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CDSL/OPS/RTA/POLCY/2023/261

December 11, 2023

SEBI CIRCULAR - REVISED FRAMEWORK FOR COMPUTATION OF NET DISTRIBUTABLE CASH FLOW BY REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUSTS

Issuer / RTAs are advised to refer to the SEBI Circular no. **SEBI/HO/DDHS/DDHS-PoD/P/CIR/2023/185** dated **December 06, 2023**, regarding **Revised framework for computation of Net Distributable Cash Flow (NDCF) by Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs)** [refer Annexure].

Issuer / RTAs are advised to take note of the same.

Queries regarding this communiqué may be addressed to: **CDSL – Helpdesk** Emails may be sent to: helpdesk@cdslindia.com and telephone number 08069144800.

sd/-

Nilesh Shah
Asst. Vice President – Operations

CIRCULAR

SEBI/HO/DDHS/DDHS-PoD/P/CIR/2023/185

December 06, 2023

To,

All Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs)

All Parties to REITs

Madam/Sir,

**Sub: Revised framework for computation of Net Distributable Cash Flow (NDCF) by
Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs)**

1. Regulation 18(16) of SEBI (Real Estate Investment Trust) Regulations, 2014 ("REIT Regulations"), provides that the Net Distributable Cash Flow (NDCF) shall be computed at the level of REIT and HoldCo/SPV. Further, the minimum distribution shall be 90% of the NDCF at the Trust level as well as the HoldCo/SPV level, subject to applicable provisions in the Companies Act, 2013 or the Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008. Paragraph F of Chapter 3 of the Master Circular for Real Estate Investment Trusts provides an indicative framework for calculating NDCF at SPV level and at the REIT level.
2. In order to promote Ease of Doing Business, it has been decided to standardize the framework for calculation of available Net Distributable Cash Flows. Accordingly, the revised framework for computation of NDCF by REITs and its Holdcos/SPVs shall be as per Annexure A.

Applicability of revised NDCF Framework:

3. The revised framework shall be applicable with effect from April 1, 2024 and supersedes the Framework for calculation of Net Distributable Cash Flows provided in Paragraph F of Chapter 3 of the Master Circular for Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) dated July 06, 2023.
4. This circular is being issued in exercise of powers conferred under Section 11(1) of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992 and Regulation 33 of the REIT Regulations. This circular is issued with the approval of the competent authority.
5. This Circular is available on the website of the Securities and Exchange Board of India at www.sebi.gov.in under the category “Legal” and under the drop down “Circulars”.

Yours faithfully

Ritesh Nandwani
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Annexure- A

A. Computation of Net Distributable Cash Flow at HoldCo/ SPV level: -

Particulars
Cash flow from operating activities as per Cash Flow Statement of HoldCo/ SPV
(+) Cash Flows received from SPV's which represent distributions of NDCF computed as per relevant framework (refer note 1 and 9 below) (relevant in case of HoldCos)
(+) Treasury income / income from investing activities (interest income received from FD, tax refund, any other income in the nature of interest, profit on sale of Mutual funds, investments, assets etc., dividend income etc., excluding any Ind AS adjustments. Further clarified that these amounts will be considered on a cash receipt basis)
(+) Proceeds from sale of real estate investments, real estate assets or shares of SPVs or Investment Entity adjusted for the following • Applicable capital gains and other taxes • Related debts settled or due to be settled from sale proceeds • Directly attributable transaction costs • Proceeds reinvested or planned to be reinvested as per Regulation 18(16)(d) of REIT Regulations or any other relevant provisions of the REIT Regulations
(+) Proceeds from sale of real estate investments, real estate assets or sale of shares of SPVs or Investment Entity not distributed pursuant to an earlier plan to re-invest as per Regulation 18(16)(d) of REIT Regulations or any other relevant provisions of the REIT Regulations, if such proceeds are not intended to be invested subsequently
(-) Finance cost on Borrowings, excluding amortisation of any transaction costs as per Profit and Loss Account and any shareholder debt / loan from Trust
(-) Debt repayment (to include principal repayments as per scheduled EMI's except if refinanced through new debt including overdraft facilities and to exclude any debt repayments / debt refinanced through new debt, in any form or equity raise as well as repayment of any shareholder debt / loan from Trust)
(-) any reserve required to be created under the terms of, or pursuant to the obligations arising in accordance with, any: (i). loan agreement entered with banks / financial institution from whom the Trust or any of its SPVs/ HoldCos have availed debt, or (ii). terms and conditions, covenants or any other stipulations applicable to debt securities issued by the Trust or any of its SPVs/ HoldCos, or (iii). terms and conditions, covenants or any other stipulations applicable to external commercial borrowings availed by the Trust or any of its SPVs/ HoldCos, or (iv). agreement pursuant to which the SPV/ HoldCo operates or owns the real estate asset, or generates revenue or cashflows from such asset (such as, concession agreement, transmission services agreement, power purchase agreement, lease agreement, and any other agreement of a like nature, by whatever name called); or (v). statutory, judicial, regulatory, or governmental stipulations; or – (refer note 2)
(-) any capital expenditure on existing assets owned / leased by the SPV or Holdco, to the extent not funded by debt / equity or from reserves created in the earlier years (refer note 10)
NDCF for HoldCo/SPV's

