

TAMIL NADU PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Office Order No. 177, dated 28.04.2021

Sub.: Office Procedure – Submission of Notes and Drafts - Regarding.

The following instructions are issued regarding distribution of tapals within the sections, initiation of action on the tapals, noting, drafting and approval of files.

A. Receipt and Distribution of Tapals

- (1) The Section Officer shall peruse the tapals received and assign a level of priority to each tapal, based on the content and the action required to be taken thereon.
- (2) In the case of tapals requiring to be brought to the immediate attention of the Commission / Secretary / Controller of Examinations, a copy shall be marked appropriately and forwarded to the Commission / Secretary / Controller of Examinations, as the case may be, through the Under Secretary and Deputy Secretary concerned.
- (3) In continuation of (2) above, a copy of tapals whose contents may have a critical impact on scheduled events (especially recruitment related) shall be forwarded to the Section Officers concerned.
- (4) The Section Officer shall thereafter distribute the tapals received to the Assistants / Assistant Section Officers / Assistant Section Officer-cum-Programmers for further action.
- (5) In the absence of the Section Officer, the Under Secretary or in his absence, the Deputy Secretary shall distribute the tapals to the Assistants / Assistant Section Officers / Assistant Section Officer-cum-Programmers of the section concerned for further action.
- (6) The Joint Secretary / Deputy Secretary and the Under Secretary shall also peruse the tapals sent to the sections under their control and monitor the action taken thereon.

B. Re-assignment of Tapals

Tapals pertaining to other departments / sections shall be transferred on or before the next working day to the departments / sections concerned.

C. Initiation of Action

- (1) In cases of requirement to initiate action on a subject, either suo moto or upon receipt of tapals or by way of reminder, the Assistants / Assistant Section Officers / Assistant Section Officer-cum-Programmers, shall verify the existence of current file(s) on the subject, in the Personal Register / Management Information System (MIS) Report.
- (2) Upon identifying such file(s), necessary action, including submission of the tapal received, for perusal, noting on the subject, proposing action to be taken, seeking of orders and submission of draft(s) for approval, shall be undertaken.
- (3) In the absence of existing files, the dealing hand shall initiate a new file and follow the procedure as stated in (2) above.
- (4) Tapals on which 'SPECIAL' / 'FOR REMARKS' / other similar notations are inscribed, shall be added to the files concerned and submitted to the Secretary / Controller of Examinations, as the case may be, within 48 hours of receipt of the tapal / time stipulated by the officers concerned.
- (5) Prompt action shall be taken on all other tapals following the guidelines prescribed in the Government Office Manual.

D. Noting

- (1) The note file is essentially a narrative of facts to facilitate decision making.
- (2) While writing notes, care shall be taken to see that the facts of the case to be dealt with, including an abstract of past history, the relevant portions of the latest correspondence on the subject,

precedents (if any) and material provisions of the relevant law / rules / orders are presented.

- (3) The note shall supply deficiencies or omissions and correct any error or explain any ambiguity in the current. It shall not merely be a repetition of the current.
- (4) In the case of voluminous records that cannot be incorporated as part of the eFile, the covering letter alone shall be added to the current of the eFile. The eNote shall mention that the records along with the covering letter are being submitted concurrently as hardcopies. Similarly, an inscription to the effect that an eFile in reference number ____ had been submitted via the eOffice system shall be made on the first page of the covering letter.
- (5) Remarks made by the Chairman / Members / Secretary / Controller of Examinations in the current file or papers put up in a current file, shall be extracted (reproduced) in the note file with necessary noting thereon.
- (6) Oral communication (between officers and staff / between departments of the Commission's office OR between the Commission's office and the Government / Government Departments / other organizations), wherever required, shall form part of the note file.
- (7) The facts stated in the note shall be supported by references made to the current / other files / disposals / law / rules / orders, etc. References to statements made in earlier notes of the file / notes in other files shall preferably be avoided.
- (8) Noting such as "*Further action shall be taken separately*" shall not be resorted to. Every kind of action required to be taken on a file shall be taken before the file is submitted, except –
 - (a) In cases where action is also required to be taken in another file.
 - (b) In cases where action is required to be taken by other departments / sections.

