

Public Service Commission

Housing Standard Operating Procedures



2018

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1. Public Service Housing Procedures

The public service housing procedures have been developed to assist Ministries, tenants eligible for housing and the Public Service Commission (PSC) to deliver an efficient and effective housing service.

It is a requirement that Ministry personnel and tenants that are eligible for housing read the procedures, understand them and ensure they abide by them. For further assistance please contact the Housing Coordinator, responsible HR Coordinator, and/or the respective Assistant Secretary at the PSC.

2. Housing Budget

- 2.1. The PSC shall be sending out a memo to all ministries requesting housing estimates, including a listing of the eligible employees, prior to budget submission of each fiscal year, for information and confirmation purpose only.
- 2.2. All ministries are responsible for providing the PSC with their respective annual housing budget projections by **March/April** of each year.
- 2.3. The housing estimates of each ministry/agency is to be made known to the Commission in order to better deliver the required administrative processes.
- 2.4. Upon request, the submitted housing listing is sent to the National Budget Coordinating Committee by the **end of April** of each year.

3. Housing Administration

- 3.1. Once the budget is approved, October of each fiscal year, the PSC is then in a position to proceed with new housing allocation and administration tasks. The PSC will continue to administer ongoing housing activities as prescribed hereafter.
- 3.2. The Ministry sends through an official housing request, addressed to the Chairman of the Public Service Commission. The request will be registered through the Executive secretary/Housing Coordinator, and then forwarded to the Housing division for action.
- 3.3. Upon receipt of the official memo, the Housing Coordinator will then promptly conduct a review and submit an in-house analysis for the Commission's review and action during its normal weekly meetings.
- 3.4. To attain new housing for tenants the Housing Coordinator will source appropriate housing through contacting landlords to research availability.
- 3.5. Where necessary, the Housing Coordinator will secure the potential rental unit prior to the arrival of the respective tenant.
- 3.6. Once availability of the housing has been agreed with the landlord the PSC will conduct a formal inspection of the property.
- 3.7. The PSC will schedule and inspect the property **within two days** of the agreement being made with the landlord.
- 3.8. If the property is deemed not suitable then the Housing Coordinator will research further for suitable housing.

- 3.9. If the property is suitable the Housing Coordinator will complete a housing lease agreement for approval by the landlord and be sent through email or delivery **within two days** of establishing suitability.
- 3.9.1. Suitability is determined by a house or unit meeting all the requirements as stipulated, including appliances (per Housing Policy), utilities and water both of which are the sole responsibility of the landlords and not the tenants.
- 3.10. The landlord is given **two working days** to return the signed housing lease agreement for any further action, if not returned in this time frame the Housing Coordinator will follow up.

4. Housing Lease agreement process

- 4.1. Once the housing lease agreement has been received by the PSC, the Housing Coordinator will hand deliver the original lease to the Attorney General's office **within two days** of receiving the lease.
- 4.1.1. The housing lease agreement requires signatures from the following ministries:
- Landlord-1 days
 - Attorney General - **2 days**
 - Ministry of Finance (Secretary and Budget office) - **2 days**
- 4.2. The Housing Coordinator is responsible for follow up and carry out collection of the agreement from each agency for signature **within 2 days**.
- 4.3. Once the agreement is received the Housing Coordinator will obtain approval from the Commission (Chairperson and Commissioner for Housing) for the housing lease agreement **within 1 days**.
- 4.4. Once obtained the Commission approval the Housing Coordinator will provide the original to the Ministry of Finance, Accounts payable, and copied to the line ministry, PSC housing and the landlord **within 1 days**.
- 4.5. The Ministry of Finance will provide the PSC with the 'obligation contract number' (purchase order) **within 1 days**, to ensure the payment of the housing lease agreement is secured.
- 4.6. The Housing Coordinator meets with the landlord to obtain the keys to the property and takes control of the management of the housing lease agreement.
- 4.7. Unless decides otherwise by the Commission, once a contract has been signed the tenant is required to stay in the house allocated for at least one year of the contract prior to relocating from one house to another, as such shall be first reviewed and authorized by the Commission.