B. Computation of Net Distributable Cash Flow at Trust level: -

Particulars
Cashflows from operating activities of the Trust
(+) Cash flows received from SPV's / Investment entities which represent distributions of NDCF computed as per relevant framework (refer note 1 and 9 below)
(+) Treasury income / income from investing activities of the Trust (interest income received from FD, any investment entities as defined in Regulation 18(5), tax refund, any other income in the nature of interest, profit on sale of Mutual funds, investments, assets etc., dividend income etc., excluding any Ind AS adjustments. Further clarified that these amounts will be considered on a cash receipt basis)
(+) Proceeds from sale of real estate investments, real estate assets or shares of SPVs/Holdcos or Investment Entity adjusted for the following • Applicable capital gains and other taxes • Related debts settled or due to be settled from sale proceeds • Directly attributable transaction costs • Proceeds reinvested or planned to be reinvested as per Regulation 18(16)(d) of REIT Regulations or any other relevant provisions of the REIT Regulations
(+) Proceeds from sale of real estate investments, real estate assets or sale of shares of SPVs/ Hold cos or Investment Entity not distributed pursuant to an earlier plan to re-invest as per Regulation 18(16)(d) of REIT Regulations or any other relevant provisions of the REIT Regulations, if such proceeds are not intended to be invested subsequently
(-) Finance cost on Borrowings, excluding amortisation of any transaction costs as per Profit and Loss account of the Trust
(-) Debt repayment at Trust level (to include principal repayments as per scheduled EMI's except if refinanced through new debt including overdraft facilities and to exclude any debt repayments / debt refinanced through new debt in any form or funds raised through issuance of units)
(-) any reserve required to be created under the terms of, or pursuant to the obligations arising in accordance with, any: (i). loan agreement entered with financial institution, or (ii). terms and conditions, covenants or any other stipulations applicable to debt securities issued by the Trust or any of its SPVs/ HoldCos, or (iii). terms and conditions, covenants or any other stipulations applicable to external commercial borrowings availed by the Trust or any of its SPVs/ HoldCos, (iv). agreement pursuant to which the Trust operates or owns the real estate asset, or generates revenue or cashflows from such asset (such as, concession agreement, transmission services agreement, power purchase agreement, lease agreement, and any other agreement of a like nature, by whatever name called); or (v). statutory, judicial, regulatory, or governmental stipulations; or – (refer note 2)
(-) any capital expenditure on existing assets owned / leased by the REIT, to the extent not funded by debt / equity or from contractual reserves created in the earlier years (refer note 10)
NDCF at Trust Level

Notes/ Other Rules:

1. NDCF computed at SPV level for a particular period to be added under this line item, even if the actual cashflows from SPV to REIT has taken place post that particular period, but before finalization and adoption of accounts of the REIT.
2. The specified agreements could be for either PPP or non-PPP projects. The Trust retains the option to distribute any surplus amounts, unless such surplus is required to create reserves for any subsequent period.
3. The option to retain 10% distribution under Regulation 18(16) needs to be computed by taking together the retention done at SPV level and Trust level. Refer Illustration below:

Illustration:

Particulars	SPV A	SPV B	Total at SPV level
NDCF as computed	100	150	250
Amount retained by SPV	5	10	15
Net amount distributed to Trust	95	140	235

REIT	Scenario 1	Scenario 2
Received from SPV	235	235
Add:- other items at Trust level for computation of NDCF	65	(35)
Total NDCF	300	200
Combined NDCF for computing Max retention		
NDCF of Trust (A)	300	200
NDCF of SPV's (B)	250	250
Less: - Amount distributed by SPV's (C)	(235)	(235)
D = A + B -C	315	215
Max retention amount – 10% of D	31.5	21.5
Amount already retained by SPV	15	15
Max amount that can be retained by Trust	16.5	6.5

4. Further, Trust along with its SPVs needs to ensure that minimum 90% distribution of NDCF be met for a given financial year on a cumulative periodic basis as specified for mandatory distributions in the REIT regulations (subject to provisions of Note 1 above).

5. Surplus cash available in SPVs due to:
 - (i) 10% of NDCF withheld in line with the Regulations in any earlier year or half year or
 - (ii) Such surplus being available in a new SPV on acquisition of such SPV by REIT
 - (iii) Any other reason, excluding if such surplus cash is available due to any debt raise could be considered for distribution by the SPV to the REIT, or by the Trust to its Unitholders in part or in full, but needs to be disclosed separately in the NDCF computation and Distribution.
6. Similarly, any restricted cash (disclosed as such) should not be considered for NDCF computation by the SPV or REIT (e.g. unspent CSR balance for any year deposited in a separate account as per Companies Act which will be utilized in subsequent years, DSRA reserve, major maintenance reserve etc)
7. Further, it is expressly provided that no Trust or SPVs can distribute any cashflows by obtaining external debt, except to the extent clarified in note 2 above (this will exclude any working capital / OD facilities obtained by Trust/ SPVs as part of Treasury management / working capital purposes as long as they are squared off within the quarter).
8. Further, it is also clarified that Proceeds from sale of real estate investments, real estate assets or shares of SPVs or Investment Entity adjusted for transaction costs or repayment of debt taken for such assets or other items as mentioned above which is intended to be reinvested or planned to be reinvested as per Regulation 18(16)(d) of REIT Regulations, could be temporarily parked in Overdraft accounts or used to repay any additional/ unrelated debt. Further if such proceeds are not intended to be reinvested as per the timeline provided in the Regulations and such net proceeds are to be distributed back to Unitholders, then redrawing such temporarily parked funds to distribute such net proceeds will not be considered as a contravention of note 7 above.

9. Cash flows received from SPV's / Investment entities which represent distributions of NDCF computed as per relevant framework at the Trust level for further distribution to Unitholders shall exclude any such cash flows used by the Trust for onward lending to any other SPVs / Investment entities to meet operational / interest expenses or debt servicing of such other SPVs / Investment entities.
10. Capital expenditure include amounts incurred and paid towards asset enhancement and are capitalized to asset value in the financial statements including lease payments. It is further clarified that Existing Assets as referred to in this line item includes any new structure / building / other infrastructure constructed on an existing real estate asset which is already a part of the REIT.