



SUBJECT: CHANGE OF SCHOOL TIMINGS U/S 6(1)(t) OF THE PUNJAB ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT, 1997

ORDER

WHEREAS, the recent air quality data from 19th to 30th October, 2025 has consistently indicated **unhealthy** AQI levels ranging from 201 to 300 to **very unhealthy** AQI levels ranging from 301 to 400 in Lahore and surrounding districts; primarily due to the current meteorological conditions resulting into accumulation of pollutants in the troposphere.

2. **AND WHEREAS**, the prevailing meteorological conditions during this period characterize low morning temperatures (less than 19°C), absence of rainfall, and calm to light winds (1–9 km/h). This meteorological condition coupled with east to west air currents has resulted into trapping of pollutants within the lower atmosphere and persistent haze formation;

3. **AND WHEREAS**, the forecasts further indicate that there are very little or absolutely no significant chance of improvement in dispersion conditions, with temperature inversion, weak wind regimes and stagnant air masses usually in the range of average of air speed 1–10 km/h during coming days. This whole scenario will continue to support the build-up of pollution in troposphere, thereby posing serious risks to public health, especially for children, elderly individuals, and people with respiratory and / or cardiac ailments;

4. **AND WHEREAS**, under the existing meteorological setup, vehicular emission, particularly in the morning, primarily due to early school timings, has been identified as major local contributor to the rise in particulate matter causing adverse environmental effects;


5. **AND WHEREAS**, under Section 2(i) of the *Punjab Environmental Protection Act, 1997*, “adverse environmental effect” means any impairment or damage to the environment, including harm to human health and safety, biodiversity, property, or pollution, as well as any other adverse effects specified in the regulations;

6. **AND WHEREAS**, rationalization of schools operating hours can substantially reduce vehicular load during early-morning peak smog hours. Adjustment of such timings serves as a practical mitigation measure of adverse environmental effect by curbing ambient particulate concentration, lowering roadside emissions, and safeguarding school children from direct exposure to hazardous air pollutants, accumulated in the lower atmosphere early in the morning;

7. **AND WHEREAS**, Section 6(1)(t) of the Punjab Environmental Protection Act 1997 empowers EPA to take or cause to be taken all necessary measures for the protection, conservation, rehabilitation and improvement of the environment, prevention and control of pollution and promotion of sustainable development;

8. **NOW THEREFORE**, I, Dr. Imran Hamid Sheikh, PAS, Director General, Environmental Protection Agency, Punjab in exercise of the powers conferred upon me U/S 6(1)(t) of the Punjab Environmental Protection Act 1997, do hereby order that, henceforth, all the public and private Schools as well as Special Education Centers shall not open before **8:45 am** within the territorial jurisdiction of Punjab.

9. Any contravention of this order shall be punishable under Section 188 PPC in addition to Rule 11 (read with Sr. No.7 of Schedule) and Rule 12 of the Punjab Environmental Protection (Smog Prevention and Control) Rules, 2023 through imposition of administrative penalty ranging from **Rs. 100,000 to 500,000** on first violation and **Rs. 600,000 to 1,000,000** on each subsequent occurrence of violation.

 10. General Public may report any violation of this order on **EPA's Helpline 1373** (operating round the clock) as well as **Green Punjab App** and extend help in identification of violators.

11. This order shall come into force with effect from **3rd November 2025 (Monday)** and will remain in force till **31st January, 2026**.

Issued under my hand and seal on this 01st Day of November 2025.

M. A. 01/11/25

DR. IMRAN HAMID SHEIKH (PAS)
DIRECTOR GENERAL
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
PUNJAB

Copy is forwarded for information and necessary action to:

- i. The Secretary, Environment Protection & Climate Change Department, Punjab
- ii. The Secretary, School Education Department
- iii. The Secretary, Special Education Department
- iv. The Director General Public Relations (DGPR) for wide publicity of this order
- v. All the Commissioners of Punjab
- vi. All the Deputy Commissioners of Punjab / Chairpersons District Education Authorities, Punjab
- vii. The Secretary, Judicial Water & Environment Commission (JWEC), Punjab
- viii. The Additional Secretary (Staff), Chief Secretary's Office, Lahore
- ix. The Additional Secretary (Coordination), Chief Minister Office, Lahore.
- x. The Chief Environment & Climate Change, P&D Board, Lahore
- xi. PSO to Minister for Environment, Forest and P&D
- xii. PSO to Provincial Police Office/ IGP, Punjab
- xiii. The Additional Director General (Ops & Imp), EPA Punjab
- xiv. The Chairperson, Private Schools Association, Punjab for circulation among the concerned private educational institutions.
- xv. The Incharge, Strategy & Analysis Wing, EPA Headquarters
- xvi. PRO / AD Social Media / Data Analyst, EPA Punjab for necessary action
- xvii. All the Deputy Director (Field) / Assistant Directors (Field) EPA Punjab for strict implementation of this order**
- xviii. PA to Director General EPA Punjab