



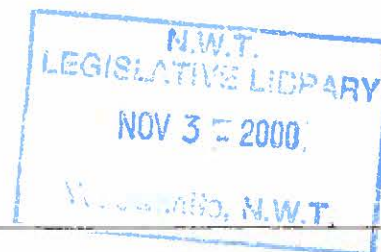
Ministerial Administrative  
Procedures

Section: 10  
Title: Ministerial Executive  
Assistants

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Guidelines

1. "Ministerial Executive Assistants" are persons appointed to assist Ministers in their duties.
2. Ministerial Executive Assistants are appointed at pleasure for a term period not to exceed the term of office of their Minister. At pleasure means that the employment can be terminated at any time without cause and without notice.
3. Ministerial Executive Assistants may be hired without competition and seconded upon recommendation of the applicable hiring Minister.
4. Ministerial Executive Assistants appointed from outside the Public Service will be given thirty (30) days' salary in lieu of notice on termination.
5. Ministerial Executive Assistants seconded from within the Territorial Public Service will be offered a position within the Territorial Public Service on termination with a salary level at least equivalent to their salary prior to appointment, plus increases or increments they would have received had they remained in their former position.
6. The terms and conditions of employment for GNWT excluded employees apply to Ministerial Executive Assistants except where there is conflict with these guidelines.
7. Ministerial Executive Assistants are employed in a confidential capacity.
8. Ministerial Executive Assistants are paid at pay range 18. Ministers may set the salary level of their Executive Assistants within the designated pay range. Executive assistants are subject to 5 days mandatory leave without pay.
9. Ministerial Executive Assistants may receive up to two (2) performance related salary increases per year provided they are not at or above (present incumbent only status) the maximum level of the established pay range. This is based on the recommendation of their Minister.
10. The remuneration which Ministerial Executive Assistants receive, and the employers cost of benefits are paid from the Executive Department appropriation and charged against the Ministers Office Activity under the applicable Minister's cost centre.



Procedures

1. Ministers shall submit their recommendations for the appointment or secondment of their Ministerial Executive Assistants to the Secretary to Cabinet.
2. As part of the recommendation process, Ministers should provide the following documents to potential ministerial staff before submitting their recommendation to the Secretary to Cabinet:
  - a) Section 10 of the Ministerial Administrative Procedures Manual.
  - b) The Ministerial Staff Handbook.
3. The recommendation referred to in #1 above should include the following:
  - a) Candidate's name
  - b) Candidate's mailing address
  - c) Candidate's current employer
  - d) Proposed starting date
  - e) Salary level
  - f) A list of three or more references and authorization signed by the candidate to permit the Secretary to Cabinet to contact the references.
  - g) Secondment details (if secondment is proposed).
4. In cases where a secondment is proposed, the hiring Minister shall:
  - a) obtain a letter of agreement from the Deputy Minister of the employing department/agency and provide a copy of same to the Secretary to Cabinet.
  - b) provide the Secretary to Cabinet with details of the proposed secondment including:
    - i) the name of the employing department/agency and the candidate's current position number.

- ii) the location of the candidate's current position;
  - iii) the period of secondment;
  - iv) details of the requirement for relocation assistance if applicable.
5. The Secretary to Cabinet will initiate the necessary reference checks and issue the applicable letter of offer indicating that the appointment is subject to Cabinet ratification based on the outcome of the reference check process.
6. If the reference check shows that a candidate is not suitable for appointment, the Secretary to Cabinet will immediately advise the hiring Minister accordingly.
7. If the reference check confirms that the candidate is suitable, the Secretary to Cabinet will initiate proforma Cabinet ratification of the direct appointment.
8. Upon receipt of Cabinet ratification, the Secretary to Cabinet will:
- a) confirm the appointment and prepare and finalize the secondment agreement if applicable;
  - b) initiate the documentation process including a briefing to explain the benefits package;
  - c) arrange for removal into Yellowknife if applicable.
9. Ministers will brief their Ministerial Executive Assistants as to their specific duties and responsibilities.
10. The Secretary to Cabinet will:
- a) initiate an orientation briefing and staff introduction for new Ministerial Executive Assistants;
  - b) initiate operational briefings for Ministerial Executive Assistants on an ongoing basis.

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### Attachments

Appendix A - Current Salary Levels

Appendix B - Ministerial Direction

### Contacts

For further information contact:

- |                                 |          |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Secretary to Cabinet         | 873-7100 |
| 2. Director, Corporate Services | 873-7148 |

## MINISTERIAL DIRECTION

The roles and responsibilities of ministerial staff (Executive Assistants and Secretaries) differ from one Minister to another. Individual Ministers usually have their own particular method of dealing with the day-to-day operation of their ministerial offices. For this reason it is essential that ministerial staff take time upon initial appointment to sit down with their respective Ministers to work out specific details with respect to office protocol and procedures. Ministerial staff might wish to discuss the following questions with their Minister:

### 1. Role and Responsibilities

- What should the Executive Assistant's role be:  
That of:
  1. Administration Officer
  2. Chief of Staff
  3. Complaints Bureau
  4. Subject Specialist
  5. Policy Advisor
  6. Speech Writer/Press Aide
  7. A mix of the above
- What specific responsibilities are to be assigned to the Executive Assistant?  
These will be derived from the role which is agreed upon.
- What are the Secretary's role and responsibilities?

### 2. Authority

- What can the Executive Assistant/Secretary/Deputy Minister/other Ministers sign for the Minister?
- Can the Executive Assistant speak on the Minister's behalf at meetings, and to the press?

### 3. Ministerial Preferences in Administration

- What is the Minister's preference with respect to:
  - frequency and timing of meetings with personal staff?
  - times and places for meetings with departmental staff?
  - meetings with public delegations?