In both the above cases, action shall be initiated concurrently or immediately upon receipt of requisite orders.

- (9) In cases where information from other departments / sections is required prior to the submission of a file, a note seeking **specific** information / comments shall be routed through the departments / sections concerned who shall respond appropriately and send back the file on or before the next working day.
- (10) Drafts of correspondence / memoranda, etc., shall not be routed through other departments / sections, either for information or remarks thereon.
- (11) In cases where urgent action is required to be taken in a file currently under submission, the dealing hand shall submit a separate file bearing the same file number as the former. This file shall be added to the original file upon its return.
- (12) Once a file is submitted, corrections, if any, in the draft(s) therein, shall be made by the recipient himself. However, in cases where the draft requires to be completely re-drawn, the file may be returned to the dealing hand with instructions on the modifications required to be made. Such instructions shall not be given orally.
- (13) No file shall be returned for modification of the note submitted. In case of factual errors / errors in interpretations made / conclusions arrived at in the note, the officer perusing the file shall indicate such errors and the rectification thereof in his note.
- (14) In the case of any clarification required, the files may be returned to the dealing hand with specific queries. Such queries shall be responded to, within two working days.
- (15) In any case, the file shall be passed to the immediate superior only after a very brief summary of the initial note and remarks / suggestions / orders sought for thereon have been added.
- (16) In cases where the orders sought for in the note are unclear / not tenable, the officer perusing the file shall make suitable modifications in the orders being sought for. The file shall not be returned to subordinates for such modification.
- (17) In the case of files requiring approval by the Secretary / Controller of Examinations / Chairman / Commission, the notings by the Under Secretaries / Deputy Secretaries / Joint Secretary shall not only facilitate decision making but shall also serve to instruct subordinates in dealing with files of a similar nature.

E. Drafting

- (1) Drafts shall state the subject in phrases that convey the essence of the correspondence.
- (2) The references cited shall be relevant to the contents of the draft and shall be as brief as possible.
- (3) The draft shall be concise and courteously worded.
- (4) Draft(s) on orders passed in files shall be submitted by the dealing hand, on or before the next working day.
- (5) Synopses to be placed for Commission's discussion, shall be a concise narrative of all the facts of the case, with relevant citations.

F. Approval

While approval of physical files shall be indicated by the signature (and remarks, if any) of the designated approving authority, in the case of eFiles, the act of forwarding the file to the next higher authority shall cause auto-tagging with the identity of the staff concerned along with the date and time of forwarding. Approval of the file shall be authenticated by eSignature of the designated authority.

G. Extracts / Copies of Notes and Orders

In cases where orders of the Commission / Chairman / Secretary / Controller of Examinations have already been obtained on a subject and the subject is required to be placed for further discussion or the said notes and orders are to be furnished for information, photocopies shall not be used, instead, an extract / copy, as applicable, of the notes and orders shall be made in the following format:

- (a) A heading indicating whether 'Extract' / 'Copy' and the file no. ____ .
- (b) The requisite contents / complete contents of the note.

- (c) Remarks, if any, made by the approving officers with designation and date of approval, in ascending order.
- (d) A legend indicating / **By Order** / or / **True Copy** / shall be appended after (c) above.
- (e) The extract / copy shall be attested by the Under Secretary / Section Officer, as prescribed.

H. General

- (1) In the case of file(s) transferred from one section / department to another, the Section Officer transferring the files shall do so through an eNote to the Section Officer receiving the file(s).
- (2) Extracts / copies of notes and orders to be transferred to other sections / departments shall be transferred through eOffice.

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Secretary