism for addressing such complaints. Members shall ensure that contact details for raising AePS related complaints are prominently displayed on their website and other channels. Complaints received by NPCI, if any, shall be redirected to the relevant Member for resolution.

10.2. Members shall address the AePS related complaints / transactions disputes using the dispute resolution mechanism made available by NPCI. Members shall comply with NPCI prescribed chargeback eligibility criteria, limits, timelines and dispute management process.

10.3. Members shall abide by the RBI guidelines on Harmonization of Turn Around Time (TAT) and relevant compensation for failed transactions using authorized Payment Systems and any other regulatory guidelines related to AePS related grievance redressal.

10.4. Members shall refer to and be guided by the AePS PG and OSG on AePS dispute management rules and regulations.

10.5. Every Member may be enabled on Unified Dispute and Issue Resolution (UDIR) for online resolution of user complaints, may connect its user-facing channels to UDIR and may expose real-time dispute status as prescribed. Members may also refer to and be guided by the AePS UDIR related documents issued for implementation of UDIR for AePS transactions.

10.6. Members shall collaboratively endeavor to settle discrepancies raised by other Member/s. All such discrepancies should be resolved amicably as per the PG and OSG on AePS dispute management rules and regulations.

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PART V: COMPLIANCE AND SELF ATTESTATION

11. Self Attestation

11.1. Self-Attestation is a periodic compliance process through which Members are required to confirm their adherence to applicable NPCI guidelines, operating circulars, procedural guidelines, technical specifications, product feature documents, risk management directions, brand guidelines, API usage guidelines, and other documents issued by NPCI from time to time.

11.2. Members shall submit the Self-Attestation through the prescribed NPCI portal on an annual basis or as and when required by NPCI.

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PART VI: GENERAL

12. Amendments / Modifications

This Consolidated Circular may be amended, modified, supplemented, suspended or withdrawn, in part or in whole, from time to time as deemed necessary, including for fulfillment of any operational, technical, risk, security, compliance or participant requirements specified in this Consolidated Circular. Such amendments shall be binding on all Members, Sub-Members and system participants of the AePS from the relevant issue or effective date.

13. Audit and Records

Every Member, Sub-Member and system participant of the AePS shall provide full cooperation and access to NPCI or its authorized personnel during any inspection or audit of the activities, systems, processes, controls and compliance of any Member or system participant in relation to the products, services or functionalities governed by this Consolidated Circular and/or compliance with Applicable Law in relation to the payment system.

Every Member, Sub-Member and system participant of the AePS shall maintain complete and accurate records relating to activities undertaken pursuant to this Consolidated Circular and shall preserve such records for such period as may be prescribed by Applicable Law, as amended from time to time.

14. Requisition of Information

Every Member, Sub-Member and system participant of the AePS shall provide any information, records, books, registers, logs, data, correspondence, policies, agreements, reports, certifications, transaction details, system-generated records, audit trails, User consents, or other documents and materials relating to the AePS that may be required from time to time.

