

**C I R C U L A R**

Sub:-pension –delay in the disposal of pension cases-delay of more than Six Months to be avoided in any cases-instruct-ions-regarding.

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The attention of all Heads of Departments and other pension sanctioning Authorities is urgently invited to the fact that in spite of repeated instructions issued from this department and the instructions issued with reference to the pendency in particular officers by the inspection (General) wings of this departments in its inspection notice, there is still much avoidable delay in the disposal of pension cases as seen from the monthly statements received in this department. The trend seems to be that while most of the fresh cases are processed with satisfactory speed, cases which present one difficulty or other, which calls for sustained action or a personal initiative from the pension sanctioning Authorities concerned are left to drag on in routine correspondence for the month's together. For instance, a review of the progress in the disposal of pension cases as at the end of May 1972, has brought out that out of the 3965 cases pending there are only 1883 cases pending below six months as compared to 2082 cases pending for more than six months ranging from around 1 year to 5 years. The exact numbers and duration of pendency in these cases are as below:-

Over six months up to one year	= 369
Over one year below 2 years	= 924
More than 2 years up to 5 years	= 667
Over 5 years.	= 122
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Total	= 2082
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Particular cases of heavy delays are simultaneously being brought to the personal notice of the Heads of Departments concerned for urgent expediting action. However, some of the common difficulties accounting for the delay noted with the various pension Sanctioning Authorities are dealt with below. The main difficulties are the following.-

1. Failure to initiate advance action from one year behind for enouving Payment of pension to officers as soon as these retire.
2. Failure to settle liabilities in proper time.
3. Failure to obtain approval for pay fixation, where necessary, from audit.
4. Lack of necessary response from pensioners/ their heirs at one stage or other.
5. Lack of responsible reporting on the part of officers subordinate to pension Sanctioning Authorities.
6. Delay in verification of pension papers by Audit.

The failure in the matter of I above is noted to be due to default on the part of the Pension Sanctioning Authorities in maintaining an up-to-date record of dates of birth and due dates of retirement of the persons held in their establishments and that of their subordinate officers checked from month to month for timely action to be started before one year of the dates or retirement. Repeated instructions have been issued on this both in general orders and particular instructions in inspection notes. All Pension Sanctioning Authorities are however, again earnestly requested to keep an up-to-date record of the list of person due to retire within one year and ensure that they themselves call for pension papers on that basis from sub officers instead of allowing the subordinate officers to put up pension cases in their own time. In this connection, failure in item 5 above has also to be avoided. It very often happens that even after pension apers are put up to Pension Sanctioning Authorities to the subordinate officer concerned. Such delays should not be allowed to occur. Proper alertness and timely attention should be bestowed on such cases by both the Pension Sanctioning Authorities and the Subordinate Officers.

Failure to settle liabilities in proper time and excessive harshness apparently to pin responsibility for liabilities of those who could successfully evade responsibilities on those left in service appear to contribute to the delay in settlement of liabilities. The Pension Sanctioning Authorities and all concerned are requested to avoid such tendency and to be guided on the correct lines indicated in circular Memorandum No.14/Pen.Sl.A2/64/Fin, dated 18-3-1964 where clear distinction has been drawn between personal liabilities which call for recovery and other liabilities which do not call for it. It should be ensured that where there is no case for recovery of liability from the officer concerned, his case should be cleared for pension without occasioning unnecessary delay. Even where recovery is called for, the aspect whether pension can be released with holding the Death-Cum retirement Gratuity should receive consideration at this stage so as to avoi8 unnecessary holding up of pension where release of pension is allowed by rules by rules/orders, Attention is also invited in this connection to the personal responsibility of the officers concerned with the fixation of liability in cases where settlement of liabilities is delayed beyond one year from the date of retirement of the officer as per G.O.(P)422/66/Fin.dated 14-9-1966/Fin.dated 14-9-1966. It should also be ensured that the immunities from liability allowed by this G.O. are recommended in all deserving cases where delays beyond one year have occurred thereby to facilities to settlement of the pension claims.

In regard to failure referred to as 3 above, the Accountant General has informed this Department that arrangements have been made to obviate all avoidable delay and that special attention is being paid to cases of pay fixation pertaining to officers who have already retired or are due to retire shortly. Therefore, if the Pension Sanctioning Authorities or their subordinate officers bring to the notice of the Accountant General that in any particular case clearance of pay fixation from Audit is delaying action preparing pension papers, they will be responded quickly from the Accounts Office. All officers concerned may take due advantage of this arrangement.

As regards the situation arising from lack of response from the pensioners of their heirs they may be duly notified of the delay that their own omission is causing in the matter of settlement of their claims and sought to be persuaded to respond quickly

In cases where there is a definite non cooperation or inability to respond they may be told by registered letter that unless they replay by a definite period (of not less than one month in any cases) that action on their pension cases will be temporarily closed. Action may thereafter be taken to close such cases placing them in "Call Book" for appropriate period. Such cases may be excluded from the list of pending cases until they are taken up again, according to office procedure.

With reference to the delay in audit referred to as 6 above, it is found that this delay reported in monthly statement very often turn out to be overstatements and that correctly there is not such avoidable delay at the Accountant General's Office. In face, it is ascertained from that Office that there are no pending cases out of those received up to 30-6-72 and that out of the case received up to 15-8-1972 there are not more than 200 cases yet to be cleared. (Cases which are required to be reported by the Accountant General to Government for sanction like that of the Panchayath Department which do not come to any considerable number are however not reckoned in the above figures). Specific instance of delays reported at the Accountant General's Office are however, being pursued by the Finance (Inspection General) Department in the large majority of cases.

In this light of the foregoing, it is presumed that there would not be any insurmountable difficult holding up settlement of pension cases beyond six months Except the lack of proper initiative and a spirit of urgency which alone can ensure Sustained and spirit of urgency which alone can ensure sustained and persevering follow up action by constantly checking the progress against the total delay occurring in each cases. All Heads of Departments and other Pension Sanctioning Authorities are therefore requested to note this position and to see that all cases pending settlement beyond six months are specially followed up and ensured earliest clearance by reporting to suitable effective expediting steps (including disciplinary action where culpable delays r or omissions are noted). They are also requested to impress on their subordinates the necessity to follow the above instructions strictly and without fall.

VELAYUDHAN NAIR  
FINANCE SECRETARY.

To

All Heads of Departments and Pension Sanctioning Authorities

Forwarded/By Order  
Section Officer.