5. Taking control of the property

- 5.1 The Housing Coordinator will advise the Commission of the possession of the property.
- 5.2 The Housing Coordinator will provide the keys of the property to the personnel section of the line ministry for the tenant to occupy on the **same day**.

- 5.3 The Housing Coordinator schedules a property pre-occupancy inspection with the tenant, and the landlord to sign off on the inventory.
- 5.4 Should the finding of such is perceived to warrant further occupancy satisfaction, such shall be secured within a two days' time.

6. Payment process

- 6.1 The payment process for housing lease agreements is coordinated on a quarterly basis.
- 6.2 The housing coordinator prepares a memo for the Ministry of Finance (Secretary and Accounts Payable) through the Deputy Commissioner for approval of quarterly payments.
- 6.3 The housing coordinator is responsible for sending the memo to Ministry of Finance.
- 6.4 The housing coordinator will follow up with Ministry of Finance to ensure landlords' payments have been processed.
- 6.5 It is the responsibility of the landlord to collect payment from Ministry of Finance.

7. Ongoing housing administration and coordination

- 7.1. The Administration and Housing division will coordinate the annual projection of the number of tenants eligible for housing.
- 7.2. The Housing Coordinator will manage the ongoing relationship with the landlord and the tenant, and to ensure the working relationship is well maintained.
- 7.3. The Housing Coordinator will arrange periodic inspections for all properties in liaison with the tenant, the respective ministry/agency and the landlord, as may be needed or as requested to address housing issues.
 - 7.3.1. The same inspection will be carried out in Ebeye by the PSC representative as may be scheduled and authorized by the Majuro office. The outcome of the inspection will be furnished to PSC for information and action where necessary.
- 7.4. The Housing Coordinator will coordinate housing inspection with landlord and tenant prior to vacationing and/or taking leave off islands. Incidences of such nature will require prior communication to the Housing Coordinator for further inspection and other review process as may be necessary.
 - 7.4.1. In the event of theft or destruction of property while employee is on vacation or off island, an official report of such shall be made available to the Commission and to the police for further action.
- 7.5. Ministries will be made accountable to the PSC in advising on a monthly basis any employee who is in government housing and intends on taking leave longer than one month.
- 7.6. The Housing Coordinator will identify fund de-obligation and will provide the Ministry of Finance with a memo outlining the de-obligation details for the property, including names of employee and the timeframe requiring the de-obligation provisions.
- 7.7. The Housing Coordinator will manage the relocation of tenants as directed by the Commission. As part of the relocation a new payment schedule will be created and sent to Ministry of Finance.

8. Termination of housing lease agreement

- 8.1. The line ministries are responsible for advising the PSC of any tenant terminating that has a housing lease agreement and providing the PSC with a debt clearance form for the tenant. The routing of the debt clearance form **MUST** be handled by the line ministries, not the tenant, and be delivered directly to the housing coordinator within a period of no more than two (2) days. Once cost of damage has been determined by the respective landlord, a final inspection of the domicile is conducted by the Commission, the landlord and the responsible ministry/agency (and tenant when still on islands) for cost of damage verification and to secure of payment.
- 8.2. The PSC provides the landlord with a termination memo advising that the housing lease agreement will be terminated in **30 days**.
- 8.3. The Housing Coordinator will advise the Ministry of Finance and the line ministry of the housing lease agreement termination at the **same time**.
- 8.4. The Housing Coordinator will arrange a final inspection of the property with the landlord, respective ministry/agency and tenant.
- 8.5. If the finding of the inspection does not meet the required standard, the last payment for the tenant will be withheld until the property is restored to the original condition and/or prior to the next occupancy. Failure to satisfy this cleaning requirement shall be subject for additional charges against the tenant.
- 8.6. In the event an employee is terminated (with cause), the finding of the final inspection of the respective domicile the Housing Coordinator will notify the line ministry, and the Finance, of the need to accommodate the required costs of damage.
 - 8.6.1. The responsible ministry/agency shall initiate payment of the damage cost and shall inform the Finance and PSC of the payment, including any other information associated with the payment and the balance being secured, and of any remaining balance of the garnished personal payroll check.