

Public Administration Circular Letter: 02/2022

My No: EST-1/CIRL/03/0001
Ministry of Public Administration, Home Affairs,
Provincial Councils and Local Government
Independence Square
Colombo 07

2022.08.29

Secretaries of Ministries
Provincial Chief Secretaries
Heads of Departments

Replying to the Letters, E-mails and Telephone Call Received from the Public

Your attention is hereby drawn to the provisions in Public Administration Circular 23/97 dated 27.11.1997 on “Correspondence in Public Offices”, Public Administration Circular 11/2015 dated 20.05.2015 on “Responsibilities of Public Officers and Rights of Service Recipients” and Public Administration Circular 25/2016 dated 20.12.2016 on “Answering Incoming Telephone Calls to Government Institutions”

02. I observe that due to the Covid-19 epidemic situation and the fuel crisis, there has been a delay in replying to letters, e-mails and phone calls received from the public to government agencies. I would like to emphasize that government officials are obliged to promptly respond to the letters, e-mails and phone calls sent by them, rather than having the public come to public institutions regularly to accomplish a certain task by spending their time, effort and money.

03. Accordingly, the following provisions should be followed in replying to letters, e-mails and telephone calls addressed to government agencies.

I. Normal Tappol

- a) Priority should be given to the letters sent to public institutions by the general public and in this regard your attention is drawn to the provisions of Chapter XXVIII, sub-section 3:8 of the Establishment Code and the provisions of Public Administration Circular 23/97 dated 27.11.1997. Accordingly, you are further emphasized that, in a situation that a final reply cannot be sent immediately, it is required to send an interim reply within a week stating that the letter was received and to send a final reply within four (04) weeks.
- b) Further, when sending replies to all official letters, the direct telephone number, fax number and e-mail address of the staff officer in charge of the subject should be mentioned below the signature of the letter.

II. Email

- a) The mail sent to the common e-mail addresses should be checked daily and an officer should specially be appointed for the purpose. In the meantime, mails sent to the e-mail addresses of the staff officers should also be checked daily.
- b) Thorough attention should be paid to reply to the letters sent to the e-mail addresses in above mentioned manner on the same day and interim reply should be sent indicating the time required for replying whilst acknowledging the receipt of the mail in case where it is not possible to reply on the same day. Further, action should be taken to reply for such inquiries within a reasonable period within the informed time period.

III. Telephone Calls

- a) Actions should be taken to answer all the telephone calls made to the office and an officer should be appointed specially to answer such calls, if the numbers of incoming calls received by any institution/ division are high.
- b) A specific officer should be appointed to register the incoming calls and such officer should be vigilant to note down the name of the caller, the matter and the telephone number to be replied.
- c) Staff Officers/ Officers in charge of the subjects should take actions to reply within a reasonable period regarding the matters for which immediate replies cannot/ difficult to be made.

Sgd/ M.M.P.K. Mayadunne

Secretary

Ministry of Public Administration, Home Affairs,
Provincial Councils and Local Government

Telephone : 0112-695738

Fax : 0112-695279

Email : pubad.secretary@slt.net.lk