

THE GOVERNMENT OF ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

CIVIL SERVICE ORDERS FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF
ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

(Order)

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY

- 1.1 The conditions of service of Public Officers instructions for the conduct of public business and of officers and other matters are embodied in these Orders which are entitled "Civil Service Orders for the Public Service of St. Vincent and the Grenadines" and are published under the authority of the Cabinet.
- 1.2 The Orders take effect from the 2nd day of February, 1970 and they supersede the General Orders of the Windward Islands.
- 1.3 All Public Officers are required to familiarise themselves thoroughly with the Civil Service Orders and any amendments and additions thereto which may from time to time be issued. The Orders should be readily available to all officers in every Department and it is the duty of Heads of Departments to ensure that a sufficient number of copies is available for consultations by all officers in his Department.
- 1.4 The provisions of these Orders shall apply to all Public Officers provided that where special regulations are made in regard to a particular category or class of officers such special regulations shall have precedence over related provisions in these Orders.
- 1.5 Public Officers are required to make themselves acquainted with all Government notifications and orders, whether published in the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Government Gazette or conveyed by circular or other means of communications, and Heads of Departments will be held responsible for the necessary circulation of such publications within their Departments.
- 1.6 Public Officers will be liable to disciplinary action under the regulations of the appropriate Service Commission in respect of a breach of any of these Orders.

In these Orders unless the context otherwise requires:

"Department" includes reference to a Ministry;

"Head of Department" means, in relation to a Ministry, the Permanent Secretary of that Ministry;

"employee" means a person other than a public officer employed by the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines;

"office of emolument" in relation to the definition of "public officer" means any pensionable or non-pensionable post which is shown under a personal emoluments sub-head in the Estimates;

"Public Officer" or "officer" means any person holding an office of emolument in the Public Service of St. Vincent and the Grenadines employed on permanent pensionable terms and includes one employed permanently or temporarily on non-pensionable monthly terms;

"Service Commission" means the Public Service Commission, the Judicial and Legal Service Commission, the Police Service Commission or any other Service Commission appointed under the Constitution of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

CHAPTER II

APPOINTMENTS, PROMOTIONS AND TRANSFERS

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ntments

2.1 Save as may otherwise be provided in the Constitution of St. Vincent and the Grenadines or in regulations made under the Constitution appointments to the Public Service are made by the appropriate Service Commission. The appointment of non-pensionable officers and minor-salaried employees is governed by the Public Service Commission Regulations.

ive date
pointment

2.2 The effective date of an appointment is the date on which an officer becomes eligible to receive the full emoluments of the post, i.e., the date on which he assumes duty. In the case of the officers appointed from outside the State the date of his arrival in the State.

- (4) if the higher office is that of Permanent Secretary or Head of Department the office shall be deemed to fall vacant on the date the holder of the office proceeds on leave pending vacation of the office.

CHAPTER III

CONDUCT OF PUBLIC OFFICERS

3.1 (1) An officer shall discharge the duties of the office to which he is appointed and any other related duties that the Permanent Secretary or Head of Department may, at any time, call upon him to discharge.

(2) In the discharge of his duties, an officer shall be courteous and polite both to members of the staff and to members of the public.

(3) Any act by an officer which is considered to be likely to bring the Public Service into disrepute must be reported to the Chief Personnel Officer by the Permanent Secretary or Head of Department of the officer's Ministry or Department.

(4) The following modes of dress for Public Officers are acceptable -

(i) FOR MALES:

White or sober-coloured dress shirts, (not Jerseys), with long or short sleeves with or without ties, Shirt Jacs. Long trousers of sober cut and colour. Shoes, moccasins - no slippers. All garments, shoes and moccasins are to be clean and tidy. No head covering in office is permitted.

(ii) FOR FEMALES:

Dresses of sober style and cut. Pants suits and pants with tops. Shoes - no slippers.

Public Officers while on duty shall -

- (i) appear to be clean and tidily dressed and maintain a respectable demeanour in every way;

(ii) not have excessive or untidy growth of hair about the head or face or both head and face, and no dread locks;

(iii) not wear unwashed or untidy clothes.

