

2019



MARCH NEWSLETTER

HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICERS & STAFF IN THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE

RAISING THE BAR

Human Resource Management and Development (HRM&D) are critical functions within any organisation. These functions are concentrated on recruiting, managing and directing people. The focus of HRM&D now has to be adaptive, intentional, resilient, customer-centred and quick to change direction. Within such a fast paced environment, the effectiveness of HRM&D is directly linked to organisational success. HRM&D practitioners must therefore have systems and strategies in place that will provide optimal services to their customers.

It is with this in mind, that the Office of the Services Commissions (OSC) recently hosted two (2) HRM&D Practitioners Workshops for Ministries, Departments and Executive Agencies (MDEAs) on September 28, 2018 and February 27, 2019 respectively, under the theme, “*Raising the Bar Towards Greater Efficiency.*” These workshops were organised with the hope that there will be a:

- ✔ **50-60% improvement** in all the submissions made to the OSC for Departments without Delegation of Functions; and
- ✔ **50-60% decrease** in the number of audit issues identified during the HR Audit for Ministries, Departments and Executive Agencies with Delegation of Functions.

This Newsletter will present highlights of the recently held HRM&D Practitioners Workshops as well as provide answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to assist Ministries, Departments and Executive Agencies with Delegation of Functions to prepare for and meet the requirements of HR Compliance Audits. *Happy Reading!!*



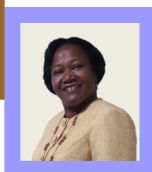
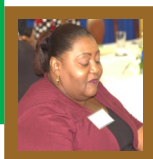
SNEAK PEEK

02-07

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE HRM&D WORKSHOPS FOR MIINSTRIES DEPARTMENTS & EXECUTIVE AGENCIES

08-09

REMOVING YOUR AUDITING NIGHTMARES: HR COMPLIANCE AUDIT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



HIGHLIGHTS

HRM&D WORKSHOPS FOR MIINSTRIES DEPARTMENTS & EXECUTIVE AGENCIES

Presentations were delivered on the following areas:

- ③ The role and functions of the Office of Services Commissions (OSC);
- ③ The role of the Governor-General (GG) and the Public Service Commission (PSC);
- ③ Delegation of Functions (Appointments, Training, Discipline and Separation).

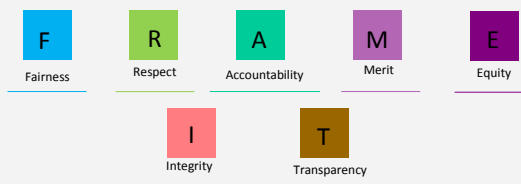
ROLE OF THE PSC

The role of the Public Service Commission is to advise the Governor General (GG) on matters relating to **appointment, discipline, separation and selection of public officers for national scholarship and study leave.**

The Governor General has the authority to **appoint, remove and to discipline employees** in the Central Government Service and Executive Agencies.

FRAMEWORK FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE DELEGATED FUNCTIONS

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Permanent Secretary (PS) and Head of Department (HOD) are accountable to the GG through the PSC. Each CEO/PS/HOD signed an Accountability Agreement that outlines the functions delegated, based on the Values Framework outlined below:



Based on the agreed standards each PS/HOD is required to submit Quarterly Reports, while each CEO is required to submit Annual Reports for each financial year, by the end of the first quarter of the succeeding financial year.



Human Resource Executive Committee (HREC)

The HREC's main function is to address the major technical, operational and administrative issues including matters arising from the Delegation of Functions.

Guidelines

- ❖ The CEO/PS/HOD or his/her designate should chair the HREC.
- ❖ The CEO/PS/HOD should elect Heads of Divisions/Units as Committee Members.
- ❖ The Head of the HR Department should be Secretary to the HREC and should not have voting rights.
- ❖ The HR Department should be the Secretariat for the HREC.
- ❖ Decisions should be made by voting majority or consensus.
- ❖ Members of the HREC shall adhere strictly to the OSC's HREC Terms of Reference.



TIPS

APPOINTMENTS

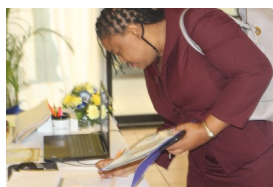
PS/CEO/HODs should ensure that:

- There is consistency in the appointment process.
- Appointment decisions flow from a sound HR strategy, including a Succession Plan.
- Appointment decisions are based on merit, through processes that are fair, equitable and transparent.
- The selection criteria fairly reflects the duties to be performed and the needs of the MDEA.
- No unfair advantage is given to any potential candidate.
- Effective HR planning is in place to reduce the length of the appointment process.