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Annexure A: Glossary

Term	Definition
Acquirer / Acquirer Bank / Acquirer Member Bank	"Acquirer" or "Acquirer Bank" or “Acquirer Member Bank” means a Member Bank certified as an acquirer, responsible for offering AePS services through its ATO network and for implementing acquirer-side controls (including per-Aadhaar, per-terminal, per-day limits and denomination standardization).
AePS / AEPS	"AePS" or "AEPS" means the Aadhaar Enabled Payment System, launched in January 2011.
AePS OFF-US Transaction	"AePS OFF-US Transaction" means an AePS transaction where the Issuer and Acquirer are different Member Banks, and covers Cash Deposit, Cash Withdrawal, and Fund Transfer as the financial transaction types and Balance Inquiry and Mini-statement as the non-financial transaction types.
AePS Onus Transaction	"AePS Onus Transaction" means an AePS transaction where the Issuer and Acquirer are same and consists of the Authentication transactions requests initiated by the AePS Member Banks for their users at the Bank's branches or their own ATOs.
AePS Touchpoint	"AePS Touchpoint" means a point of presence (terminal/device of a ATO) at which AePS transactions are originated, subject to geo-tagging and geo-fencing requirements.
AePS Touchpoint Operator	"AePS Touchpoint Operator" means an individual appointed by Acquirer Member bank to operate AePS touchpoint (mobile or fixed).
AgentID	"AgentID" means the tag/field in the AePS online transaction message used by the Acquirer Member Bank to transmit the PAN of its ATO to NPCI.
APBS (DBT)	"APBS (DBT)" means Aadhaar Payment Bridge System credit / Direct Benefit Transfer credit; referenced as an excluded category for disablement of AePS services in inactive accounts.
Balance Enquiry	"Balance Enquiry" means a non-financial AePS transaction permitting a user to check the balance of the Aadhaar-linked account, to which no limit applies.
BC/Business Correspondent/Agent/AePS Touchpoint Operator (ATO)	"BC" or "Business Correspondent" or "Agent" or “ATO” means personnel or an entity onboarded by an Acquirer Member Bank to

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Term	Definition
	deliver AePS services using mobile/moveable devices, including Corporate BCs and third-party service providers.
BHIM Aadhaar Pay	"BHIM Aadhaar Pay" means an Aadhaar-based merchant payment service that allows users to make payments to merchants/Corporate entities using Aadhaar authentication.
BSBDA	"BSBDA" means a Basic Savings Bank Deposit Account; referenced as an excluded category for disablement of AePS services in inactive accounts.
Cash Deposit (AePS)	"Cash Deposit (AePS)" means deposit of cash by a user through an ATO using Aadhaar.
Cash Withdrawal (AePS)	"Cash Withdrawal (AePS)" means withdrawal of cash by a user at ATO outlet using Aadhaar authentication.
Corporate BC	"Corporate BC" means a corporate-tier Business Correspondent referenced as a category of intermediary through which member entities may operate.
Fund Transfer (Aadhaar to Aadhaar)	"Aadhaar to Aadhaar Fund Transfer" means fund transfer initiated through AePS between Aadhaar-linked accounts.
Issuer/ Issuer Bank / Issuer Member Bank	"Issuer" or "Issuer Bank" or “Issuer Member Bank” means a Member Bank holding the user's account.
Mini Statement	"Mini Statement" means a non-financial AePS transaction providing a short statement of recent account activity and is subject to a monthly limit.
PAN	"PAN" means the Permanent Account Number of the ATO, transmitted in the AgentID tag for risk management purposes.
PMJDY	"PMJDY" means a Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana account; referenced as an excluded category for disablement of AePS services in inactive accounts.
Split Transaction	"Split Transaction" means the deliberate splitting of a single withdrawal amount into multiple smaller transactions, typically by ATOs to earn additional commission.
Two-Factor Authentication (2FA)	"Two-Factor Authentication" or "2FA" means an authentication mechanism for BCs/Agents/Merchants performing Aadhaar-based transactions, comprising two factors, at least one of which is Aadhaar-based biometric authentication.

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Annexure B: Reference Circulars

Reference Number	Date	Issuing Authority	Subject / Scope	Relevance	Status
NPCI/2015-16/AEPS/03 (Circular 3)	25 Jan 2016	NPCI	Implementation of per transaction limit for AePS transactions (Rs. 10,000)	Acquirer per-transaction limit; baseline for limits framework	Subsumed
NPCI/2017-18/AEPS/008 (Circular 21)	19 Jun 2017	NPCI	Circular against 19th AePS Steering Committee Meeting (BHIM Aadhaar Pay compliance, on-us reporting, extension of Rs. 10k limit to issuer, paise reconciliation)	Extends Circular 3 obligation to issuer; BHIM Aadhaar Pay operational items	Subsumed
NPCI/2017-18/AEPS/106 (Circular 25)	12 Dec 2017	NPCI	BHIM Aadhaar Pay — limit increase to Rs. 10,000; extension to corporates; no sub-limit	BHIM Aadhaar Pay per-transaction limit and scope	Subsumed
NPCI/2018-19/AEPS/010 (Circular 35)	13 Feb 2019	NPCI	Control measures against split transactions; standard investigation structure for	Issuer limits framework; acquirer split-control best practice (modified by Cir 65); fraud investigation format (Annexure II)	Modified (acquirer side limit made non-mandatory); otherwise Subsumed

