

F. No. K-12011/15/96-PG
Government of India
Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
(Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances)
Sardar Patel Bhavan, Sansad Marg,
New Delhi

the 6th January, 1997

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject:— Activating the existing Machinery for Redressal of Public Grievances—Citizen's Charter for Public Agencies.

The undersigned is directed to refer to this Department's O.M. No. 1/PLCY/PG-88(7), date the 1st March, 1988 in which detailed instructions regarding setting up of the Internal Grievance Redressal Machinery in each Ministry/Department/public sector undertaking/autonomous organisation of the Government were issued. The Cabinet Secretary has expressed his concern about the routine and lackadaisical manner in which these instructions are observed by most public agencies, and the growing dissatisfaction of the public about delays, lack of information and unsympathetic attitude of officials at all levels.

2. While the Internal Grievance Redressal Machinery has now come to be established in all Ministries/ Departments, its effectiveness in settling public grievances expeditiously and in reducing systemic deficiencies or public dissatisfaction has not been upto the mark. The Parliamentary Standing Committee has taken a serious view of the routine manner in which grievances are handled in Ministries/Departments. The functioning from time to time with a view to devising measures for strengthening it and making it more responsive to the needs of the public.

3. It is reiterated that the following steps should be taken to further strengthen the Internal Grievance Redressal Machinery in the interest of promoting responsive administration. This acquires significance in the context of the announcement of the Prime Minister for examination of the entire scene of Citizen-friendly Government machinery and the introduction of the principles of Citizen's Charter in all Departments:—

- (i) A meetingless day on every Wednesday should be observed strictly. The designated officer or his/her immediate subordinate should be accessible on this day and for emergent complaints at stipulated hours on other days.
- (ii) The receptionists, security personnel and peon should be given suitable instructions about the meetingless day so as to allow the members of the public to meet officers without prior appointment. This should be enforced also in respect of all the attached offices and public agencies under the supervision on the Ministry/Department.
- (iii) The name, designation, room number, telephone number etc., of the Director of Grievances should be displayed prominently at the reception and other convenient places in the office buildings/ministries.
- (iv) A locked complaint box should be placed at the reception and opened each day for expeditious action.
- (v) In the interest of expeditious disposal of grievances, the Director of Grievances should exercise more frequently the powers vested in him to call for papers/documents of cases pending for more than 3 months, and take decisions with the approval of the Secretary of the Ministry/Department or Head of the Department/Organisation.

- (vi) Each grievance petition must be acknowledged within two weeks of receipt, along with an indication of the name, designation and telephone number of the employee who is processing the case.
- (vii) Ministries/Departments should analyse grievances received by them, with a view to identifying the major grievance-prone areas and take corrective measures to reduce recurrence of such grievances.
- (viii) Wide publicity should be given about the grievance redressal machinery in the Ministries/Departments/public sector undertakings/autonomous organizations.
- (ix) The grievances column of the newspapers should be regularly examined by each Ministry/Department/agency of Government for picking up cases which related to it and quick action should be taken for their redressal on a time-bound basis and for publicizing the action taken.
- (x) Time norms for disposal of applications/request for services/activities which bring the public in contact with the Ministry/Department should be fixed and advertised so as to ensure improved public interface and greater accountability. Systemic deficiencies and centralization leading to recurring grievances should be taken up for urgent corrective action.
- (xi) A Staff Grievance Officer (SGO) should be designated in every Ministry/Department/Office to deal with grievances of the employees on the lines done by Departments like Railways and the possibility of holding regular Staff Adalats can be pursued.
- (xii) The feedback mechanism and high levels monitoring of grievance should be strengthened, so that there are in-built mechanisms for steps to correct deficiencies. The scope for regular dialogue with user and Citizen groups on grievances and procedures should be pursued.
- (xiii) Reports/returns required to be sent to this Department should be sent as prescribed.
- (xiv) Lok Adalats/Staff Adalats should be constituted if not already constituted and held every quarter for quicker disposal of public as well as staff grievances and pensioners' grievances.
- (xv) Social Audit Panel or such other machinery, if not already constituted may please be constituted for examining areas of public interface with a view to recommending essential changes in procedures to make the organisation more people friendly.
- (xvi) Grievances should be segregated from those which are requests, suggestions, allegations and matters requiring legal redress and built into computerized monitoring as advised by this Department.
- (xvii) Grievance redressal should be decentralized to the lowest possible field formations with built in participative systems of evaluation.
- (xviii) A Single Window System may be established at points of public contact, wherever possible at points of public contact wherever possible to facilitate disposal of applications. Areas so identified may be intimated to this Department.
- (xix) Booklets/pamphlets may be made available to the customer at easily accessible contact point to notify requisite procedures of the organisation computerized enquiry centers for writing lists, information on procedures, etc. may be set-up wherever necessary.
- (xx) MTNL should be notified separately about directory entries pertaining to Public Grievance Redressal Officers.

