

ONE-STOP-SHOP FOR PUBLIC OFFICERS

People & Standards Division

This manual is correct as on 30 September 2025

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1 Purpose

The People and Standards Division within the Office of the Prime Minister values people and their potential as an important resource for the administration of the Public Service. This is why we put employees at the centre of our endeavours to achieve goals through a service of excellence. In this regard, the One-Stop-Shop for Public Officers within the People & Standards Division was set up to provide quality guidance and assistance to public service employees for a wide range of services. The One-Stop-Shop for Public Officers aims to ensure that public officers are given timely information, support and guidance on entitlements or services accessible to them. The setting up of the One-Stop-Shop further demonstrates our commitment towards quality assurance. It also serves as an example to other government service providers as to efficiency and timely quality service to clients.

The One-Stop-Shop shall ensure quality service through efficient and timely service, as well as by providing public officers with the necessary attention and offering them the opportunity to express themselves on issues related to their place of work, with a view to assist them.

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2 Introduction

The service offered by the One-Stop-Shop for Public Officers consists of information, guidance and assistance on the services, entitlements and obligations pertinent to public officers.

The One-Stop-Shop for Public Officers is not intended to replace or take over the responsibility of Directors responsible for People Management. The first line of support has to be invariably offered by the Ministry where the officer is employed. However, the One-Stop-Shop works closely with directorates responsible for People Management across line Ministries to ensure that public officers are provided with timely information and guidance for their queries. The One-Stop-Shop also provides guidance to public officers who would like to submit a grievance case for the review of the Grievances Board (GB) in respect of claims of alleged injustices. Furthermore, the One-Stop-Shop also serves as a liaison between the Grievances Board and officers who submit a grievance, for facilitation purposes.

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Roles & Responsibilities

3 Roles & Responsibilities

Public officers may request information from the One-Stop-Shop should there be issues on which they require clarifications and support on matters regarding their conditions of employment in the Public Service.

One-Stop-Shop for Public Officers

The One-Stop-Shop (OSS) is responsible to provide quality guidance and assistance to public officers for a wide range of requests for information and guidance. The One-Stop-Shop is responsible to provide timely information and support to public officers on their employment conditions with the Public Service, such as, leave entitlements, progressions and promotions, work-life balance measures, modern work practices as well as guidance on entitlements or services, as requested.

Grievance Board

The Grievances Board (GB) is responsible to provide public officers with an accessible contact point where they can report any alleged grievances in their respect, regarding their employment conditions with the Public Service. Public officers may access the GB through the One-Stop-Shop for Public Officers. The GB is responsible to investigate claims that occurred not earlier than five (5) years from when they are submitted, in a timely and fair manner with the aim to establish whether there is an injustice and make recommendations as necessary.

The Grievances Board may investigate claims of alleged injustices in respect of public sector employees in cases where the public entity concerned does not have an internal mechanism, or is still in the process of setting up an internal mechanism, to redress alleged injustices that occurred in respect of its employees. In such cases, a senior employee from the entity's HR Unit shall form part of the Grievances Board during the investigation.

Officer's Employing Ministry/Department

The Employing Ministry/Department is responsible to provide accurate, timely information requested by the One-Stop-Shop or the Grievances Board in order to complete a case received from an employee. The employing Ministry / Department is also responsible to abide by the Grievances Board's recommendations and implement them within the timeframe provided by the Grievances Board, and in any case not later than thirty (30) working days. Any recommendations and/or direction issued by the OSS is to be implemented by the Ministry within the timeframe provided by the OSS. The approval of the PPS or his delegate needs to be sought for this period to be exceeded for valid reasons.

The Employing Ministry/Department is expected to cooperate with the requests of both the One-Stop-Shop and the Grievances Board to ensure the provision of good governance and quality services.

Directorate Responsible for People Management

The Directorates responsible for People Management are the first point of contact for the One-Stop-Shop to gather the necessary information regarding the employee accessing the One-Stop-Shop. They are obliged to liaise with the relevant departments falling under the remit of their Ministry to obtain the necessary information requested by the One-Stop-Shop and/or the Grievances Board in a timely manner. They are also responsible to ensure that the recommendations of the One-Stop-Shop and of the Grievances Board are implemented in a timely manner and within the timeframes stipulated by the OSS/GB. Every Ministry is expected to have two specifically designated employees who serve as contact points for employees referred by the OSS to the line Ministry, with the aim to guide the employees as required. These contact points shall be representatives from the Office of the Permanent Secretary and/or from the Office of the Director responsible for People Management in a middle management position or higher.

