

PF and ESI on **one** page

When each applies, what it costs, when it's due and what being late costs. For Indian companies approaching their tenth or twentieth hire.

PF (EPF)

Applies from	20 or more employees (a few notified categories from 10). Everyone counts, whatever their pay
Who must be enrolled	PF wages of ₹15,000 a month or less on joining. Higher earners with employer consent
Once covered	Always covered, even if headcount falls below 20
Voluntary	You can register with fewer than 20

What PF costs

WHO PAYS	RATE	GOES TO
Employee	12% of PF wages	EPF account
Employer	3.67%	EPF account
Employer	8.33% on wages up to ₹15,000 (max ₹1,250 a month)	Pension (EPS)
Employer	0.5%	Insurance (EDLI)
Employer	0.5%	EPFO admin charges

On a ₹15,000 capped wage: employee ₹1,800 a month, employer about ₹1,950.

Registering

- PF: EPFO employer portal, with PAN, incorporation certificate, address proof, bank and signatory details
- ESI: ESIC portal, within 15 days of becoming covered
- Register the month you cross the threshold. Dues run from then either way

The Code on Social Security has been in force since 21 November 2025 and kept these thresholds. Under the labour codes, allowances above 50% of total pay are added back to "wages".

ESI

Applies from	10 or more employees in an ESIC-notified area (20 in some states for some businesses)
Who is covered	Gross wages of ₹21,000 a month or less (₹25,000 for people with disabilities)
Crossing the limit	They leave ESI at the end of the contribution period
Above the ceiling	No voluntary cover

What ESI costs

WHO PAYS	RATE ON GROSS WAGES
Employer	3.25%
Employee	0.75%

Employees on up to ₹176 a day don't pay their share; the employer still does. On ₹18,000 a month: employer ₹585, employee ₹135.

Due dates

WHAT	DUE
PF contribution and ECR	15th of the next month
ESI contribution	15th of the next month
ESI half-yearly return	11 November (April to September), 11 May (October to March)

If you're late

- PF: 12% a year simple interest, plus damages that grow with the delay
- ESI: 12% a year simple interest, plus damages for longer delays
- Deducting the employee's share and not paying it in is treated seriously, including prosecution in bad cases
- Investors check both in every round