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Reference Number	Date	Issuing Authority	Subject / Scope	Relevance	Status
			fraudulent transactions		
NPCI/2019-20/AEPS/006 (Circular 43)	6 Sep 2019	NPCI	Mandating all transaction types by Acquirer and Issuer banks live in AePS	Mandatory enrolment as Issuer; five mandatory acquirer services	Subsumed
NPCI/2019-20/AEPS/012 (Circular 49)	11 Mar 2020	NPCI	Implementation of standardized limit for AePS (10 cash withdrawals or Rs. 50,000 per month, whichever earlier; no limit on BE/MS)	Standardized monthly issuer limit framework	Modified (cash withdrawal monthly count revised to minimum 5)
NPCI/2020-21/AEPS/011 (Circular 59)	30 Mar 2021	NPCI	Implementation of monthly limit for Off-us Mini Statement (minimum 5)	Issuer-side Mini Statement monthly minimum	Subsumed (also restated by Cir 65)
NPCI/2021-22/AEPS/002 (Circular 61)	18 Aug 2021	NPCI	Splitting of transactions below Rs. 10,000 for Off-us transactions initiated from Micro-ATM (AePS & Card+PIN)	Anti-splitting reiteration; user right to single-transaction up to Rs. 10,000	Subsumed
NPCI/2021-22/AEPS/65 (Circular 65)	20 Dec 2021	NPCI	Implementation of transaction limits and two-factor authentication	Mandatory acquirer 5/user/terminal/day; 2FA for BCs; issuer 5 CW/month; 5 MS/month	Modified (acquirer side limit made non-

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Reference Number	Date	Issuing Authority	Subject / Scope	Relevance	Status
			(2FA) — modifies Cir 35, 36, 49, 59		mandatory); otherwise Subsumed
NPCI/2023-24/AePS/081 (Circular 81)	15 Jun 2023	NPCI	Standardization of Interoperable Cash Withdrawal transactions at BC Outlets (multiples of Rs. 50 where amount > Rs. 100)	Denomination standardisation for AePS and Card+PIN via NFS	Subsumed
NPCI/2023-24/AEPS/010 (Circular 86)	26 Oct 2023	NPCI	Enhancing security of AePS transactions — fraud-only disablement; dormancy disablement; consent at onboarding; multiple enable/disable channels	Account-level enable/disable framework; response code 78	Subsumed
NPCI/2023-24/AePS/087 (Circular 87)	2 Nov 2023	NPCI	AePS transaction limits — cumulative monthly Rs. 50,000 (AePS CW + BHIM Aadhaar Pay)	Issuer cumulative monthly value limit; response code 61	Subsumed

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Reference Number	Date	Issuing Authority	Subject / Scope	Relevance	Status
NPCI/2023-24/AEPS/091 (Circular 91)	4 Apr 2024	NPCI	Transmission of PAN of Business Correspondent / Agent in online transaction messages, for risk management	PAN in AgentID tag; written consent from BC/Agent	Subsumed
NPCI/2024-25/RMD/002 (RMD-002)	3 Jul 2024	NPCI	AePS Risk Mitigation Measures — Geo-tagging and Geo-fencing of AePS touchpoints	20 km geo-fence radius; Geolocation data to be purged by T+4 days; alignment with RBI 25-Mar-2022 framework	Subsumed
NPCI/2026-27/AePS/001/096 (Circular 96)	12 June 2026	NPCI	Introducing step-up authentication for Cash Withdrawal & BHIM Aadhaar Pay transactions carried out through AePS	All AePS Cash Withdrawal and BHIM Aadhaar Pay transactions with transaction amount greater than INR 5,000/- to mandatorily have step-up authentication based on Aadhaar Biometric + OTP based authentication.	Subsumed

