



OFFICE OF THE SERVICES COMMISSIONS

(CENTRAL GOVERNMENT)

MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE BUILDING

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CIRCULAR No. 213

OSC Ref. C. 5166⁷

28th August, 2020

AMENDMENT TO ACCOMMODATE STUDY LEAVE/DAY RELEASE FOR FULL-TIME ONLINE COURSES

Under the Public Service Regulation, 1961 (Regulation 15), the Public Service Commission is responsible for granting Study Leave and permission to accept award scholarships for special training for the public service. Study Leave is granted in accordance with Section 7.8.2. of the Staff Orders for the Public Service, 2004.

The advent of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the subsequent orders under the Disaster Risk Management Act 2015, has mandated that workplaces and learning institutions practice and maintain physical and social distancing. This has forced educational institutions to offer many of their programmes on-line. The effect of this is the need for an amendment to the award of Study Leave/Day Release.

THIS AMENDMENT TO THE STUDY LEAVE/DAY RELEASE PROVISIONS IS INTENDED TO SUPPORT THE GRANTING OF STUDY LEAVE/DAY RELEASE FOR FULL-TIME ON-LINE PROGRAMMES, AND TO RESCIND THE SECTION OF THE PROVISION IN THE OFFICE OF THE SERVICES COMMISSIONS CIRCULAR NO. 4, DATED 7TH JANUARY 2020 WHICH STATES “ADDITIONALLY, PLEASE NOTE THAT STUDY LEAVE WILL NOT BE GRANTED TO PURSUE ON-LINE COURSES”.

With the prevailing conditions resulting from the Coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic, the following Guidelines are set out below:

GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE STUDY LEAVE/DAY RELEASE

1. Officers must have three (3) years appointed service to qualify for Study Leave and one (1) year continuous service to be eligible for Day Release.
2. A full-time on-line programme of study is defined as a programme with the same matriculation, teaching and learning requirements as a conventional face-to-face full-time programme. This includes hybrid or blended options (on-line and face-to-face modalities).
3. The institution offering the programme of study must be registered, and the programme must be accredited by the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ) or the relevant authority.
4. For Study Leave classes must be held for three (3) full days or more during the week and for Day Release one (1) or two (2) full days during the week.
5. The programme of study should **not** be available on a part-time basis, on weekends or in the evenings. Evenings mean programmes commencing at least 5.00 p.m.
6. Officers who have been granted Study Leave or Day Release to pursue a full-time on-line programme of study are required to undertake their studies for the full period of the Study Leave/Day Release, sit the required examinations or write the required papers, and fulfil any other academic requirement of the institution. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of the Study Leave/Day Release.
7. The Office of the Services Commissions or the relevant authority must be informed of, and approve any change to the approved programme of study by the beneficiary, for example, switching major or transferring to a part-time programme. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of the Study Leave/Day Release.
8. Study-Leave/Day-Release recipients are required to submit progress reports at the end of each semester and failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of the Study Leave/Day Release.

9. Persons who have been granted Study Leave/Day Release for on-line courses should, as best as possible, refrain from using the Office facilities for online classes.
10. All other provisions and considerations that govern the granting of Study Leave/Day Release as stated in the Staff Orders for the Public Service, 2004 or circulars issued by the Office of the Services Commissions remain in effect.

Permanent Secretaries/Heads of Department with Delegation of Functions should be guided by this Circular when granting Study Leave/Day Release to their members of staff.

Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Department are requested to ensure that these amendments to the Study Leave/Day Release Guidelines are brought to the attention of all officers who are eligible for the grant of Study Leave/Day Release.



**M. Tam (Mrs.)
Chief Personnel Officer (acting)**