

DRAFT

Guidelines of Advertising for Skin Lightening or Fairness Improvement Products

Preamble:

While all Fairness products are licensed for manufacture and sale by relevant state Food & Drug Administrations (FDA) under the Drugs & Cosmetics Act, there is a strong concern in certain sections of society that advertising of fairness products tends to communicate and perpetuate the notion that dark skin is inferior and undesirable. ASCI code's Chapter III 1 b already states that advertisements should not deride race, caste, color, creed or nationality. Yet given how widespread the advertising for fairness and skin lightening products is and the concerns of different stakeholders in society, ASCI therefore felt a need to frame specific guidelines for this product category. The following guidelines are to be used when creating and assessing advertisements in this category.

- 1. Advertising should not communicate any discrimination as a result of skin colour.** These ads should not reinforce negative social stereotyping on the basis of skin color. Specifically, advertising should not directly or implicitly show people with darker skin as unattractive, unhappy, depressed or concerned. These ads should not portray people with darker skin as at a disadvantage of any kind, or inferior, or unsuccessful in any aspect of life particularly in relation to being attractive to the opposite sex, matrimony, job placement, promotions and other prospects.
- 2. Advertising should not use post production visual effects on the model/s to show exaggerated product efficacy.** The pre- and -post product usage visuals of model/s using special effects should not be dramatized or exaggerated so that efficacy depicted is not drastically different than what can be delivered by the product . Further, the expression of the model/s pre and post usage of the product both in the real and graphical representation should be the same.
- 3. Advertising should not associate darker or lighter colour skin with any particular socio-economic strata, caste, community, religion, profession or ethnicity**
- 4. Advertising should not perpetuate gender based discrimination because of skin colour.**