HR Managers should ensure that:

- Successful candidates possess the requisite academic qualifications, training and experience.
- A mixture of selection tools are used in the selection process.
- Selection scoresheets are properly completed using a pen.
- An Outcome Report is prepared at the end of every Recruitment and Selection exercise.
- Selection particulars are placed on the successful candidate's personal file along with the Outcome Report.
- Particulars for unsuccessful candidates are placed on a general file.
- Both the successful and unsuccessful candidates are advised of the outcome of the selection process at the same time.



Standard documentation for personal files

1. Application Form (P1 or P2)
2. Recruitment & Selection records
3. Personal and academic records (birth, marriage and academic certificates, NIS, TRN numbers)
4. Medical Examination Report
5. Employment, first appointment and promotion letters
6. Proof of Reference Checks and Security Vetting
7. Copies of Performance Evaluation Reports
8. Leave application and permission letters
9. Training particulars
10. Disciplinary particulars (if necessary)





TRAINING

Training and development should be done within the context of a Training and Development Plan.

Information gathered from needs assessments and the performance management process should inform the Training and Development Plan.

STUDY LEAVE

Study Leave is a period of absence granted to public employees to pursue courses of study.

Categories of Study Leave

- Category 1: Programme of study initiated or mandated by GOJ/ MDEA.
- Category 2&3: Programme of study undertaken voluntarily by officers to improve qualifications directly related to current functions.
- Category 4: Programme of study undertaken voluntarily by officers for personal interest (not related to job/MDEA's mandate).

Staff Orders 7.8.1

Obligations of Trainees

1. Loan Agreement must be executed prior to the commencement of course.
2. If Loan Agreement is in place, the officer should resume duty or take up employment upon completion of the course of study, after any approved period of leave.
3. Officer should devote the full-time required to the course for which the award was made.
4. Progress reports should be submitted to HR at the end of each semester and certificates awarded should also be submitted upon completion.
5. Permission should be sought from the authorizing body in the event that there is a change in the course of study/institution.

Staff Orders 5.8

Study Leave will not be granted to pursue on-line courses.

SELECTION OF PERSONS FOR TRAINING, INCLUDING THE GRANT OF STUDY LEAVE HAS BEEN DELEGATED TO HODs/PSSs/CEOs

HR should ensure that:

1. Applicants are eligible for Study Leave (years of service, performance).
2. Applicants are suitable to undertake the course of study (aptitude and medical fitness).
3. The proposed training will benefit the MDEA and or the wider service.
4. Funds are available in the event that a replacement will be required to perform the duties while the officer is on Study Leave.
5. Programmes and institutions are accredited by the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ).
6. The tertiary institutions are registered by the Jamaica Tertiary Education Commission (JTEC).
7. Applications forms are properly completed and supporting documents are attached, for example, acceptance letters and scholarships/awards.

All employees should be provided the opportunity and support to be trained and developed to enable them to perform efficiently and contribute to the achievement of the mission and goals of the organisation.

Staff Orders 5.1

DISCIPLINE

CODE OF CONDUCT

EXECUTIVE AGENCIES (EAs)

Each Executive Agency (EA) should formulate a Code of Conduct (HR Manual) for the information and guidance of members. The CEO shall take such steps as are necessary to ensure that all members of staff have access to it. The Code of Conduct shall include provisions relating to:

- *Requirements for confidentiality*
- *The involvement of employees in political activity*
- *Recruitment and appointment of staff*
- *Separation*
- *Conflict of interest*

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Central Government employees should be guided by the Staff Orders, 2004 and the Public Service Regulations, 1961.

DISCIPLINARY PROCESS | STEPS

The CEO/PS/HOD shall deal with disciplinary proceedings against officers in the light of reports.

If an officer commits a criminal offence the CEO/PS/HOD shall obtain the advice of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) as to whether criminal proceedings ought to be instituted against the officer.

Interdiction

Interdiction is the removal of an officer from performing his/her official duties and the withholding of a specified portion of his/her salary pending criminal or disciplinary proceedings.

Criminal Proceedings | Acquittal

An officer acquitted in any court of a criminal charge shall not be dismissed or otherwise punished in respect of any charge of which he has been acquitted.

Nothing shall prevent him/her from being dismissed or otherwise punished in respect of any other charge arising out of his/her conduct in the matter, unless such other charge is substantially the same as that in respect of which he/she has been acquitted.

