



**the dpsa**

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Public Service and Administration  
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**TO ALL HEADS OF NATIONAL/PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENTS, PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATIONS AND GOVERNMENT COMPONENTS**

**ADVERTISING OF POSTS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE VACANCY CIRCULAR**

1. The purpose of this Circular is to inform departments of certain contextual changes and procedural matters regarding the advertising of posts in the Public Service Vacancy Circular.
2. The power to recruit staff vests in terms of section 3(7)(b) of the Public Service Act, 1994 with departments. To this end, the Public Service Regulations, 2016 prescribe in Regulation 65 inter alia the following conditions whereby departments are to undertake recruitment:

- “65.(1) An executive authority shall ensure that vacant posts in the department are advertised, as efficiently and effectively as possible, to reach the entire pool of potential applicants, including designated groups.*
- (2) An advertisement for a post shall as a minimum specify the job title, salary scale, core functions, place of work, inherent requirements of the job, including any other requirements prescribed in these Regulations.*
  - (3) A vacant post in the SMS shall be advertised nationwide.*
  - (4) An executive authority shall advertise any other vacant post, as a minimum, within the department, but may also advertise such post -  
(a) in the public service;  
(b) locally; or  
(c) nationwide.*
  - (5) When advertising outside the department, the department shall also advertise in the public service vacancy circular issued by the Department of Public Service and Administration.*
  - (6) An advertisement for a post shall not unfairly discriminate against or prohibit any suitably qualified person or employee from applying.*
  - (7) A funded vacant post shall be advertised within six months after becoming vacant and be filled within twelve months after becoming vacant.”*

3. Regulation 65(6) introduces an important principle in that advertisements -
  - 3.1 may not unfairly discriminate against any suitably qualified person or employee; and
  - 3.2 may not prohibit any suitably qualified person or employee from applying.

4. "Unfairly discriminate" and "suitably qualified person" must be interpreted according to the respective provisions in sections 6 and 20(3) and (4) of the Employment Equity Act, 1998.
5. The provision in Regulation 65(6) implies a substantial change in the purpose and role of the Public Service Vacancy Circular; to the extent that -
  - 5.1 the Vacancy Circular will not anymore be an internal circular addressed to departments, but a publication (issued by the DPSA) that -
    - (a) communicates, without any reservations as to who can apply, job opportunities available in the Public Service; and
    - (b) invites applications from all interested job seekers, whether they are serving employees, unemployed persons or persons employed outside the Public Service;
  - 5.2 departments now can, instead of advertising in the media such as newspapers, use the Vacancy Circular at no cost to recruit from outside the Public Service; and
  - 5.3 the Vacancy Circular will serve as a "nationwide" communication medium for purposes of advertising vacancies in the SMS.
6. The Vacancy Circular will, **with immediate effect**, be published with an amended cover page in which its revised purpose and role are communicated.
7. The arrangements concerning the Vacancy Circular's composition and scheduled dates of issuing will otherwise (but except for the change introduced in paragraph 7.6(a) below), remain unchanged. As regards the compilation of the Vacancy Circular attention is, with due regard to departments' autonomy in respect of recruitment, drawn to the following:
  - 7.1 Although departments may in own discretion undertake recruitment and determine the content of the advertisements, caution needs to be exercised that -
    - (a) despite the Vacancy Circular's amended scope as a recruitment medium, vacant posts in the department are advertised as efficiently and effectively as possible to reach the entire pool of potential applicants, including designated groups;
    - (b) an advertisement -
      - (i) conforms to the principles of employment equity and fairness;
      - (ii) does not unfairly discriminate against any suitably qualified person or employee;
      - (iii) does not prohibit any suitably qualified person or employee from applying; and
    - (c) the requirements defined in advertisements are valid, appropriate and clear as they ultimately represent the selection criteria applicable to the filling of the post. It therefore stands to reason that the better the effort that goes into the content of an advertisement, the easier and more efficient the subsequent screening and selection processes will be.

7.2 The reference to “suitably qualified person” in Regulation 65(6) should be understood and applied within the context of section 20(3) and (4) of the Employment Equity Act, 1998. The sub sections provide as follows:

*“(3) For purposes of this Act, a person may be suitably qualified for a job as a result of any of, or any combination of that person’s -*

- (a) formal qualifications;*
- (b) prior learning;*
- (c) relevant experience; or*
- (d) capacity to acquire, within a reasonable time, the ability of the job*

*(4) When determining whether a person is suitably qualified for a job, an employer must -*

- (a) review all the factors listed in subsection (3); and*
- (b) determine whether that person has the ability to do the job in terms of any one of, or any combination of those factors”*

7.3 Departments must ensure that when advertising is done outside the department, the advertisement is, in accordance with Regulation 65(5), also published in the Public Service Vacancy Circular.

7.4 Practice has shown that sufficient time should be allowed for job seekers to respond to advertisements. Departments are consequently advised to refrain from advertising vacancies with running periods of less than two weeks.

7.5 The entry/employment requirements stated in advertisements should be in line with the inherent requirements of the job and other prescribed requirements. Caution should especially be exercised -

- (a) not to require too stringent educational and experience requirements unless they are prescribed or reflected in the inherent requirements of the job; and
- (b) that the requirements and terminology used in advertisements must not in any way either directly (in terms of gender, age, etc) or indirectly (for instances by means of inappropriate or irrelevant qualifications and/or experience requirements) discriminate against any candidate or potential candidate.

7.6 As regards the submission of advertisements to the Department of Public Service and Administration for inclusion in the Public Service Vacancy Circular, the following should be adhered to:

- (a) Advertisements must from now on be emailed to the Department of Public Service and Administration at the e-mail address: [PSVC@dpsa.gov.za](mailto:PSVC@dpsa.gov.za). The email address used so far will however, as a transitional measure, be maintained until all departments have adjusted to the new email address.
- (b) Departments must clearly indicate in which Public Service Vacancy Circular the advertisements should be placed. The “Public Service Vacancy Circular Year Programme 2017” (issued per circular 14/1/3/P dated 5 December 2016) that contains the dates on which the respective Vacancy Circulars will be published, must be used for this purpose.
- (c) Advertisements should be submitted according to the following structure:

- (i) Job title.
  - (ii) Salary scale.
  - (iii) Place of work/location/centre.
  - (iv) Requirements for the post.
  - (v) Core functions/duties/key performance areas.
  - (vi) Contact details of the person to whom enquiries should be directed.
  - (vii) Any notes/remarks that should accompany the advertisement.
- (d) Departments must ensure that advertisements are submitted in the following format:
- (i) MS Word.
  - (ii) The "Styles" function should be set as "Normal".
  - (iii) The paragraph format should be set as follows:
    - Single spacing and justified.
    - Spacing before must be set at 0.
    - Spacing after must be set at 0.
  - (iv) The font size should be 9.
  - (v) Advertisements should be submitted according to salary scale, from the highest salary scale to the lowest.

8. Kindly bring the contents of this Circular to the attention of your Department's Human Resource component.

  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL  
DATE: 07/04/2017