## MINISTERIAL DIRECTION

- How does the Minister wish to deal with his signature book when he/she is travelling?
- Who arranges meetings with whom; the Secretary or the Executive Assistant?
- Which meetings should the Executive Assistant attend?
- What role should the Executive Assistant play at meetings presided over by the Minister?
- What level of hospitality should be extended?
- What are the Minister's catering preferences?
- How accessible does the Minister want to be?
- What is the Minister's preference with respect to briefing notes?
- Who arranges the Minister's travel? What are the Minister's preferences regarding type of air travel, hotel preference?
- To what extent is the Executive Assistant expected to accompany the Minister or stand in for him/her?
- What are the usual travel patterns for the Minister (fall federal-provincial meetings, constituency travel, home travel)?
- Who does the Minister prefer to include on charters if there are empty seats; press members, family, departmental staff?
- Does the Minister want travel briefing notes and who should prepare them; the Executive Assistant, departmental staff?
- Does the Minister want the Executive Assistant to see incoming mail before he/she does?
- Does the Minister want to see all incoming mail or just priority items?
- Who should draft responses to correspondence?
- Is there a standard correspondence format which the Minister prefers?

## MINISTERIAL DIRECTION

- Does the Minister wish to have a formal acknowledgment process put into place?
- Who should direct items to the department for a draft response?
- Should the Executive Assistant vet all outgoing correspondence?
- How budget-conscious does your Minister want to be?
- Who will monitor the Minister's office finances? constituency finances?
- Who should have access to the Minister's private telephone line?
- Does he/she want his incoming calls screened?
- Does the Minister want an unlisted home phone number?

### 4. Public Relations

- Who arranges or commits the Minister to attend public meetings and engagements?
- Does the Minister prefer a written speech or just notes?
- Who should draft speeches: the Executive Assistant, departmental staff, the Press Secretary, the Minister, or a combination of all?
- Who should edit speeches?
- Can the Executive Assistant give speeches on the Minister's behalf?
- Who arranges press conferences for the Minister?
- What role should the Executive Assistant play in relation to the Press Secretary?
- When does the Executive Assistant write press releases?
- What role should the Executive Assistant play in relation to the Public Affairs Officers for the Minister's respective portfolios?
- Can the Executive Assistant speak directly to the press on a Minister's behalf?

## MINISTERIAL DIRECTION

- Should the Executive Assistant refer queries from the press to the Deputy Minister or to the Press Secretary?
- What are the Minister's media likes and dislikes?
- Does the Minister have an overall media strategy?
- Who are the Minister's important constituents?
- What are the major issues in the Minister's constituency?
- What dealings are the Executive Assistant and the Secretary to have with the Minister's constituency assistant?
- Does the Executive Assistant write/edit the constituency newsletter?
- Should the Executive Assistant meet with constituents and handle constituency problems on the Minister's behalf?
- What dealings are the Executive Assistant and the Secretary to have with regional departmental staff in a Minister's constituency?
- What level of translation does the Minister prefer and which correspondence will require it?
- What office dress code does the Minister prefer; business suit/dress, casual, native dress and when?
- What type of event does the Minister prefer to host (buffet supper v formal banquet)?
- What degree of press coverage does the Minister prefer (flamboyant publicity v low profile)?



## MINISTERIAL DIRECTION

### 5. Legislative Assembly Sessions

- Who should coordinate the development of the Minister's departmental briefing book?
- What is the Minister's preferred style of briefing notes?
- What is the Executive Assistant's relationship with the Minister's department(s) in providing answers to questions raised in the Assembly?
- Does the Minister want "issue briefings" in preparation for debates?
- Should the Executive Assistant vet the unedited Hansard?

### 6. Executive Council/Committee and Financial Management Board Meetings

- Should the Executive Assistant be involved in preparing submissions and what type (appointments to boards, grant applications)?
- Should the Executive Assistant vet submissions for political implications only?
- Does the Minister wish to have someone in the office all the time while he/she is attending Executive meetings?
- Should the Executive Assistant obtain a verbal summary of decisions from the Minister after the meetings?

### 7. Departmental Responsibilities

- Does the Minister want the Executive Assistant to deal with his/her respective Deputy(s) to ensure that effective communications are maintained between the Minister's office and his/her departments?
- Does the Minister want the Executive Assistant to follow up on items referred to departments without being instructed to do so by the Minister?
- What involvement does the Minister want the Executive Assistant to have in issues related to departmental management/organization? (Can the Executive Assistant give direction in certain areas?)

### 8. Miscellaneous Issues

- Will the Minister give direction with respect to hours and working conditions for his ministerial staff?

## MINISTERIAL DIRECTION

- Will the Minister provide time in lieu of overtime?
- What are the Minister's requirements for office computerization?
- What are the Minister's preferences for replacement staff when the Secretary or Executive Assistant are on leave (stand-in from Minister's department or casual employee)?
- Do ministerial staff and the Minister want to be called at home after hours and on weekends for matters related to the constituency, portfolios and his Executive office?
- Does the Minister wish to hire a Youth Assistant/student during the summer months by utilizing funds from the department?
- Does the Minister expect ministerial staff to defend his/her positions and opinions while they are attending private social functions?
- Will the Minister be sympathetic and understanding when personal or family commitments occasionally take ministerial staff away from their duties?

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Appendix A

1999-2000

EXCLUDED EMPLOYEES

PAY						
RANGE	STEP1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5	STEP 6
18	60,547	62,107	63,706	65,325	67,002	68,718

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Appendix B

The following attachment entitled "Ministerial Direction" was developed with input from previous ministerial staff. In the past it has proven to be a useful tool in helping new staff work out specific details with respect to office protocol and procedures.

September 1996