Any violation of paragraph (4) shall be an act of misconduct under Order 3.27.

Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments shall ensure that the modes of dress are strictly complied with and in the event of any violation shall warn the delinquent Public Officer in writing. If after two (2) warnings the officer persists in violating the directions, the Permanent Secretary or Head of Department shall report the Public Officer to the Public Service Commission with a view to the institution of disciplinary proceedings.

of work 3.2 (1) The normal hours of work of public officers are thirty-six hours in each week as prescribed in Appendix Heads of Departments may require any or all of the staff of their Department to work temporarily for longer hours than those prescribed whenever the public interest makes this desirable.

(2) An officer may be required by his Head of Department to work on any public holiday but in such cases the officer will, whenever possible, be compensated by being given time off in lieu unless he receives overtime payment for the duty.

ce from 3.3 No officer may absent himself from duty during e during working hours without the permission of the Head of the ng hours Department in which he works or such other officer as may be deputed by the Head of Department to give such permission.

ce from 3.4 (1) An officer who absents himself from duty without ssion without permission, except in case of illness or other unavoidable circumstances shall render himself liable to disciplinary action.

(2) An officer may not leave the State without permission given in writing by the Chief Personnel Officer or, in cases of emergency by a Permanent Secretary of Head of Department who will inform the

Chief Personnel Officer accordingly.

Attendance
Register

3.5 Every officer save those who may be exempted by the Head of Department shall sign his name in the Attendance Register kept in the Department for this purpose and insert the time of his arrival and departure from duty. The Head of Department shall depute an officer to examine and initial this Register every day and bring to his notice any case of habitual or frequent unpunctuality or absenteeism on the part of any officer. The Head of Department or such officer as he may designate shall examine the Register at least once every month.

Private
Interests

3.6 (1) Except in the case of part-time officers, an officer's whole time is at the disposal of the Government.

Accordingly -

- (a) an officer may not at any time engage in any activity which would in any way tend to impair his usefulness as an officer, nor may he engage in any occupation or undertaking which might in any way conflict with the interests of his Ministry or Department or be inconsistent with his position as an officer;
- (b) an officer shall not engage in any trade or any professional, commercial, agricultural or industrial undertaking or undertake private work for remuneration without the prior consent of the Service Commission;
- (c) notwithstanding that prior consent may have been given, the Service Commission may at any time after notice to the officer and after holding an inquiry prohibit an officer from -
 - (i) engaging in any trade, professional, commercial, agricultural or industrial undertaking;
 - (ii) regularly undertaking private work for remuneration, if the Commission is

of the opinion that the officer's activity tends to impair his usefulness as an officer or conflicts with the interests of his Ministry or Department or is inconsistent with his position as an officer;

- (d) within a period of thirty days after his first appointment to office in the public service, and in the case of a serving officer within a period of sixty days of the coming into operation of these Orders, an officer shall disclose in writing to the Service Commission particulars of any investment or shareholding which he possesses in any company carrying on business inside or outside of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and also of any direct interest which he has in any professional, commercial, agricultural or industrial undertaking in or outside St. Vincent and the Grenadines;
- (e) an officer who invests in or acquires shares in any company carrying on business in or outside of St. Vincent and the Grenadines or who acquires any direct interest in any professional, commercial, agricultural or industrial undertaking in or outside of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, shall within a period of thirty days thereafter inform the Service Commission;
- (f) whenever the Service Commission is of the opinion that an officer's performance of his duties is likely to be influenced by the fact that he owns shares or investments in any company, or he has direct interest in any professional, commercial, agricultural or industrial undertaking, the Commission may require the officer to dispose of such shares, investment or interest within such

period as the Commission may specify or may transfer the officer to other duties. If the officer, on being required to dispose of such shares investment or interest fails to do so within the specified period, he shall be liable to disciplinary action;

the family
interests

3.7 An officer is required to report to the Service Commission through the Chief Personnel Officer any interest in trade, commerce or agricultural undertakings held by his wife as a principal or on her own account. Where it is considered by the Commission that the interests of an officer's wife in this connection conflict, or are likely to conflict, or may seem to conflict, with the efficient and faithful performance of the officer's duties, the Commission may direct the transfer of the officer to other duties where such conflict, real or apparent, does not exist, unless his wife has in the meantime divested herself of her interests. The restriction in this paragraph does not extend to the employment of an officer's wife as a paid employee of Government or any private firm.

for
Public Boards
committees

3.8 (1) Officers are not permitted to undertake work for public boards or committees without previously obtaining the sanction of the Service Commission.