(Regulation 34, Public Service Regulations, 1961)

Criminal Proceedings | Conviction

If an officer is convicted of a criminal charge, the CEO/PS/HOD may consider the relevant proceedings of that court, and if the CEO/PS/HOD is of the opinion that the officer ought to be dismissed or subjected to some lesser punishment in respect of the offence of which he/she has been convicted, the CEO/PS/HOD or PSC may recommend the dismissal or other punishment of the officer without institution of any disciplinary proceedings.

(Regulation 35, Public Service Regulations, 1961)

DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

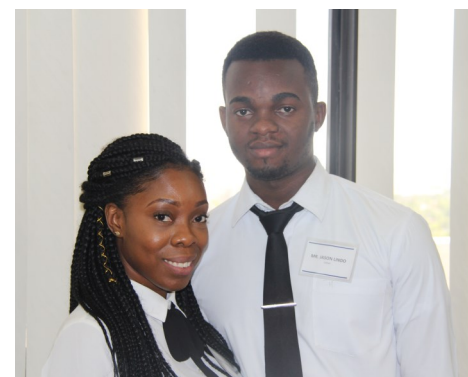
Where there is a breach of conduct:

- a. Conduct a preliminary investigation. If a case of misconduct can be made, then proceed to step b.
- b. Draft a charge sheet.
- c. Issue of a charge sheet, in seeking to institute disciplinary proceedings.

EXAMPLES OF BREACHES WARRANTING DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

- i. Absence from duty without permission.
- ii. Habitual and frequent unpunctuality.
- iii. Signing the register for or on behalf of another person.
- iv. Being idle, disorderly, indisciplined or behaving in an improper manner while on duty.
- v. Careless handling of any article or equipment which is the property of a MDEA.
- vi. Inefficient performance of duties.
- vii. Committing any act prejudicial to the good order and discipline.

(Regulation 42, Public Service Regulations, 1961)





SEPARATION

Resignation Guidelines

HR Managers should ensure that:

- The required notice period is correctly stated at employment.
- The correct effective date is noted for resignation.
- All resignations are accepted.
- Strategies are implemented to recover monies owed by employees.
- Exit Interviews are conducted.

Retirement Guidelines

- Officers are expected to retire from the Public Service upon reaching the mandatory age of retirement.
- Pre-retirement arrangements should commence at least **one (1) year** in advance.
- All entities in which pensionable officers are employed should create and maintain a creditable Record of Service for each individual with the following information:
 - Correct name as it appears on the Birth Certificate
 - Date of birth
 - Date of employment
 - Date of retirement
 - Pensionable emoluments
 - Positions held
 - Leave entitlement
 - Period of pensionable service
 - Any disciplinary action taken or commendation
 - Medical Examination Report
 - Confirmation in first permanent appointment

Retirement Guidelines continued...

From April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2023, Section 14 (2) of the Pension (Public Service) Act, 2017, should be quoted in the letters for mandatory retirement. Section 14 (1) of the Act must be used from April 1, 2023, when the mandatory age of retirement will be 65 years.

Additionally,

- Service Records should be prepared and signed by Head of Entity.
- Leave Computations should be prepared from the Service Records and forwarded to the Leave Section, Strategic Human Resource Management Division (SHRMD) of the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service (MOFPS) for approval.
- Retiring Officers should be advised to proceed on Pre-retirement Leave at least **two (2) months** before the effective date of retirement.
- Pension particulars should be forwarded to the Pension Administration Branch of the MOFPS at least **six (6) months** prior to the effective date of retirement.



“

Very good workshop. It should be repeated in the future. The presenters were very knowledgeable of their subject areas.

”



“

The workshop was informative and very interactive. It reinforced HR policies and procedures.

”



“

This workshop was well received and overdue. I really hope it is continued especially for new people entering the HMR&D.

”

“

The workshop is very good. I have learnt a lot as a young Human Resource Practitioner. I look forward to another session.

”



“

Presenters did well, material clearly understood.

”

“

Receiving the presentations during the workshop was great. The topics selected and the incorporation of the CEOs at the workshop made the event memorable.

”

“

The workshop is very important. Excellent idea to bring all the Executive Agencies together.

”



“

The workshop was informative and well organized with beautiful decorations. The Workshop should be offered twice per year.

”



REMOVING YOUR AUDITING NIGHTMARES:

HR Compliance Audits Frequently Asked Questions & Answers



An HR Audit is a comprehensive look at policies, procedures, systems, processes, practices and documentation with respect to the organization's HR functions. The HR Audit helps to reveal the strengths and weaknesses in an attempt to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of an organization's HR department.

