

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Background

Prior to 1952, appointments to the lower grades in the Civil Service were made by the Governor on the recommendation of a body known as the Promotion Selection Committee comprising the Deputy Colonial Secretary, Financial Secretary, Auditor General and President of the Civil Service Association.

Other appointments relating to junior professionals, scientific and technical officers were made in the Colonial Secretariat on the recommendation of the Head of Department. Appointments to posts with salary above E700 were made by the Secretary of State for the Colonies upon the recommendation of the Governor. Such recommendations would either be accepted or rejected by the Secretary of State who, in certain circumstances, would appoint someone else from another colonial territory.

In light of the above, Law 48 of 1951 was duly enacted by the Governor of Jamaica with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Representatives, in order to facilitate the recommendations made.

Purpose

The purpose of the establishment of the Commission was to provide for an independent and impartial body charged with the responsibility of dealing with matters relating to the appointment, removal and exercise of disciplinary control in respect of public officers. At this time the Public Service Commission operated out of the Establishment Branch of the Colonial Secretary's Office located at Headquarters House, 79 Duke Street, Kingston.

The power was given to the PSC to make recommendations to the Governor for public officers to be appointed, as well as to remove or exercise disciplinary control. This was enshrined in the 1959 Constitution, and at the same time provision for the

delegation of functions of the Public Service Commission was made by the Governor, acting on the recommendation of the Public Service Commission.

Composition of Commission

As ordained Section 124 of the Constitution, members of the Public Service Commission should be appointed by the Governor-General, acting on recommendation of the Prime Minister, after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition. In order to ensure that undue influence was not exercised on the Commission by persons holding public offices, Section 124 (3) of the Constitution provided that no person would be qualified to be appointed as a member of the Public Service Commission if he held or was acting in any public office other than the office of member of the Judicial Service Commission or member of the Police Service Commission.

Conditions of Membership

Section 124(4) of the Constitution states that a member of the Public Service Commission shall not, within a period of three (3) years commencing with the date on which he last held or acted as a member of the Commission, be eligible for appointment to any office power to make appointment to which is vested by the Constitution in the Governor-General acting on the advice of the Public Service Commission.

Functions of the Commission

The functions and operations of the Public Service Commission were established in the Public Service Regulations which were gazetted in 1961. The Regulations set out how the Commission would operate with regard to the appointment, separation, discipline and the selection of public officers for national scholarships and study leave. The applicability and legality of the Regulations was entrenched in Section 2 of the Second Schedule of the Jamaica Constitution Order in Council, which came into being a year later, 1962, with independence.

Main Legislation

- ❖ The Public Service Regulations, (1961)
- ❖ The Civil Service Establishment Act (1976)
- ❖ Staff Orders for Public Service (Revised 2004)

- ❖ The Pensions Act

When the Commission meets

The Commission meets at least once per month to determine matters under its purview. **The current Public Service Commission members with effect from April 1, 2015:**

The Hon. Shirley Tyndall, OJ, CD Chairman

Rev. Dr. Karl Johnson – Member

Mrs. Elise Wright-Goffe, Attorney-at-Law – Member

Mrs. Brenda Viorif Cuthbert - Member (JCSA Nominee)