

PD(BM): 3/1/1

PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 1 of 2020

FROM : Chief Personnel Officer

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

DATE : June 1, 2020

SUBJECT : **Guidelines for resumption of Work of non-essential Government employees consequent on the lifting of the Stay at Home Order implemented during the COVID – 19 Pandemic**

As you are aware, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago had implemented certain measures to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Among those measures was the “Stay at Home” order which came into effect from March 27, 2020 to all non-essential employees. In this regard, Government’s employees who were determined to be non-essential to the continued functioning of such Ministries/Departments/Statutory Authorities/THA were at home from that date.

2. In keeping with the Government’s announcement to open all elements of the Public Service, a decision has been taken to allow those that have been deemed non-essential Government employees to return to work with effect from June 1, 2020. You are reminded to inform all employees who discharge Managerial and Supervisory responsibilities to report to work on a daily basis to facilitate the governance, oversight and support of service delivery across the Public Service.

3. Further, it is recommended that work be performed on rotational basis and at flexible times, with the use of virtual meeting platforms where available. Remote working should continue to be considered as far as practicable. Guidance on the implementation of flexible working hours are found in Personnel Department Circular No. 1 dated January 24, 1974. The guidelines must be adhered to while exercising administrative discretion for the efficient and effective functioning of the respective Ministry/Department. Any departure from the guidelines would require consultation between the Chief Personnel Officer and the Public Services Association.

4. In order to facilitate the working arrangements at paragraph 3, the attention of Permanent Secretaries/Heads of Departments/Tobago House of Assembly and Heads of Statutory Authorities subject to the Statutory Authorities Act, Chapter 24:01 (Permanent Secretaries/Heads of Department) is drawn to the provisions of **Regulations 62 and 63** of the Civil Service Regulations Chapter 23:01, which state as follows:

62. The actual hours of arrival and departure may be varied by Permanent Secretaries or Heads of Departments to meet Ministerial or Departmental requirements.

63. Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments shall have the discretion to require the attendance of staff on such days and for such hours as they consider it necessary for the efficient conduct of public business.

5. You are also reminded of the importance of ensuring that your health and safety committees are functioning and policing the guidelines that are applicable to mitigate potential risks associated with COVID-19 to employees and members of the public who are accessing services. It is recommended that those committees consult the policies, guidelines and protocols from the Ministry of Health and the Occupational Safety and Health Authority and Agency to ascertain the appropriate health and safety directions and protocols to be adopted.

6. You are further reminded to facilitate Joint Consultative Committees, where feasible, to enable parties to meet and treat or report issues as they arise.

7. Lastly, you are to be guided by the provisions of this Circular Memorandum and are further requested to ensure that such provisions are brought to the attention of all employees for whom you are responsible.



Daryl Dindial
Chief Personnel Officer