Audits help to confirm the presence of systems, policies and records with the goal being to ensure that employees and leaders are following them, and that they are in line with the most current legal requirements. Audits look for inefficiencies and processes that failed to work; for example if a task or function is consistently not being carried out then this may signal that there may be an issue with training, your team, or the processes or the task flow.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q. What is the purpose of an HR Audit?

A. The purpose of the HR Audit is to ascertain whether the delegated HR functions are being managed in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Accountability Agreement and the Values Framework.

Q. What are the objectives of an HR Audit?

- A.**
1. To ensure that the HR functions are executed in keeping with FRAME IT.
 2. To identify gaps in the management of the delegated functions and suggest recommendations for improvement.

Q. How long does a typical HR Audit last?

A. The HR Audit usually ranges from two to four weeks, depending on the size of the entity.

Q. What are the methodologies that may be employed in conducting an HR audit?

- A.**
- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Review of Secondary Data | 3. Focus Group Discussions with randomly selected members of staff |
| 2. Interviews with Senior Managers | 4. Review of Website |

Q. What are the steps in conducting an HR Audit?

- A.**
1. Identify entity to be audited based on audit schedule.
 2. Write to PS/CEO/HOD advising of the date for audit and request the current staff list.
 3. Select from the staff list personal files to peruse, senior managers for interviews and staff for focus group discussions.
 4. Prepare audit plan and schedule and submit to entity.
 5. Confirm interviews with PS/CEO/HOD and HR senior staff for commencement of audit.
 6. Commence audit by interviewing PS/CEO/HOD and HR senior staff.
 7. Conduct focus group discussions.
 8. Analyze findings and prepare for Post Audit meeting with PS/CEO/HOD and HR senior staff.
 9. Prepare draft report and send to the PS/CEO/HOD. A response should be received in ten (10) working days.
 10. Following feedback from PS/CEO/HOD, prepare final report and submit to Public Service Commission for review and comments.
 11. Send final report to PS/CEO/HOD with feedback from the Public Service Commission. A copy of Report is also sent to the Governor General and the Cabinet Secretary.

Q. Apart from the FOUR (4) delegated functions, what other areas do you Audit?

- A.** Generally focus is placed on the four (4) delegated areas, however, the audit also integrates the Records Management process of the organisation, Performance Management as well as the communication of staffing matters.

Q. What document do you request from the entity BEFORE conducting an Audit?

- A.** The current Staff List.

Q. What documents do you request from the entity DURING an Audit and Why?

- A.**
1. Personal Files
 2. Separation Records
 3. Disciplinary Records
 4. Recruitment & Selection Records
 5. Training Records
 6. HREC Records
 7. Corporate Plans
 7. HR Policies and Procedures Manuals

These documents are requested to ascertain how the processes are completed as well as to verify the policies used to manage the various processes.

Q. What are the legal ramifications for not doing due diligence and ensuring completion of organizational documents and employees' files?

- A.** Incomplete organizational documents and employees' files could result in a breach of the Accountability Agreement and the Staff Orders for the Public Service. HR Audit compliance helps to ensure the organization is operating in accordance with the set guidelines and policies, thus mitigating the risk of legal action by employees and their unions.



OFFICE OF THE SERVICES COMMISSIONS



EXCITING NEWS!

It's Official,
Our [New Website](#) Has Been Launched.



SEE YOU IN JUNE

IMPORTANT NOTICES

March 31, 2019	Annual Performance Evaluation Reports Financial Year: April 1, 2018—March 31, 2019
	Study Leave/Day Release Deadline Office of the Services Commissions
	Statutory Declarations of Assets, Liabilities and Income Commission for the Prevention of Corruption
April 1, 2019 to June 28, 2020	Human Resource Quarterly Transactions MDs with Delegation of Functions
	Work Plan (Agreed Targets) Financial Year: April 1, 2019 - March 31, 2020
Financial Year 2019/2020	Change Management Training has begun in the Public Service and persons desirous of becoming Change Champions should speak with their HR Managers for details.
	Roll-out of HR Shared Services.
	Roll-out of My HR+ in the wider public service.

Editors:

Nickesha N. Walters, JP
Director, HR Development and Public Education

Mrs. Rene Phillips
Human Resource Information and Development Officer

Information Standards and Public Education Unit
Office of Services Commissions
30 National Heroes Circle, Kingston 4