(xxi) The Annual Action Plan and Annual Report of the organisation should reflect the public and staff grievance redressal machinery and the statistical details of receipt and disposal of public /staff grievances.

(xxii) The working of the public grievances redressal machinery should be monitored. Further, a small percentage of complaints (about 3 to 5 per cent) should be enquired into by Senior Officers to ensure efficacy of the system.

4. All Ministries/Departments are requested to ensure strict compliance with the above instructions and report action taken on the letter, so that a consolidated report may be sent to the Cabinet Secretariat.

5. The receipt of this memorandum may kindly be acknowledged.

Sd/-

(P. S. A. Sundaram)

Additional Secretary (AR&T)

Tele: 3732133.

To

All Ministries/Departments



DEVIKA KUMAR (MRS.)
DIRECTOR

प्रशासनिक सुधार और लोक शिकायत विभाग
भारत सरकार
सरदार पटेल भवन, संसद मार्ग, नई दिल्ली-110001
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE
REFORMS & PUBLIC GRIEVANCES
Government of India
Sardar Patel Bhavan, Sansad Marg, New Delhi-110001

K-12014/12/96-PG

Dated 27-01-1997

Dear

Kindly refer to Additional Secretary Dr. P.S.A. Sundaram's d.o letter No. K-11022/26/96-P dated 1.1.97 regarding responsive administration-focus on the concerns and grievances of employees—reducing recourse to Central Administrative Tribunals (copy enclosed). I am enclosing a proforma for evaluation of Staff Grievance Redressal Machinery in Ministries/Departments. I shall be grateful if a feedback on the Staff Grievance Redressal Machinery in your Ministry/Department in the above proforma is sent to us by 28th February, 1997.

Your sincerely,

Sd/-
(Devika Kumar)

To
All Staff Grievances officers of Ministries/Departments

डा. पी. एस. ए. सुंदरम
DR. P.S.A. SUNDARAM
TELE: 3732133, 3732546
FAX: 3732133

अपर सचिव
प्रशासनिक सुधार और लोक शिकायत विभाग
भारत सरकार
सरदार पटेल भवन, संसद मार्ग, नई दिल्ली-110001
Additional Secretary
Department of Administrative Reforms &
Public Grievances,
Sardar Patel Bhavan, Sansad Marg, New Delhi-110001

अ. सं. प.
D.O. NO. K-11022/26/96-P

01.01.1997

Subject:— **Responsive Administration – Focus on the concerns and grievances of employees
— reducing the recourse to CAT.**

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Dear

Your kind attention is invited to letters addressed by Secretary (Personnel) on the critical issues relating to responsive administration, arising from the Conference of Chief Secretaries. In the review of follow-up action on these issue, the Cabinet Secretary emphasized the need for attention to the prompt redressal of employee grievances as an important means to better services for the public.

In this context, this Ministry has been reviewing the experience with resort of employees to the various CAT benches for the judicial resolution of their disputes, the huge pendency of cases, and the implications of cost and congenial relations for both the Government and the employees. It is felt that it is necessary to devise urgent preventive measures, rooted in the role of the Government as a good and caring employer, to reduce the incidence of such cases, while raising employee satisfaction and morale. This is seen as contingent upon conscious action and continuous monitoring by the Secretaries and heads of departments. Personnel management and motivation of operational staff is vital to the success of department objectives and its public interface.

It has been found that the substance of cases before the CAT relate as much to appeal against statutory decisions of Department Authorities, as to matters of emoluments, placement and service conditions of employees. The latter cases are generated by inadequate attention to prompt decisions on cases of pay fixation and arrears, travel claims, PF Advance, Efficiency Bar, improved working environment, adverse entries in CRs, etc. They also arise from perception of non-transparent norms and rules for performance assessment, fixation of seniority, promotion, regularization of daily wage employment, placement and transfers. Most of all, employee frustration rises from the perception of inaccessibility and lack of concern for superior officers, failure to acknowledge and act on grievance applications, and non-involvement in department activities. There is little effort for periodic review of employee issues and grievances on a collective or individual basis, and the excellent results of Staff Adalats in many units of Railways and Posts are not replicated in most government service. Not much attention is given to training and quality circles.

It is felt that these issues may be addressed energetically by activating the posts of Staff Grievance Officers with exclusive mandate and access to Joint Secretaries and above. In addition, it is possible provide for appeals by employees to independent internal committees or designated senior officials against decisions on service matters. If this works well, then it can be legally provided that the employees will be required to take recourse to this internal second level grievance redressal before approaching the CAT.

