Unique Identification Authority of India
(Aadhaar Usage Division)

UIDAI HQs,
Bangla Sahib Road, Behind Kali Mandir,
Gole Market, New Delhi. 110001

Dated: 31 October, 2022

CIRCULAR

Subject: Usage of Aadhaar- Do's & Don'ts for Offline Verification Seeking Entities (OVSEs).

Offline verification is the use of Aadhaar for carrying out identity verification and KYC processes locally, without connecting to the Central Identities Data Repository (CIDR) of UIDAI. The organizations conducting offline verification of an Aadhaar number holder for a lawful purpose are termed as Offline Verification Seeking Entities (OVSE). [Ref. Section '2- Definitions', Aadhaar (Authentication and Offline Verification) Regulations]

2. There are two modes of offline verification, viz the Secure QR Code (displayed on Aadhaar letter, e-Aadhaar, Aadhaar PVC card and m-Aadhaar) and the Aadhaar Paperless Offline e-KYC XML (downloaded from the UIDAI website and m-Aadhaar). Both the Secure QR Code and the Aadhaar Paperless Offline e-KYC XML contain the resident's data that is digitally signed by UIDAI. This is an essential security component that establishes the authenticity of the document, as presented by the resident seeking service from an OVSE. Scanning of secure QR code (which includes validation of UIDAI's digital signature) is possible using Aadhaar Secure QR code scanner application. This scanner application is freely available for both Android and iOS based mobile phones as well as Windows based applications. The scanner is also available as part of UIDAI's m-Aadhaar mobile application, for both Android and iOS phones.

3. Residents may voluntarily use the Aadhaar number for a lawful purpose, to establish their identity by way of offline verification by an OVSE. For the purpose of offline verification by an OVSE, the Aadhaar number holder may use his/her Aadhaar either in (i) the physical form like Aadhaar letter (or copy thereof) or printed e-Aadhaar or Aadhaar PVC Card; or in (ii) the electronic form like e-Aadhaar/ Aadhaar Paperless Offline e-KYC (XML)/ mAadhaar.

4. **Following are the Dos and Don'ts to be followed by the OVSEs:**

(A)   Dos:-

i. Be courteous to residents. Assure the resident about the security & confidentiality of their Aadhaar being used for offline verification.

ii. Be sure to carry out offline verification of Aadhaar (as per para 2 above) prior to accepting it as proof of identity. This applies to all modes of offline usage of Aadhaar, ie. secure QR Code on Aadhaar Letter (or copy thereof) / e-Aadhaar/ m-Aadhaar or in the Aadhaar Paperless Offline e-KYC (XML), as the case may be.

iii. Carry out offline verification of Aadhaar only for the lawful purpose specified to the Aadhaar number holder along with his/ her explicit consent for verification taken either in physical or electronic form. Maintain logs/ records of the consent for any future audit by UIDAI or any agency thereof.

iv. Provide the resident, desirous of availing any service from OVSE, other viable alternative means of identification, in addition to Aadhaar, as required for rendering the service.

v. Ensure that Aadhaar data collected is not shared with any entity except in accordance with the Aadhaar Act and/or regulations thereof.

vi. Ensure that no service is denied to any resident for refusing to or being unable to undergo offline verification of Aadhaar provided that the resident is able to identify himself/ herself through other viable alternative means, as suggested by the OVSE.

vii. Ensure full cooperation to the Authority, or any agency appointed or authorized by it or any other authorized investigation agency, in case of any fraud investigation involving Aadhaar.

viii. Do inform the Authority and the Aadhaar number holder, without undue delay and in no case beyond 72 hours after having knowledge of misuse of any information or systems related to the Aadhaar framework or any compromise of Aadhaar related information.

ix. Ensure strict compliance to the Aadhaar Act and Regulations and to any other directions received from UIDAI from time to time, with respect to obligations of OVSEs.

(B)   Don'ts:-

i. Do not accept Aadhaar number, in physical or electronic form, as a proof of identity for a lawful purpose, without first verifying the digital signature of the Authority as provided in the Aadhaar Secure QR Code on Aadhaar Letter or e-Aadhaar or m-Aadhaar or Aadhaar Paperless Offline e-KYC (XML), as the case may be.

ii. Do not perform verification of Aadhaar without explicit consent of the Aadhaar number holder in the form & manner as prescribed.

iii. Do not perform offline verification on behalf of any other entity or person.

iv. Do not collect, use or store Aadhaar number or biometric information of the resident after having conducted offline verification of Aadhaar. Post verification, if the OVSE finds it necessary for any reason, to store a copy of Aadhaar letter/ e-Aadhaar, the OVSE must ensure that Aadhaar number is redacted/ masked and irretrievable through any means by any entity, including by OVSE itself.

Kr
(Kuldeep Singh)
Asstt. Director (AU)
Tel: 2347 8511