

PD (bm): 3/9/1

PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM

FROM : Chief Personnel Officer

TO : Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Department,
Chief Administrator, Tobago House of Assembly
and Heads of Statutory Authorities subject to the
Statutory Authorities Act, Chapter 24:01

DATE : April 13, 2022

SUBJECT : Accumulation of Annual Vacation Leave

As you are aware, the Personnel Department devolved certain functions to Permanent Secretaries/Heads of Department, the Chief Administrator, Tobago House of Assembly and Heads of Statutory Authorities subject to the Statutory Authorities Act, Chapter 24:01. One of the devolved functions is the authority to grant approval to officers for the accumulation of annual vacation leave beyond their normal maximum leave eligibility.

2. In the above regard, it has come to my attention that there has been an increase in requests for approval of compensation in lieu of unutilized accumulated annual vacation leave for consideration by the Cabinet. In order to reduce the occurrence of such activities, this Circular is to serve as a reminder of the existing regulations governing vacation leave, its accumulation and its application.

3. In accordance with Regulation 74 of the Civil Service Regulations, Chapter 23:01:

An officer shall not take less than –

- (a) fourteen (14) days leave each year if he is in receipt of a salary equal to or greater than that of the maximum of Range 24;
- (b) seven (7) days leave each year if he is in receipt of a salary of less than that of the maximum of Range 24.

4. Regulation 78 (1) and (2) of the Civil Service Regulations, Chapter 23:01 state that annual leave may be accumulated to a maximum of ninety (90) or sixty (60) days depending on an officer's salary Range. Officers may also be allowed to accumulate annual leave beyond the normal maximum subject to the following conditions:

- (i) On accumulation of the normal maximum leave eligibility, the officer applies for leave within 30 days of the date on which the maximum falls due;

- (ii) The Supervisor intimates to the officer in writing his inability to grant the leave owing to the exigencies of the service.

Further, Regulation 75 of the Civil Service Regulations, Chapter 23:01 states:

“An officer who owing to the exigencies of the service is required to defer his annual leave, shall, in the year following that in respect of which his annual leave was deferred, be granted such deferred leave together with the annual leave for that year”

5. Given the directives of Regulation 74 and the maximum periods of leave an officer is permitted to accumulate as indicated above, permission to accumulate vacation leave in excess of one's maximum should be reserved for **exceptional circumstances only**.

6. All officers must be made aware of the regulations which set out the procedures that apply to the earning, utilization and accumulation of annual leave. It is essential that officers be informed that:

- (i) **he/she must submit an application for annual leave** with effect from the date specified by the Supervisor. Further, he/she should apply for sufficient annual leave so that he/she would not attain his/her maximum leave eligibility within one (1) year of his/her resumption of duty;
- (ii) failure to apply for annual leave as set out in Regulations 78 (i) and (ii) and 75, results in the **cessation of earning** further annual leave beyond the date for which approval was granted for accumulation beyond the normal maximum; and
- (iii) accumulation of vacation leave and compensation in lieu of unutilized accumulated annual vacation leave is not an entitlement, but is subject **only** to the exigencies of the service.

7. You are reminded that the purpose of annual leave is to allow officers a period away from work so that they can rest and rejuvenate or attend to personal or family responsibilities. It is an important pillar in attaining a healthy work life balance. Officers should be encouraged to take vacation leave annually as it is known to contribute to the wellbeing of individuals which in turn would benefit their organisations as a whole. While it is the responsibility of an officer to monitor his/her own leave eligibility, good management practices suggest that at the beginning of each year, officers should be apprised of their leave eligibility in order that decisions on the utilization of annual leave and consequential staffing arrangements can be made in a timely manner.

8. You are asked to recall the decisions of Cabinet in Minutes No. 557 dated May 09, 2001 and No. 81 dated November 01, 2002 as well as Personnel Department Circular Memorandum dated June 24, 2002 on the subject “Revised policy re: the payment of compensation in lieu of unutilized annual (vacation) leave” which provide guidance on the treatment of compensation in lieu of unutilized annual (vacation) leave.

9. Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Department, Chief Administrator, Tobago House of Assembly and Heads of Statutory Authorities subject to the Statutory Authorities Act, Chapter 24:01 are directed to bring this Circular Memorandum to the attention of all officers to ensure adherence to its contents.


Chief Personnel Officer (Ag.)