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Department:
Public Service and Administration
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DIRECTIVE ON HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE (PROFESSIONALISATION DIRECTIVE VOLUME 1) (THE DIRECTIVE)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

KEY DEFINITIONS UNDER THE DIRECTIVE

Ethical State and Public Official	An ethical state operates on fairness, integrity, and transparency principles, guiding public officials to act in the public's interest. An ethical public official demonstrates honesty, adheres to moral principles, and makes legal and correct decisions.
Responsible State and Public Official	A responsible state acknowledges its duty to its citizens, ensuring that its actions and policies meet their needs and contribute to the common good. A Responsible public official carries out their duties with diligence, consider the consequences of their actions, and are committed to serving the public efficiently and effectively.
Accountable State and Public Official	Accountability in a state refers to mechanisms that ensure public officials are answerable for their actions and decisions, upholding transparency and the rule of law. An accountable public official must be held responsible for and answer for their actions and decisions, be open to scrutiny, and be willing to take corrective action when necessary.

STRATEGIC FAQs

i. How does the Professionalisation Directive Vol 1 of 2024 and the National Framework towards Professionalisation of the Public Sector interact?

The Directive puts into action the strategic vision of the National Framework by issuing detailed human resources management and development (HRMD) guidelines. This synergy forms a unified strategy to strengthen professionalism, efficiency, and service orientation in the public sector, aiming for an ethical, responsible, and accountable governance model.

ii. What are the critical areas of focus under the Directive?

The Directive emphasises enhancing recruitment processes, fostering continuous learning and development, strengthening planning and performance management, upholding ethics and integrity, and cultivating leadership and innovation.



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OPERATIONAL AND PRACTICAL FAQs

1. How does the Directive promote Merit-based Recruitment?

The Directive promotes impartial, competence-based recruitment in line with the Constitution, Public Service Act and PSR to ensure that appointment decisions are made ethically, responsibly, and accountable. This approach maintains integrity and professionalism within the Public Service.

2. How is Public Service Delivery and Governance enhanced?

By developing an accountable, skilled, and ethical workforce, these initiatives aim to improve public services and governance, restoring public trust in government institutions and advancing towards a more responsible and accountable governance framework.

3. What are the Proposed Strategies for Professional Development?

The proposed strategies, including merit-based recruitment, structured induction, ongoing training, and career development pathways, are designed to cultivate an ethical work culture, promoting the values of responsibility and accountability among public servants.

4. How are Potential Challenges Addressed?

The challenges are addressed by establishing explicit norms and standards to enhance HRMD functions, including recruitment, promoting ongoing learning and development, reinforcing planning and performance management, maintaining ethics and integrity, and nurturing leadership and innovation.

5. How will the Directive be Evaluated?

The effectiveness will be evaluated through the results of compliance and performance audits, by the DPSA, the DPME and the AG-SA. In addition, the DPSA will gauge the level of public confidence, for example, as depicted in media coverage, improvement in the satisfaction of the public and feedback on compliance informed by audit findings and service delivery disputes.

6. How is the Directive aligned with the National Development Plan and Public Service Reform?

These initiatives are crucial to realising a capable, ethical, and accountable state, enhancing governance, ensuring equitable service delivery, and contributing to social and economic development, aligning with the objectives of the National Development Plan.



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7. Are there any financial implications associated with implementing the Directive?

The Directive outlines no direct financial implications, suggesting that the focus is on leveraging existing resources and frameworks to achieve the goals.

8. What is the status of previously issued directives that may conflict with this Directive: Volume 1?

This Directive repeals the following previously issued directives:

- a) Compulsory Capacity Development, Mandatory Training Days and Minimum Entry Requirements for Members of SMS;
- b) Directive on the Acceptance of Electronic Job Applications and The Utilization of Prescribed Z83 Form;
- c) Directive on the Application of the Minimum Requirements for the Appointment into an entry-level post in the Public Service; and
- d) Directive of Personnel Suitability Checks

This Directive takes precedence over prior directives in instances of overlap to ensure conformity with the most recent strategic objectives, modernise public services and align with the National Framework Towards the Professionalisation of the Public Sector. Where relevant, the stipulations of earlier Directives have been integrated into this Directive. This method aids in minimising excessive reporting within the public service, resulting in a reduced reporting burden and red tape.

9. What is the status of the Competency Assessments?

Competency Assessments for appointment into the SMS are still compulsory. This is in line with **Paragraph 4.1(5) of the Directive on the Implementation of Competency Assessments for Members of the Senior Management Service (SMS)**, which states that “Departments are expected to utilize the results of the competency assessment in conjunction with other processes associated with recruitment”. These associated processes include the considering of qualifications of applicants, technical competency testing, interviewing, reference checking, etc to arrive at a decision whether to appoint a candidate or not. The Competency Assessment Results **MUST** therefore, be considered in the decision to or not to appoint a candidate, but should not be the sole determinant.

10. How will the Personal Professional Profile be utilised under the new Directive and when will it come into effect?

The DPSA is currently piloting psychometric instruments that will look at Emotional Intelligence and Integrity of candidates. When combined with the outcome of Competency Assessments for SMS members, the result will be a Personal Professional Profile which will be vital in managing individual careers, planning development, and monitoring professional progression within the public service. This will enhance HRMD functions. The use of Personal Professional Profiles will be announced via a Circular to be issued by the Director General, once the pilot is completed before the end of March 2024.



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11. Do selection committee members need to possess technical skills relevant to the post functions?

The selection committee for any position within the public service must have at least some individuals possessing technical expertise on the field of the post being filled. Technical expertise may not be limited to academic qualifications and may include both Public Servants and individuals outside the public service that have the competencies, technical knowledge, expertise and skills in the field of the post to be filled.

12. Removal of public sector experience

The public service is committed to eliminating bureaucratic obstacles and enhancing its ability to attract skilled and competent workers from all sectors, particularly in professional fields, technology, and the built environment. The removal of public sector experience as a requirement for filling a post improves the competitiveness of the public service in competing for critical skills in the market, whilst also opening up the public service for new ideas and innovations.

13. How will the public service deal with unprofessional public servants?

The public service enforces a Code of Conduct that all employees must follow, ensuring their behaviour does not tarnish their employer's reputation. Any violations of this code are addressed according to the public service disciplinary code stipulations, which outline the consequences and procedures for non-compliance.

14. What will happen to the current processes when these changes occur?

The Directive will take effect on 1 April 2024. Any further processes undertaken after 1 April 2024 must comply with the provisions of this Directive.

15. Why is Pillar 5 not included in Volume One of the Directive?

Volume Two of the Directive will elucidate Pillar 5 of the Professionalisation Framework which deals with the career progression and management of career incidents for Heads of Departments. When it is issued, it will also address additional implications for Deputy Director Generals as the Executive Management layer within the Public Service.

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