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Annexure C: List of withdrawn AePS Operating Circulars

Sr. No.	OC Number	OC Name
1	NPCI/2015-16/AEPS/01 (OC-1)	Switching fee for AePS & eKYC and Card +PIN
2	NPCI/2015-16/AEPS/02 (OC-2)	List of entities live on AePS OFFUS
3	NPCI/2016-17/AEPS/02 (OC-6)	Implementation of Aadhaar Mobile Update API
4	NPCI/2016-17/AEPS/04 (OC-8)	Debit BC account
5	NPCI/2016-17/AEPS/05 (OC-9)	Release of AePS interface specification 4.6
6	NPCI/2016-17/AEPS/06 (OC-10)	Adherence to AePS XML specification
7	NPCI/2016-17/AEPS/001 (OC-15)	Switchfee & interchange
8	NPCI/2016-17/AEPS/15 (OC-16)	Release of AePS Interface Specification ver 4.7.1
9	NPCI/2016-17/FI/060 (OC-18)	Daily Reconciliation of AePS transaction
10	NPCI/2017-18/AEPS/003 (OC-19)	BHIM Aadhaar Pay- Mandatory Guidelines
11	NPCI/2017-18/AEPS/103 (OC-23)	Charges Levied for Non-Registered Devices Authentication Requests
12	NPCI/2017-18/AEPS/95 (OC-24)	Circular Against the 20th AePS sterring committee meeting
13	NPCI/2017-18/AEPS/010 (OC-26)	XML services and ISO services of member banks migration to bharat switch
14	NPCI/2017-18/AEPS/014 (OC-29)	Temporary discontinuation of AePS OFFUS Cash Deposit Service
15	NPCI/2018-19/AEPS/006 (OC-31)	NFS Micro ATM Network-EMV Migration of Micro ATMs
16	NPCI/2018-19/AEPS:OC/007 (OC-32)	Alignment of Member Bank towards AEPS Online Technical Specification
17	NPCI/2018-19/AEPS/008 (OC-33)	AePS-Response Code Stramlining
18	NPCI/2018-19/AEPS/009 (OC-34)	Timeline for AePS Certification of VID and UID token
19	NPCI/2019-20/AEPS/010 (OC-47)	Implementation of Two Settlement cycles for AePS
20	NPCI/2019-20/AEPS/011 (OC-48)	Implementation of Two settlement in a day for AEPS transaction - effective from 9th January 2020
21	NPCI/AePS/2020-21/002 (OC-51)	Implementation of 3rd Settlement cycle in a day for AePS transactions - Effective from 25th July'20
22	NPCI/2021-22/AEPS/001 (OC-60)	Migration from ISO to XML Messaging Specification
23	NPCI/2021–22/AePS/005 (OC-64)	Capturing correct Card Acceptor Identification Code & Card Acceptor Name
24	NPCI/2022-23/AEPS/001 (OC-68)	Extension in timelines in migration of ISO to XML messaging platform in AePS ecosystem
25	NPCI/2022-23/AEPS/002 (OC-69)	Migration from ISO to XML messaging specification for supporting FMR+FIR authentication
26	NPCI/2023-24/AePS/088 (OC-88)	Reference to OC 88 on BC/Agent Aadhaar based biometric authentication for OFFUS cash withdrawal Transactions
27	NPCI/2023-24/AEPS/088A (OC-88a)	Extension of BC/Agent Aadhaar based biometric authentication for OFFUS Cash Withdrawal transactions (OC - 88)

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Annexure D: Transaction Limits, Thresholds and Validation Requirements