(2) No officer in the full-time employment of the Government will be eligible to receive any fee or other emoluments from Government funds in respect of his membership of, or service to, a public board or committee.

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employment
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3.9 No officer may accept any paid employment while on leave without previously obtaining the express sanction of the Service Commission which will not normally be withheld when an officer is on retirement leave.

Public Officers
to sign
public petitions

3.10 No officer shall sign or procure signatures to any public petition to the Government which may require executive action or which relates to any action or proposals of the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines or of any other Government.

officers
Press

3.11

(1) No officer, whether he is on duty or leave of absence shall -

- (a) act as editor of any newspaper, magazine or periodical or take part directly or indirectly with the management thereof; or
- (b) contribute to, whether anonymously or otherwise, or publish in any newspaper, magazine or periodical or otherwise cause to be published in any manner, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines or elsewhere anything which may reasonably be regarded as of a political or administrative nature; or
- (c) allow himself to be interviewed on questions of public policy, or on any matter of a political or administrative nature or on matters affecting the administration or the security of any state or territory; or
- (d) speak in public or broadcast in any way on matters which may reasonably be regarded as of a political or administrative nature; or
- (e) take active part in any public meetings at which speeches on matters of a political or administrative nature are made.

Provided that the provisions of this Order shall not apply to an officer acting in the pursuance of his official duties and with the prior permission of his Minister.

Provided also that statements for publication of factual and technical information may be made by Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Departments and other senior officers if authorised by the appropriate Minister.

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3.12

No officer may, without the written approval of the Minister concerned make public or communicate to the Press or to unauthorised individuals any documents, papers or information which may come into his possession

in his official capacity, or make private copies of any such documents or papers. Every public officer is required to exercise due care and diligence to prevent unauthorised access or disclosures of such documents and information.

3.13 Nothing in the preceding two Orders shall be deemed to prevent an officer from publishing in his own name, by writing, speech or broadcast, matters other than that which may reasonably be regarded as of a political or administrative nature, provided that if the publication is a book, article or other work, the subject of which is connected with the officer's official duties or those of other officers, the prior consent of the Service Commission is obtained.

3.14 / No officer may call a public meeting to consider any action of the Government or actively take part in such a meeting.

3.15 No officer may seek to influence any member of the Legislature or any other person as a means of bringing his services to official notice especially in connection with appointments, leave, postings, transfers, discipline, promotions, or any condition of service, or as a means of furthering his interests in the Government service in any way. The employment of such methods will not be to the advantage of the person concerned and may render him liable to disciplinary proceedings.

3.16 X Officers are expressly forbidden to participate actively on behalf of any party or candidate in an election to the legislature or at Municipal or Local Authority elections. They are expressly forbidden to act as agents, sub-agents or canvassers at elections of this nature.

3.17 Public officers may be members of a trade union and they are entitled to attend private meetings of their union, even if of a political character, and to speak and vote at such meetings. But they may not hold office in a trade union, the objects of which are wholly or in part political, nor may they speak or vote at public meetings organized by such trade union.

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3.18 Public Officers are prohibited from receiving valuable presents (other than ordinary gifts from personal friends) whether in the shape of money, goods, services or other personal benefits, and from giving such presents. This rule applies not only to the officers themselves but also to their families and officers will be held responsible for its observance by their families. It does not apply to cases of remuneration for special services rendered and paid for with the consent of the Government.

