

## CHAPTER – II

### GUIDELINES AT A GLANCE

The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances is the nodal agency for policy making on public grievances. The Department has issued the following important guidelines to all Ministries/ Departments of the Central Government for handling grievance redress and to strengthen the grievance redress machinery in order to make the administration more responsive to the needs of the people. In order to achieve this, all Ministries and Departments are required to:

- Designate a senior officer as Director of Public Grievances/Grievance officer in every office including all organizations under them.
- Observe every Wednesday as a meetingless day in the Central Secretariat offices when Director of Public Grievances should be available at their desks from 1000 hrs. to 1300 hrs. to receive and hear public grievances. Field level officers having contact with the public have also to declare one day in the week as a meetingless day.
- Deal with every grievance in a fair, objective and just manner.
- Analyse public grievances received to help identification of the grievance prone areas in which modification of policies and procedures could be undertaken with a view to making the delivery of services easier and more expeditious.
- Issue booklets/pamphlets about the schemes/services available to the public indicating the procedure and manner in which these can be availed and the right authority to be contacted for service as also the grievance redress authority.
- Pick up grievances appearing in newspaper columns which relate to them and take remedial action on them in a time bound manner.
- Strengthen the machinery for Redress of Public Grievances through strictly observing meetingless day on every Wednesday, displaying name, designation, room number, telephone number etc. of Director of Grievances at the reception and other convenient places, placing a locked complaint box at reception, and giving more publicity about the grievance redress machinery, etc.
- Set up Staff Grievance Redress Machinery and designate a Staff Grievance Redress Officer.
- Include the Public Grievances work and receipt/disposal statistics relating to redress of public grievances in the Annual Action Plan and Annual Administrative Report of Ministries/Departments.
- Fix time limits for disposal of work relating to public grievances and staff grievances and strictly adhere to such time limits.
- Inform complainants the name, designation, office and telephone number of the official who is processing the case. The time frame in which a final reply will be sent should also be indicated.
- Constitute Lok Adalats/Staff Adalats, if not already constituted, and hold them every quarter for quicker disposal of public as well as staff grievances and pensioners' grievances.
- Constitute a Social Audit Panel or such other machinery, if not already constituted, for examining areas of public interface with a view to recommending essential changes in procedure to make the organization more people-friendly.
- Establish a Single window system at points of public contact, wherever possible, to facilitate disposal of applications.

- Notify MTNL separately about directory entries pertaining to Public Grievance Redress Officers.
- Issue a reasoned and a speaking reply for every grievance rejected.
- Quarterly Progress Reports regarding the receipt and disposal of grievances in the Ministry/Department and organizations under it.
- Grievances received and disposed of in the Ministry/Department and organizations under it should be monitored by the Joint Secretary/Director (PG) every month.
- Each Ministry/Department should prepare a consolidated directory of officers holding public/staff grievances responsibility in the Ministry/Department and organizations under it.
- Should give wide publicity of Director (PG) through Citizens' Charters, Broadcast of audio-visual capsules, sports, websites; etc.
- Focus attention on analysis of public grievances to identify grievance-prone areas and implement systemic changes to reduce grievances.
- Brochures/Pamphlets prepared by various Ministries/Departments and their subordinate/attached/autonomous agencies may be kept at accessible contact points including the railway stations, bus stands etc.
- Citizens' level of satisfaction should be measured on a regular basis.
- In order to make the grievance redress mechanism more effective, the following steps need to be taken:
  - (a) careful analysis of grievances.
  - (b) decision on grievances to be taken at a fairly senior level.
  - (c) forwarding the grievances to the departments concerned for prompt redress.
  - (d) reply to complainant informing details of authorities setting grievances.
  - (e) obtaining reply/report from the departments concerned.
  - (f) a reasoned reply to the complainant, if a grievance cannot be settled.
- Place Citizen's Charters of Ministry/Department and organizations under them on the website.