

CIRCULAR 2/2024

From: Permanent Secretary for Civil Service and Public Enterprises

Phone: 892 4321

To: All Permanent Secretaries

Date: 18 January 2024

Subject: Retention Measures through Regularisation of Acting Appointments, Allowing Step Movements, Filling of Re-Evaluated Positions and Utilising of Alternate Talent Pool

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 It has been noted that in some Ministries/Departments, there are a number of substantively vacant positions which have been filled by acting appointments for excessively lengthy periods.
- 1.2 Consequently, in an effort to introduce, revise and implement some of the retention strategies aimed to address significant workforce turnover and to effect some immediate retention measures, the Public Service Commission in its meeting on 15th January has endorsed amendments (attached in Annex 1) to the following guidelines:
- (i) Open Merit Recruitment and Selection Guideline,
 - (ii) Performance Management Framework, and
 - (iii) Job Evaluation and Civil Service Remuneration Setting Guideline.
- 1.3 The specific measures being implemented are as follows:

2.0 Regularisation of Acting Appointments

- 2.1 Officers currently on acting role must fulfil the qualification requirements, possess relevant skills and experience, have a satisfactory performance record for at-least two last assessments, and demonstrate potential for increased responsibilities for the position. They must have acted in the role for at least 6 months on a continuous basis.
- 2.2 Officers acting in vacant positions and meeting the above criteria would be recommended by the Permanent Secretary for confirmation of their appointment with the agreement of the relevant Minister considering:
- (i) Qualification requirement, position requirements such as registrations, licenses etc.
 - (ii) Satisfactory performance and evidence of meeting of KPI's
 - (iii) Funding confirmation on availability of budget
 - (iv) Justification of skills retention

2.3 Please be advised that this is a one-off exercise, effective from the date of this Circular and expiring on Thursday, 29th February 2024

2.4 For all vacant positions, if a suitable candidate is not found within the Ministry, the vacancy must be advertised within the Civil Service, through an internal advertisement with closed merit selection (expression of interest). If this process fails to attract a suitable candidate, the vacancy should then be addressed through the Open Merit Recruitment and Selection process. This involves initiating the standard advertising procedure.

3.0 Step Increase within the Salary Band

3.1 The Permanent Secretaries may consider step movements provided that funds are available, performance requirements are met and with the agreement of the Minister responsible for the Ministry.

3.2 Ministries must ensure transparency, fairness, and adherence to the principles of proper performance assessment outlined in the Performance Management Framework when allowing for step increase.

4.0 Re-evaluated Positions

4.1 The streamlined process for existing re-evaluated positions includes providing opportunity for existing position holders to transit and perform the duties of the role for the period under permanent appointments, to build morale, enhance capacity and contribute to succession planning without the need for advertising the re-evaluated position.

5.0 Alternate Talent Pool

5.1 Alternate talent pool is derived from the merit list, to recognise and appoint suitable candidates for any vacant advertised positions within the designated salary bands.

5.2 Ministries are obligated to uphold the current merit system, however there will be instances where making a semi-direct appointment from the Alternate Talent Pool to the Civil Service is necessary and more appropriate than an appointment through competition, especially in order to address unique staffing circumstances.

5.3 Ministries are required to comply with the guidelines and principles outlined in this Circular and any appointments made from Alternate Talent Pool must be made in agreement with the candidate and is subject to approval by the respective Minister concerned.

6.0 Implementation

6.1 Permanent Secretaries must inform respective officers/candidates of the decision made relative to the implementation of above retention measures.

6.2 Documentation related to these implementations must be maintained by the individual Ministries.

- 6.3 This Circular outlining the retention measures will supersede the previous relative measures in place.
- 6.4 An implementation audit will be done after 6 months to assess the effectiveness of these retention measures.
- 7.0 **Clarification**
- 7.1 The content of the Circular must be brought to the attention of responsible officers in your Ministries/Departments.
- 7.2 Please direct all queries to the Ministry of Civil Service Policy Division through email on mcspolicy.fiji@gmail.com

Thank you.



Parmesh Chand

Permanent Secretary for Civil Service and Public Enterprises