You are requested to review existing systems of personnel management and staff, with reference to what has been stated above, and arrange to send a status report. It is proposed, with your cooperation, to undertake individual ministrywise discussions in the course of February, 1997.

With regards,

Yours Sincerely,
Sd/-
(P.S.A. Sundaram)

Shri P. P. Chauhan
Secretary
Department of Health
Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi

Shri K. Rajan
Secretary,
Department of Agriculture
Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi

Shri N. P. Nawani
Secretary
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi

Shri N. P. Singh
Secretary
Ministry of Urban Development
Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi

Copy to : (i) AS (P) for favour of report on pension related grievances
(ii) JS (T)
(iii) JS (E)
(iv) PPS to Secretary (P)

Sd/-
(P.S.A. Sundaram)
Addl. Secy (AR&T)

T.S.R. SUBRAMANIAN

मंत्रिमंडल सचिव
CABINET SECRETARY
NEW DELHI
D.O. No. K-12011/15/96-PG
February 17, 1997

Dear Secretary,

This is to draw your attention to the weak and unattended area of public grievance redressal. You are aware that this is a major source of public dissatisfaction and the subject of criticism by Members of Parliament and Standing Committees. Many of the Government Departments and their subordinate offices which have a substantial public interface do not display requisite customer orientation. Grievances primarily arise out of inaccessibility of officers, unwarranted delays, lack of information, harassment, demand for speed money and unsympathetic attitude of officials at all levels.

2. The Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances has been issuing instructing from time to time urging all Ministries to enforce time limits for acknowledgement of and final reply to letters from the public and M.Ps. They have also been reviewing the redressal machinery in all Ministries. The Directorate of Public Grievances in the Cabinet Secretariat has been separately looking into individual complaints relating to selected agencies. However, the general picture is still one of routine and lackadaisical approach to the entire area of public grievance redressal. There is a failure to address the systemic causes of grievances through delegation and decentralization, procedural changes, forms design, computerization, etc. While some of these may be built into the concept of Citizen's Charter on which I have written to you separately, I feel there is a need to bring about a total change in our attitude towards redressal of public grievances at all levels.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-

(T. S. R. SUBRAMANIAN)

To

Secretaries of all Ministries/Departments



सत्यमेव जयते
Devika Kumar (Mrs.)
Director (PG)
Tele: 3362325.

प्रशासनिक सुधार और लोक शिकायत विभाग
भारत सरकार
सरदार पटेल भवन, संसद मार्ग, नई दिल्ली-110001
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE
REFORMS & PUBLIC GRIEVANCES
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SARDAR PATEL BHAVAN, SANSAD MARG,
NEW DELHI-110 001

स. स. प. सं.

D.O. No. D—12012/3/97-PG

दिनांक

Dated 25-2-97

Dear

It has been represented to this Department that, while sending replies communicating final decision rejecting a grievance petition, the grounds on which the petition has been rejected are sometimes not communicated to the petitioner. As a result , the petitioner does not know the basis of the decision. Consequently, the decision being negative, the petitioner harbours a further sense of grievance. It is, therefore, requested that while rejecting a grievance petition, the reason or the rule(s), if any, under which it has been rejected should be communicated to the petitioner alongwith details of the appellate authority where applicable. Please bring this to the notice of all agencies and public sector units under your Ministry and send this Department a copy of the instruction issued by you.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-

(Devika Kumar)

To
Director of Public Grievances in
all Ministries/Departments

Copy to:—

- (1) Director (PG),
Directorate of Public Grievances,
Cabinet Secretariat.
- (2) I.O. (Home).

Sd/-

(Devika Kumar)



Devika Kumar (Mrs.)
Director (PG)
Tele: 3362325.

प्रशासनिक सुधार और लोक शिकायत विभाग
भारत सरकार
सरदार पटेल भवन, संसद मार्ग, नई दिल्ली-110001
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE
REFORMS & PUBLIC GRIEVANCES
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SARDAR PATEL BHAVAN, SANSAD MARG
NEW DELHI-110 001

स. स. प. सं.

D.O. No. D—12014/12/96-PG

दिनांक

Dated 06-3-97

Dear

A large number of grievances relating to service matters are being received in this Department. Also more and more employees are resorting to litigation in the various branches of the Central Administration Tribunals as they fail to get redressal from their office. I am to enclose a list of the major grievance prone areas which have been identified as the cause of generating most of the grievances amongst the employees. Although some of these pertain to service rules and your Ministry/Department may not be concerned, I shall be grateful if you look into these grievance prone areas and remedy the defects, if any, in the system which fall within your ambit. Where the rules or procedures are cumbersome, steps may please be taken to simplify them. I would particularly draw your attention to the need to fix time norms for all matters, as it is the delay in the disposal of staff matters that most often drives employees to secure redress through the courts.