(2) A present given to an officer by an officer or representative of a foreign Government or a member of a recognised organisation in the State, either official or unofficial, which cannot be refused without giving offence, may be accepted but the fact and the circumstances must at once be reported to the Service Commission and the recipient shall abide by any instructions which may be given as to the disposal of the gift.

proceed-
by officers

3.19 No steps may be taken by public officers to institute civil proceedings in any Court in connexion with matters arising out of the discharge of their public duties, or against a Minister, a Permanent Secretary or other public officer, for anything done in the performance of his duty, unless, and until the sanction of the Service Commission has been obtained.

proceed-
against
officers

3.20 (1) Subject to the provisions of this Order, the Government will, unless advised otherwise by the Attorney General in any particular case, accept responsibility for the defence of officers against whom legal proceedings are threatened or instituted in respect of acts done or liabilities incurred in the execution of their duty.

(2) Where any such legal proceedings are threatened or instituted, the fact thereof shall be reported forthwith to the Attorney General and no legal or other expenses shall be incurred by the officer against whom the proceedings have been threatened or instituted, or other steps taken in connexion with any such proceedings until the directions of the Attorney General have been

received by the officer.

pecuniary
embarrassment

3.21 Public officers are required to be prudent in the conduct of their private financial affairs. Serious pecuniary embarrassment arising out of the imprudent conduct of an officer's private financial affairs may be regarded as impairing his efficiency thus affecting his claim to promotion or increments. In an aggravated case of this description the officer concerned will be liable to disciplinary proceedings with a view to his dismissal and the onus will rest upon him to show that the circumstances do not justify the imposition of the full penalty of dismissal.

bankruptcy

3.22 In the event of an officer filing a petition in bankruptcy or of bankruptcy proceedings being taken against him, or of his entering into a composition with his creditors under the Bankruptcy law, or of any other serious financial embarrassment on his part, the officer shall immediately notify the Head of his Department who will report the fact to the Chief Personnel Officer.

3.23 In every instance of bankruptcy proceedings against a public officer, the officer of the Court before whom the proceedings are taken shall forthwith report the matter to the Chief Personnel Officer giving particulars of the officer's indebtedness. On the conclusion of the examination the officer of the Court shall furnish a further report to the Chief Personnel Officer showing whether or not the officer's difficulties were occasioned by (a) imprudence or extravagance or (b) unavoidable misfortune or other extenuating circumstances.

judgment
summons

3.24 Any public officer who is publicly sued for debt and against whom, after an order of payment has been made, a judgment summons is issued, will be regarded, in the absence of a reasonable explanation of his failure to pay the debt, as having brought himself within the terms of Order 3.22.

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3.25 Clerks of the Courts shall furnish to the Chief Personnel Officer a quarterly return of officers against whom judgment summons have been issued, giving particulars of the indebtedness of such officers.

to and by
ic officers

3.26 No officer shall borrow at interest from or make any loan at interest to, any public officer, or borrow from or lend money to, any public officer, in return for payment of a larger sum or any other valuable consideration whatever or shall act as intermediary between any public officer and a money-lender or shall take any part in collecting debts on behalf of a money-lender. In particular, no officer shall borrow money from a subordinate officer. Heads of Departments are responsible for reporting to the Chief Personnel Officer through the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry any officer who is known to be contravening those rules and such an officer will render himself liable to disciplinary action.

conduct

3.27 An officer will be liable to disciplinary action for any misconduct including general misconduct to the prejudice of discipline or the proper administration of Government business and contravention of specific rules and regulations.

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ic officers

3.28 Public officers who go on strike violate the terms of their employment and shall be liable to instant dismissal.

ificate of
ice

3.29 Any public officer may, if he so wishes, obtain on leaving the service, a Certificate of Service in the prescribed form from the Chief Personnel Officer. The main purpose of a Certificate of Service is that it may be used as a reference covering the holder's Government service when seeking other employment. Accordingly, a Certificate should contain that information which the prospective employer might fairly expect to obtain from the person who had previously employed the holder. In no circumstances may a public officer who leaves the Service be provided with a personal testimonial other than this.

