

Combined Service Circular : 03/2026

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Ministry of Public Administration,  
Provincial councils and Local Government,  
Independence Square,  
Colombo 07.

27.05.2026

Secretaries of All Ministries  
Heads of Departments  
District Secretaries  
Divisional Secretaries

### **Implementation of Annual Transfers for Officers in Combined Services**

Combined Services Division has received correspondence from various parties, including Secretaries to Ministries, Heads of Departments, and relevant officers, regarding the non-implementation of the annual transfers of officers belonging to the Combined Services for various reasons. This circular is issued to provide the necessary instructions and guidance to avoid the issues that have arisen in this regard.

02. The annual transfer circular is issued by the Director General of Combined Services in accordance with the transfer procedure approved by the Public Service Commission. The annual transfer process provides officers with opportunities to be transferred to various workstations, thereby enhancing their motivation and facilitating the fulfillment of the service requirements of the respective institutions.

03. The main steps of the annual transfer process for officers in Combined Services are as follows:

i. Publishing the annual transfer circular for Combined Services and the calling of applications.

After publishing the annual transfer circular, applications are called online and at this stage, information must be submitted regarding officers who have completed 5 years of service at their respective institutions, officers recommended to be retained based on service requirements (this does not apply to popular/preferred workstations), details of officers on maternity leave or no pay leave, and any other special circumstances affecting the transfers.

However, the following shortcomings have been observed:

- a. Incorrect entry of the officer's current workstation, previous workstations, and their durations when applying for annual transfers.
- b. Not selecting correct workstations when requesting transfers.

- c. Failure to notify officers who are to be retained based on service requirements.
- d. Failure to provide information regarding officers who have taken maternity leave or no pay leave.

Due to these shortcomings, once annual transfer decisions are finalized, other officers included in the transfer cycles as well as the respective workstations are adversely affected.

ii. Issuance of annual transfer decisions for Combined Services and calling for appeals based on those decisions.

Once the annual transfer decisions are issued, officers aggrieved by such decisions shall submit their appeals via online to the respective Review Committees.

iii. Issuing decisions after considering appeals submitted to Review Committees regarding Combined Services annual transfer decisions, and appealing to the Public Service Commission by officers aggrieved by the decisions of the Review Committees.

- a. After issuing decisions by considering appeals submitted to Review Committees, all officers who are aggrieved by the decisions shall submit their appeals via online to the Public Service Commission
- b. In accordance with the powers delegated by the Public Service Commission to the Director General of Combined Services, heads of institutions do not have the authority to withhold, amend, or postpone the implementation of such decisions. If an officer does not submit an appeal to the Public Service Commission, it shall be presumed that the officer is satisfied with the decision of the Review Committee. In such instances, there is no provision for re-appealing to the Director General of Combined Services, and the decision of the Review Committee issued to the officer shall be implemented without alteration.
- c. Furthermore, other Heads of the Institutions do not possess the authority to withhold, amend, or postpone a decision made by Public Service Commission according to powers vested in the Public Service Commission by Article 55(3) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. Therefore, it is the responsibility of both the Heads of Institutions and the relevant officers to implement the annual transfer decisions as prescribed.
- d. An officer who remains aggrieved by the decision delivered by the Public Service Commission regarding their appeal is entitled to submit an appeal to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act No. 04 of 2002. However, the relevant transfer order must be implemented as issued until the final decision of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal is received.

- e. Officers shall not submit appeals to the Combined Services Division citing personal or service requirements at the time annual transfers are being implemented, without making appeals regarding the annual transfer decisions to the Review Committees or the Public Service Commission.
  - f. It is mandatory to implement the annual transfer decisions of officers in the Combined Services on the scheduled date itself. It is hereby emphasized that the implementation of annual transfers shall not be delayed or withheld for any reason whatsoever, including pending arrival of the replacement officer or any other administrative reason.
04. General matters to be considered in the implementation of annual transfers.
- i. When submitting an appeal regarding annual transfers, an officer shall submit it through the Head of Department, in accordance with the provisions set out in Sections 5 and 6 of Chapter XXVIII of the Establishments Code.
  - ii. Furthermore, disciplinary action shall be taken in accordance with the provisions of Public Administration Circular Letter No. 06/2015 against officers who submit appeals directly without the knowledge of their Head of Institution.
  - iii. Canvassing through external parties regarding transfers will be regarded as an act of misconduct rendering the officer liable to disciplinary action in accordance with Section 1.6 of Chapter XLVII, Volume II of the Establishments Code.
05. All Heads of Institutions, as well as all officers belonging to the Combined Services, shall act in compliance with the provisions contained in this Circular in order to ensure that the annual transfer process of officers in the Combined Services is implemented in a manner that upholds the legal integrity required to be maintained in the Public Service.
06. This circular is issued with the approval of the Public Service Commission.

Sgd/ N.U. Nishan Mendis  
Director General of Combined Services  
Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government