1) Acquirer Member Bank-side Limits and Validations

a) Transaction Limits

Requirement	Limit / Threshold
AePS OFF-US Cash Withdrawal (per transaction)	Maximum ₹10,000
AePS OFF-US Cash Deposit (per transaction)	Maximum ₹10,000
AePS OFF-US Fund Transfer (per transaction)	Maximum ₹10,000
Cash Withdrawal frequency	Maximum 5 approved cash withdrawal transactions per user, per terminal, per day
Cooling Period	Decline OFF-US financial transactions initiated within 30 minutes of the user's previous approved financial transaction.
BHIM Aadhaar Pay (per transaction)	Maximum ₹10,000
Interoperable Cash Withdrawal denomination	Amounts above ₹100 shall be in multiples of ₹50
Geo-fence restriction	Transactions by an ATO permitted only within 20 km radius of their onboarded touchpoint geo-location
Aadhaar Biometric + OTP based Step-up authentication for AePS Cash Withdrawal and BHIM Aadhaar Pay	All AePS Cash Withdrawal and BHIM Aadhaar Pay transactions with transaction amount greater than INR 5,000/- to mandatorily have step-up authentication based on Aadhaar Biometric + OTP based authentication.

b) Mandatory Acquirer Member Bank-side Validations

1. Verify that AePS OFF-US Cash Withdrawal, Cash Deposit and Fund Transfer transaction amount does not exceed ₹10,000 per transaction.
2. Verify that the interoperable cash withdrawal amounts above ₹100 are in multiples of ₹50.

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3. Verify that the transaction originates from a location within 20 km of the geo-location captured at touchpoint onboarding.
4. Verify transmission of the Agent/BC PAN in the AgentID tag as prescribed.
5. Implement Two-Factor Authentication (2FA) for BC/Agent/Merchant login at least once per day, with one factor being Aadhaar-based biometric authentication.
6. Re-authenticate using 2FA whenever the ATO changes biometric devices.
7. Implement controls to prevent processing of transactions exceeding prescribed limits and other acquirer-side compliance requirements.

2) Issuer Member Bank-side Limits and Validations

a) Transaction Limits

Requirement	Limit / Threshold
AePS OFF-US Cash Withdrawal, Cash Deposit and Fund Transfer (per transaction)	Maximum ₹10,000
Cash Withdrawal frequency	Standardised minimum of 5 approved cash withdrawal transactions per user per month
Cash Withdrawal frequency for avoiding Split Transactions	Maximum 5 approved cash withdrawal transactions per user, per terminal, per day
Combined monthly value limit for AePS Cash Withdrawal and BHIM Aadhaar Pay	Up to ₹50,000 per user per month (recommended on rolling 30-day basis)
Mini Statement	Minimum 5 transactions per user per month. Charges may be levied with prior intimation to user by the Bank beyond 5 approved Mini Statement transactions in user account.
Balance Enquiry	No limit
BHIM Aadhaar Pay (per transaction)	Maximum ₹10,000

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b) Mandatory Issuer Member Bank-side Validations

1. Verify that AePS transaction amount does not exceed ₹10,000 per transaction.
2. Verify compliance with the standardised minimum of 5 approved cash withdrawal transactions per user per month before applying any issuer-specific withdrawal restrictions.
3. Verify that the cumulative value of AePS Cash Withdrawal and BHIM Aadhaar Pay transactions does not exceed ₹50,000 per user per month, preferably measured on a rolling 30-day basis.
4. Decline transactions breaching the cumulative monthly withdrawal limit using Response Code 61 - Exceeds Withdrawal Amount Limit.
5. Allow at least 5 Mini Statement transactions per month per user. Charges may be levied with prior intimation to user by the Bank beyond 5 approved Mini Statement transactions in user account.
6. Ensure no restriction is imposed on Balance Enquiry transactions.
7. Verify that AePS debit transactions are enabled on the user account.
8. Apply issuer-specific limits, risk controls and regulatory restrictions, where applicable.
9. Return prescribed response codes for transaction declines, including but not limited to:
    - 61 - Exceeds Withdrawal Amount Limit
    - 78 - AePS Debit Transactions Disabled
    - UW - Declined due to breach of Issuer Member Bank-defined limits, including per-day and/or per-month transaction limits

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Annexure E: AePS Settlement Cycles

AePS transactions are cleared and settled through the AePS Reconciliation, Clearing and Settlement (ARCS) Portal.