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Operational Procedures

4 Operational Procedures

4.1 One-Stop-Shop for Public Officers

- 1) Public Officers with any query or difficulty relating to their employment with the Public Service may access the services of the One-Stop-Shop after having resorted to their employing Ministry. The One-Stop-Shop may be accessed by telephone, by e-mail or by walk-in. More details on how to contact the One-Stop-Shop may be found at Section 5. Officers may also request an appointment for a one-to-one meeting at the One-Stop-Shop.
- 2) First level queries/requests are addressed on the spot (details of query and resolution are logged into CRM for the necessary monitoring). In cases requiring information from departments external to P&SD/OPM, the One-Stop-Shop will retrieve such information on behalf of the clients if the latter give their consent in writing. Should a request require further details, the employee shall be duly informed of the required missing data/documentation **within twenty-four (24) hours** from the time of the receipt of the request. The respective department/Ministry supplying the additional information required for the assessment of the case shall submit such information **within three (3) working days**. In cases where complex data or information dating back several years is requested, the One-Stop-Shop may extend this time frame to **five (5) or ten (10) working days**, depending on the case. If the required information is not received within the stipulated time-frame, the P&SD may take a decision by default in favour of the employee. The latter decision will be adhered to by the respective department/ministry and its implementation will be its responsibility.
- 3) Once all the necessary information is gathered from both the employee and the employing department, the officer at the One-Stop-Shop will address the case unless it is a Grievance Case. When a grievance case is lodged, the case will be forwarded to and processed by the GB. The claimant is given a case reference number when a grievance case is lodged.
- 4) Unless the case concerns a grievance, the case shall be resolved by not later than five (5) working days from the date of the receipt of the query. In case of more complex cases, this timeframe may be extended to ten (10) working days. In the case of queries of a complex nature or which require consultation with other stakeholders, the OSS shall give an indication of the expected final reply to the employee and will inform the stakeholder that a reply is requested by the same timeframes as indicated in the Directives. The OSS will follow up the case with both the employee and the employing department to ensure that the instructions were followed, and the case is resolved accordingly.
- 5) In certain cases, the OSS may refer the employee to the line Ministry's contact points so that the matter is resolved directly by the Ministry. The OSS will follow up on the matter to ensure that it is resolved efficiently and in a timely manner.
- 6) If the case presented is a claim of harassment or bullying, the case will be treated in terms of the Harassment and Bullying Free Workplace Policy.

- 7) Once all the information is gathered and evaluated, the employee is contacted with the resolution to his/her query/difficulty through the channel s/he originally used. When the case is concluded the One-Stop-Shop will inform the employing department of any recommendation made and issue instructions to the department where applicable, for **implementation within three (3) working days**. Where the implementation of the recommendation is related to a grievance case or entails lengthier operational requirements, the P&SD may stipulate a longer timeframe. Disciplinary action may be initiated against the employing department in the case of failure to implement the recommendation.
- 8) Where in cases received it is noted that the officer is experiencing difficulties of an emotional, psychological, social or substance misuse, the officer will be guided to refer to the Employee Support Programme (ESP) for professional assistance.

The timeframes as per Directive 8.1 and Directive 4.2 will be respected. In all cases of processes delegated to ministries whereby timeframes have been established, failure to inform officers of their request at the line ministry will lead to approval by default and One-Stop-Shop will simply inform the ministry to implement such action.

4.2 Grievances Board

- 1) Grievances may be defined as claims by Public Officers who believe that they are victims of some injustice that is not being investigated or has not been already assessed and decided upon by any other body such as the Courts of Law, Tribunals and the Grievance Units set up by OPM circular 4/2014 and the Grievances Board set up by OPM Circular 24/2017, or the Ombudsman, or any other mechanism set up to investigate alleged injustices. However, the Board will review such cases if new documentation or information is provided by the applicant demonstrating that the case merits further investigation, or, where the decision of such institutions was not implemented.
- 2) The Grievances Board will investigate alleged injustices that did not occur earlier than five (5) years from the submission of the application.
- 3) The Grievances Board may investigate claims of alleged injustices in respect of public sector employees in cases where the public entity concerned does not have an internal mechanism, or is still in the process of setting up an internal mechanism to redress alleged injustices that occurred in respect of its employees. In such cases, a senior employee from the entity's HR Unit shall form part of the Grievances Board during the investigation.
- 4) Public officers may submit a claim by filling in a declaration form which may be accessed from [here](#). The application is to include an explanation of the alleged injustice in writing. Any documents which applicants deem relevant to substantiate their case may be attached to their application. The claim can be submitted by e-mail or delivered by hand or by mail to the One-Stop-Shop. The contact details of the One-Stop-Shop may be found at Section 5 of this Manual.
- 5) By signing the declaration form the claimant is automatically giving consent for personal information to be gathered about him or her as well as giving consent to the Grievances Board and the One-Stop-Shop to contact the relevant departments to gather the necessary information regarding the case.
- 6) The One-Stop-Shop will gather the necessary information on the case and forward the case to the Grievances Board within five (5) working days from when the case is received.

- 7) Cases that will be evaluated and investigated by the Grievances Board will be those beyond the scope of the One-Stop-Shop and refer to infringements on the rights of the Public Officer regarding employment and career paths.
- 8) The Board will meet with the employee, assess their claim in detail, and investigate the case. The Board has the right to summon any person/s it deems pertinent to resolve the case.
- 9) The Grievances Board will conclude the case within thirty (30) working days from the date the case is referred to the Board. This time frame may be extended by the Director responsible for the OSS for justified reasons. On the conclusion of a case, the Grievances Board will inform the Director responsible for the One-Stop-Shop of the decision reached.
- 10) The One-Stop-Shop will inform the claimant of the decision within five (5) working days. In cases where action is required for the implementation of the decision, the respective Ministry is also informed of the recommendation.
- 11) The One-Stop-Shop will continue to follow up on the case to ensure compliance with the decision and that it is implemented.

The Board may conduct an investigation in relation to appointments / selection process practices where:

- a. There were exceptional circumstances that prevented a person from placing a petition as per the PSC Regulations;
Or
- b. There was evidence that was not brought to the attention of the Public Service Commission that could have affected its final decision or the case itself.

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Contact Information and Opening Hours

5 Contact Information and Opening Hours

The One-Stop-Shop for Public Officers is designed in a way to be reachable and accessible to its clients by various methods of contact, as indicated below:

Telephone: 2200 1225
Email: one-stop-shop.psd@gov.mt
Walk In: 3, Castille Place, Valletta

Opening Hours:

1st October – 15th June
Monday to Friday from 7.45 till 17.15

16th June – 30th September
Monday to Friday from 7.30 till 13.30

Public Holidays: Closed