- 3.30 Valedictory letters may be sent by the Chief Personnel Officer to public officers who retire after long and valuable service.

CHAPTER IV

SALARIES AND ACTING ALLOWANCES

Salaries to be determined by Parliament

- 4.1 The salaries attached to public offices are as provided in the Government's Annual Estimates of Expenditure and approved by Parliament.

Incremental salary scales

- 4.2 Where the salary of any post is in an incremental scale, subject to the provisions of these Orders, it shall be normal for an officer appointed thereto on a permanent basis to be paid initially the minimum salary of the scale and for the salary to be increased by annual increments at the rates provided until the maximum of the scale is reached.

Payment of salaries

- 4.3 (1) An officer will receive the full salary of his post from the date upon which he assumes the duties of the post except as provided for under Order 2.12 (ii).

(2) No salary will be paid to an officer in respect of any period during which he has been absent from duty without leave.

(3) An officer who is proceeding on leave outside the State may receive, prior to embarkation, his salary for the whole of the month in which he leaves the State.

(4) Salaries will be paid normally on the last but one working day of the month or on such other day or days that may be determined by the Minister of Finance.

Promotional increases in salary

- 4.4 Except in a case of promotion from a non-pensionable office to a pensionable office, the following shall apply where an officer is promoted to an office carrying salary on an incremental scale:

- (i) If immediately prior to his promotion the salary of the officer was less than the minimum of the new office, he shall receive the minimum, but if the grant of the next increment in his former office would have

that the female officer has elected to continue her pensionable service to normal retirement.

(3) A married female officer whose domestic responsibilities interfere with the discharge of her official duties may be called upon to resign, in which case she will be eligible to receive the marriage gratuity for which she would have been eligible at the time of her marriage. Provided that in such case the officer must be warned in good time that her retirement is contemplated and given an opportunity of replying to charges of less of efficiency.

CHAPTER IX

CORRESPONDENCE AND PUBLIC BUSINESS

Disclosure
of official
information

- 9.1 Public Officers and employees are expressly forbidden to give to any unauthorised persons information relating to the business of the Public Service. The publication of official documents or information is governed by the provisions of Civil Service Orders 3.13 and 3.14.

Confidential
and secret
correspondence

- 9.2 Confidential and secret correspondence and documents must always be kept separate from open correspondence and material, and must be kept under lock and key. No reference to confidential or secret correspondence shall be made in any open correspondence.

Responsibility
Permanent
Secretaries and
Heads of Depart-
ments for the
security of
classified
documents

- 9.3 (1) It is the responsibility of Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments to ensure that no member of their staffs, other than officers designated for the purpose, shall be in a position to handle or see confidential or secret documents.

(2) All correspondence marked "Secret", "Confidential" or "In Confidence" must be opened by the addressee personally. Heads of Departments shall themselves be responsible for the security of secret and confidential material that comes into their hands. Permanent Secretaries may arrange for one clerk to be appointed in each Ministry to whom all secret and confidential work will be entrusted.

9.4 (1) All official correspondence addressed "Secret", "Confidential" or "In Confidence" must be enclosed in two envelopes, one inside the other. The inner envelope must be marked "Secret", "Confidential" or "In Confidence", as the case may be, but the outer one should not be so marked. The inner envelope should be folded rather smaller than the other, so that both will not be opened at once.

(2) Care must be exercised that secret and confidential papers are not passed about the office, or between one office and another, except in sealed covers marked "Secret", "Confidential" or "In Confidence".

9.5 Decisions affecting an officer personally shall be conveyed to him in writing. No officer through whose hands such correspondence passes may communicate any of the contents to any person or persons without written instructions from the Chief Personnel Officer or the Permanent Secretary of a Ministry.

9.6 (1) Copies of communications to or from the Government must not be conveyed to any persons without the authority of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry concerned. If the orders therein contained are intended to be communicated, they will be embodied in a letter addressed to the person concerned.

(2) No officer may take copies of communications and reports referring to himself or any other officer, and any officer found in unauthorised possession of such documents will be liable to disciplinary action.

