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சனாதிபதி அலுவலகம்
PRESIDENTIAL SECRETARIAT



Circular No: PS/GPA/Circular/21/2020
14.05.2020

Secretaries to Ministries
Chief Secretaries of Provinces
Heads of Departments
District Secretaries
Divisional Secretaries
Chairpersons of State Corporations/Statutory Boards

**Optimum Service Delivery through Decentralized Operations of Public Institutions
situated in Colombo and Gampaha District during COVID -19 Pandemic**

The Government has further eased COVID-19 related limitations currently imposed in the country to facilitate gradual return to normalcy. However, transition will take time as school reopening, reorganization of transport modes, preventing congestion of townships and working arrangements are challenging issues. Public service delivery arrangements still remain concentrated in areas, especially in Colombo and Gampaha districts. Accordingly, public services are to be decentralized to minimize the inflows to cities. Therefore, Ministries, Head Office operations under Government institutions and Statutory Corporations located in Colombo and Gampaha districts may adhere to the following guidelines.

1.0 Service Delivery Arrangements

- i. Government institutions, irrespective of where they are located, may ensure that their services are provided at all times. Efficient service delivery in all regions in the country is a timely requirement and therefore, optimum capacity of Government institutions in the country could be expended with appropriate delegation of authority to decentralized Regional offices.
- ii. Heads of Institutions located in Colombo and suburbs, as identified in Annex I, where decentralized operations are possible through their regional offices or District/ Divisional Secretariats, should take action to redeploy staff to such offices, while maintaining a minimum staff strength at the Head Office only to carry out high-level and mandatory functions. This work arrangement will facilitate the general public to obtain their services more conveniently during this period of travel limitations, and also ease people and vehicular congestion in Colombo and Gampaha districts.
- iii. Accordingly, under this work arrangement, service delivery functions normally carried out by the Head Office must be transferred to the maximum possible extent to its decentralized offices. Concurrently, the staff not included in the minimum staff strength at the Head Office should be redeployed to decentralized offices, as the majority of service delivery functions of the Institution will now be in operation elsewhere in the country. Such redeployment must take into account the possibility of assigning staff to decentralized offices nearest to their residences.

- iv. Heads of Institutions may delegate authority to officers in charge of respective decentralized offices, where necessary, in a lawful manner. Within a reasonable time period, all accumulated and uncompleted work at decentralized offices should be completed, while performing newly assigned functions.
- v. Heads of Institutions must also make use of or introduce digital means such as internet, web applications and software tools to facilitate communication and correspondence between Head Office and decentralized offices.
- vi. In case of Ministries and other institutions where a minimum staff has to be maintained in Colombo, Heads of such organizations are instructed to schedule their staff in stages so that a restricted number will be present on any given day. Therefore, 1/3 of staff on average will report to work in such offices on a rotational basis.
- vii. The general public must be kept sufficiently informed of the new service delivery arrangements and points of delivery via mass media and other communication means.
- viii. Additional spending should not be incurred for arrangements of work arising from redeployment as strict measures have to be undertaken to control public spending. Necessary amenities/ facilities for redeployed staff in decentralised offices should be coordinated by redistribution of available resources, including vehicles, computers etc.
- ix. Your compliance is also sought to relevant provisions in Circular by Secretary to the President No. PS/GPA/ Circular/20/2020 dated 18.04.2020 on "Guidelines to be adhered to by Government Offices during the opening of districts for resumption of normal day to day activities during COVID-19" and the guidelines issued by Director General of Health Services to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the community.



P B Jayasundera

Secretary to the President

CC: Secretary to the Prime Minister
Secretary to the Cabinet of Ministers
Auditor General