Members shall fulfil their settlement obligations for the prescribed settlement cycles as given below:

AePS Settlement Cycle	From	To
AePS Settlement Cycle 1	17:30	23:00
AePS Settlement Cycle 2	23:00	10:00
AePS Settlement Cycle 3	10:00	13:00
AePS Settlement Cycle 4	13:00	17:30

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Annexure F: Standardization of SMS alerts to users – Sample SMS Formats

1. Cash Withdrawal

Sr No.	Suggested SMS	Sent by	Scenario	RC
1	Your AEPS CW txn for a/c "XXXX9341" with "Issuer Bank" is successful and debited with ₹10000.00 dated dd-mm-yy. RRN 123456789012	Issuer Bank	Success	0
2	Your AEPS CW txn for a/c "XXXX9341" with "Issuer Bank" is declined due to "<Reason>" dated dd-mm-yy. RRN 123456789012	Issuer Bank	Failure	As per RC
3	Your AEPS CW txn for a/c "XXXX9341" with "Issuer Bank" is reversed dated dd-mm-yy. RRN 123456789012	Issuer Bank	Reversal	As per reversal RC

2. Balance Enquiry

Sr No.	Suggested SMS	Sent by	Scenario	RC
1	Your AEPS BE txn for "Issuer Bank" a/c "XXXX9341" is successful. Your balance is "_____". RRN 123456789012	Issuer Bank	Success	0
2	Your AEPS BE txn for "Issuer Bank" a/c "XXXX9341" has declined due to "<Reason>". RRN 123456789012	Issuer Bank	Failure	As per RC

3. Fund Transfer

Sr No.	Suggested Notification	Sent by	Scenario	RC
1	Your a/c “XXXX9341" with "Issuer Bank" is credited with ₹10000.00 for AEPS FT Txn dated dd-mm-yy. RRN 123456789012	Issuer Bank	Success	0
2	You’re a/c "XXXX9341" with "Issuer Bank" for AEPS FT Txn is declined due to "<Reason>" dated dd-mm-yy. RRN 123456789012	Issuer Bank	Failure	As per RC

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4. BHIM Aadhaar Pay

Sr No.	Suggested Notification	Sent by	Scenario	RC
1	Your BAP txn for a/c "XXXX9341" with "Issuer Bank" is successful and debited with ₹10000.00 dated dd-mm-yy. RRN 123456789012	Issuer Bank	Success	0
2	Your BAP txn for a/c "XXXX9341" with "Issuer Bank" is declined due to "<Reason>" dated dd-mm-yy. RRN 123456789012	Issuer Bank	Failure	As per RC

5. Mini Statement

S No.	Suggested Message	Sent by	Scenario	RC
1	Your MS txn for "Issuer Bank" a/c "XXXX9341" is successful. RRN 123456789012	Issuer Bank	Success	0
2	Your MS txn for "Issuer Bank" a/c "XXXX9341" has declined due to "<Reason>". RRN 123456789012	Issuer Bank	Failure	As per RC

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Annexure G: Standardization of Account Statement Narration – Sample Format

Minimum Details	Requirement	Character Length	M - Mandatory O - Optional
Product Type-AePS	To know the transaction mode used - AePS	4	M
Transaction Type	Codes to be used: Cash Withdrawal - CW Cash Deposit - CD Fund Transfer - FT BHIM Aadhaar Pay - BAP SHG Cash Deposit - SCD SHG Cash Withdrawal - SCW	3	M
Transaction Reference number - 12 digits RRN	Unique Transaction Reference no.	12	M
Terminal ID (available in DE#42)	Agent terminal ID transmitted by acquirer bank	12	O
Agent Location/City Name (available in DE#43 - 24 to 36 characters)	Agent Location/City name transmitted by acquirer bank	12	O

Sample narration in the bank account of user:

Product Type / Transaction Type / RRN / Terminal ID / Location

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