9.7 Permanent Secretaries will correspond directly with other Ministries and with the public upon the affairs of their own Ministries and Departments. Important questions of principle or policy will be referred to the Minister concerned, and proposals which involve reference to other Ministries should be fully discussed between the Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments concerned, before they are submitted to the Minister and the fact that this has been done should be stated in the submission. Personnel questions (other than those which are for determination by the appropriate Service

Commission) and Establishment matters that may be resolved within the terms of these Orders are amended from time to time, will be dealt with by the Permanent Secretary in each Ministry, except that personnel matters which may have a Service-wide implication and establishment of any provision of these Orders or suggest a departure from existing policy or the establishment of a novel principle or a new provision, or define an issue which may have repercussions throughout the Service, shall be referred to the Chief Personnel Officer.

- 9.8 (a) All communications, whether from the public or from other Ministries or between a Ministry and a Department, must be answered with the least possible delay.

Where it is not possible for a prompt reply to be sent, an interim acknowledgement must be made and a reply sent as soon thereafter as possible.

(2) Communications must, as far as possible, be confined to a single subject. Where it is found to be essential that more than one subject is dealt with in one communication, additional copies, according to the number of subjects, must be furnished. In every communication, paragraphs must be numbered consecutively throughout and each page must be numbered.

- 9.9 No opinion of the Government law officers may be quoted directly to a private individual. If it is necessary to refer to a legal opinion this should be preceded by the words "The Government is advised that"

- 9.10 The preservation and the destruction of Government documents is regulated by the following:

- (1) No correspondence or document shall be considered for destruction before it is five years old.
- (2) Any file over five years old, that is put away, shall bear a direction by a Senior Officer in the Ministry responsible for the subject, that it shall be:
- (a) preserved because of its continuing value to the department;

preservation
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(b) destroyed at once;

(c) destroyed on a stated date if there is no further action.

(3) If a file is retained in accordance with (2) it shall be kept for fifteen years from the date of its creation, and shall then be considered by the Government Archivist for destruction or for further retention.

(4) A record shall be kept of all documents and files destroyed and the date on which they were destroyed.

(5) The following documents shall not be destroyed:

(a) those required by law or regulations to be preserved;

(b) documents of historical or other interest, particularly those relating to the history of the State or the West Indies;

(c) documents relating to land and the ownership thereof, and to the value of land and property, especially Crown Lands;

(d) documents that are more than fifty years old unless they are of a routine nature.

(6) Documents that, as a rule, must be kept, are

to reports by Departmental committees and working parties; to organisation and staffing and the personal files of public officers.

9.11 An officer in each Ministry and Department should be nominated to comply with the provisions of the preceding Order and to make reports at stated intervals to his Permanent Secretary or Head of Department.

9.12 The provisions of Orders 9.10 and 9.11 do not apply to Legal Departments, which are subject to Rules made under the Destruction of Court Documents Ordinance.

9.13 Official stationery must, on no account, be used for private correspondence or for any purpose not directly connected with the work of the Ministry or Department. Permanent Secretaries will ensure that the strictest economy in the use of stationery is exercised in all Departments of their Ministries. All orders for stationery must be scrutinised before they are issued by a responsible officer deputed for this purpose.

9.14 Official correspondence (including letters, printed matter and miscellaneous packets) is transmitted free by inland post, provided that it bears on the envelope or on the words "On Her Majesty's Service" or the letters "O.M." and, in the lower left hand corner, the signature and official designation of an officer duly authorised to frank official postal packages.

9.15 Impressions of official seals shall not be given to any private person.

9.16 Telegrams may be approved for despatch only by Permanent Secretaries or officers authorised by them. In the interests of economy, the use of telegrams should be avoided wherever possible unless the communication is urgent or a telegraphic reply has been specifically requested.

CHAPTER X

GOVERNMENT QUARTERS

(Note: The Revision of this chapter is under consideration.)

10.1 Free Quarters Free quarters are provided for officers occupying the posts listed in Appendix V. In the event of suitable Government quarters not being available for allocation to