2. This may also please be brought to the notice of all the agencies and public sector undertaking under your Ministry/Department.
3. Action in the matter may please be taken and copies of the orders etc., issued may also please be endorsed to us:

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-

(Devika Kumar)

To

All Ministries/Departments

Cause of 'Staff Grievance'

- Delay in sanction of Annual increment.
- Absence of provision for deemed confirmation.
- Lack of systematic approach in personal management.
- Delay in promotion.
- Non-redressal of grievance.
- Lack of Training and Assessment.
- Lack of Manpower deployment strategy
- Uneven distribution of work.
- Multiplicity of reporting channels.
- Absence of job rotation.
- Lack of delegation of clear-cut powers.
- Absence of clarity in channel of submission and level of final disposal.
- Delay in implementation of administrative decision relating to service conditions.
- Absence of provision for arbitration in all cases of disagreement in Department Council.
- Joint Secretary (Admn.) in-charge of public grievance.
- Inadequate career prospects and disparities in service condition.
- Poor physical environment is working place.
- Lack of support facilities like telephone, staff car, computers, etc.
- Misplaced sense of economy in management of office.
- Lack of housing facilities.
- Lack of good medical facilities.
- Lack of schooling facilities.
- Lack of educational allowance to companies cost of education.
- Inadequate advances for housing/conveyance etc.
- Absence of provision for encashment of LTC and leave.
- Inadequate TA/DA on tour.
- Refusal of leave in genuine conditions.
- Lack of incentives for improvement of efficiency in work place.
- Lack of recognition of good work.
- Unsatisfactory system of Performance Appraisal.
- Long delay in disposal of disciplinary cases.
- Threat to spoil CR and consequent exploitation especially of lady officials.
- Absence of time limit for suspension.

- Service bias arising out of multiplicity of service and interservice rivalry,
- Policy of 'pick and choose' by the Politician for postings.
- Absence of provision for mandatory posting of empanelled officers in the Central Secretariat.
- Time gap between empanelment and actual posting.
- Non-review of cadre at regular intervals.
- Absence of qualification of penalties for specific misconduct.
- Delay in payment of pension.
- Failure to post husband and wife in the same station.
- Absence of crèche facilities for working women.
- Absence of flexible timings for working women.
- Inadequate welfare measures.

D.O. No. K-12011/2397-PG

भारत सरकार

कार्मिक, लोक शिकायत तथा पेंशन मंत्रालय

नई दिल्ली-110001

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES

AND PENSIONS

NEW DELHI-110001

August 5, 1997

ARVIND VARMA

सचिव

SECRETARY

Tel: 3014849

Fax: 3012432

Dear Secretary,

Subject: The need for transparency within the Ministry/Department.

I would like to draw your attention to my previous communications regarding transparency in areas of public interface, on the one hand, and the need for addressing staff grievances, on the other. My letter No. 34011/1(s)/97-Estt (B) dated May 7, 1997 and Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances letter number K-12014/12/96-PG dated March 6, 1997 refer. I hope that this Department will be kept informed of follow-up action at the level of your Ministry/Department, and the agencies/PSUs under the Department.

2. You will agree that if transparency in our interaction with the Citizen/user is to be encouraged, it can only be achieved if there is a parallel transparency in internal dealings with our own staff and colleagues. A discontented and uninformed workforce feels no sense of involvement with the aims of the organisation and has no motivation to provide better service to the citizen.

3. May I, therefore, request you to look into procedures relating to personnel management within your organisation, in order to bring about adequate transparency in matters such as time-bound disposal of staff grievances the machinery available for it and its effectiveness; pay fixation, efficiency bar; confirmation; seniority; reservation; availability of recruitment rules; adequate work environment with availability of basic amenities; welfare measures; expeditious settlement of disciplinary cases; effective functioning of Staff/Department Councils; matters concerning promotion at various levels, empanelment etc. except those which are classified. This list is merely illustrative.

4. In the context of the emphasis laid by the May Conference of Chief Ministers, the Parliament standing Committee and the Cabinet Secretary on transparency, accountability and priority handling of grievances, you may like to consider systems for personally monitoring this area. We would welcome any suggestions you may have where DOPT can be of assistance.

5. In this connection, I would like to draw your attention to Cabinet Secretary's D.O. letter No. K-12011/15/96-PG dated February 17, 1997 wherein he has, *inter alia*, to be informed of the specific steps you propose to take to activate and computerize the entire system of public and staff grievances redressal and wide publicity of the efforts. I shall be grateful for an early response.

With regards,

Your sincerely,

Sd/-

(ARVIND VARMA)

To

Secretaries of all Ministries/Department