

कर्मचारी भविष्य निधि संगठन

Employees Provident Fund Organisation (श्रम एवं रोजगार मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार)



मुख्य कार्यालय/Head Office

प्लेट ए , ग्राउंडफ्लोर, ब्लॉक-॥, ईस्ट किदवई नगर,नई दिल्ली-110023 Plate A, Ground Floor, Block II, East Kidwai Nagar, New Delhi-110023

Website: www.epfindia.gov.in, www.epfindia.nic.in

No. AVS-24012/1/2023-DAR/E-457338/

1016

Dated: 2 8 APR 2025

CIRCULAR

Subject: Empanelment of retired officers as Inquiry Officers for conducting departmental inquiries – reg.

Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) proposes to empanel retired officers as Inquiry Officers for conducting departmental inquiries.

- 2. Interested officers who retired from the post of not below the rank of Deputy Secretary in the Central Government or equivalent in the Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) or in the State Governments or Public Sector Undertakings and who are eligible to be appointed as Inquiry Officer for the purpose of conducting departmental inquiry as per terms & conditions stipulated in the Department of Personnel & Training Office Memorandum No. 142/40/2015-AVD.I dated 15.09.2017 are requested to submit their application in the prescribed format (Annexure) along with a copy of their Pension Payment Order (PPO) for empanelment as Inquiry Officers.
- 3. Payment of Honorarium will be as per DoP&T OM dated 16.11.2022 for retired officers covered under the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) and as per DoP&T OM dated 07.01.2016 for others.
- 4. The application complete in all respect must be submitted by the retired officers through proper channel i.e., through the office from where they retired, addressing to the Additional Central Provident Fund Commissioner (HRM), EPFO Head Office, Plate A, Ground Floor, Block II, East Kidwai Nagar, New Delhi 110023.

Enclosures: DoP&T OM dated 07.01.2016, 15.09.2017 and 16.11.2022

(Saurabh Jagati)
Addl. Central P.F. Commissioner (HRM)

Copy to:

 RPFC, NDC – with the request to host this open Circular on the EPFO website and also to display appropriate message on Home Page of the website.

II. All Zonal ACCs are requested to make this Circular known to other offices / departments in their Zone to have maximum spread.

III. Director (OL), Head Office - for Hindi version.



APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT OF RETIRED GOVERNMENT SERVANTS AS THE INQUIRY OFFICER TO CONDUCT DEPARTMENTAL INQUIRY

Name of the officer : (In capital letters)

Date of retirement from government service

Last Post held before retirement

Details of the Ministry and posts held during the service

Have you ever assigned the responsibility of the Inquiry Officer

If yes, the details thereof:
Whether retired on attaining the age of
Superannuation or voluntary retirement

Whether any penalty was imposed during the service

If yes, the details thereof

Name and signature Permanent/Present Address & Contact Number

:

Place: Date:

(The empanelment of retired officers for their appointment as the Inquiry Officer will be done by a Committee comprising of three Joint Secretary level officers including CVO of the concerned Ministry/Departments/PSUs)

F.No.142/40/2015-AVD.I Government of India Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Department of Personnel and Training

New Delhi Dated, the 7th January, 2016

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject:- Procedure for empanelment of retired officers as the Inquiry Officers for conducting Departmental Inquiries- reg.

The undersigned is directed to state that the issue of utilizing the services of retired officers for conducting departmental inquiries had been under consideration of the Department. It has now been decided that panels of retired officers from the Ministries/Departments under Government of India and PSUs would be created and maintained by the respective Cadre Controlling Authorities for conducting Departmental Inquiries against the delinquent officials.

- 2. Procedure for empanelment of retired officers as the Inquiry Officers Panels of retired officers not below the rank of Deputy Secretary in Central Government and equivalent officer in the State Governments/PSUs to be appointed as the Inquiry Officer for the purpose of conducting departmental inquiries would be maintained level/rank wise and place-specific by each cadre controlling authority where its offices are located.
- 3. Validity of the panel The panel of the retired officers created for the purpose of appointing Inquiry Officers for conducting departmental inquiry will be valid for a period of three years. The respective Cadre Controlling Authority will ensure that a panel of retired Inquiry Officers is available with them.
- 4. Following are the eligibility conditions for appointment of willing retired officers as the Inquiry Officers to conduct departmental inquiries:-
- (i) The retired officers willing to serve as the Inquiry Officer should not be more than 65 years of age as on the 1st April of the year of his/her empanelment.

(ii) He/she should be in sound health - both physically and mentally.

- (iii) He/she should not be an accused officer in any pending inquiry and should be of impeccable integrity.
- 5. The respective Cadre Controlling Authority will immediately take necessary action for inviting applications from willing and eligible retired officers to serve as the Inquiry Officer for conducting departmental inquiry. In this regard, a format for inviting applications is annexed.

- 6. A three-member committee consisting of Joint Secretary level officers including CVO of the concerned Ministry/Departments/PSUs would be constituted by the respective cadre controlling authority. The other two members can be from the same Ministry/Department or from the attached or subordinate office. After receipt of willingness of the retired officers, names of the officers will be screened by the committee so constituted and panel of officers (Database) will be created rank-wise viz., Deputy Secretary, Director, Joint Secretary, Additional Secretary, Secretary, etc. Approval of Minister-in-charge may be solicited for making the panel of the officers. Appointment of Inquiry Officer, from the panel of eligible retired officers, will be done by a random draw of lot. The Committee constituted for making panels of retired officers as the Inquiry Officer has to keep in mind that applications of retired officers willing to serve as an Inquiry Officer should be scrutinized carefully to ensure that the applicant meets the eligibility criteria.
- 7. The number of disciplinary cases assigned to an Inquiry Officer may be restricted to 20 cases in a year, with not more than 4 cases at a time.
- 8. Terms and conditions for appointment of retired officers as the Inquiry Officer.

The designated Inquiry Officer shall require to give an undertaking as follows:-

- (i) that he/she is not a witness or a complainant in the matter to be inquired into or a close relative or a known friend of the delinquent Government officer.
- (ii) shall maintain strict secrecy in relation to the documents he/she receives or information/data collected by him/her in connection with the inquiry and utilize the same only for the purpose of inquiry in the case entrusted to him/her.
- 9. No such documents/information or data shall be divulged to anyone during the Inquiry or after presentation of the Inquiry Report. All the records, reports etc. available with the Inquiry Officer shall be duly returned to the authority which appointed him/her as such, at the time of presentation of the Inquiry Report.
- 10. The Inquiry Officer shall conduct the inquiry proceedings in the official premises provided by the Department/Organization, which engages him/her.
- 11. The Inquiry Officer shall undertake travel for conducting inquiry (in unavoidable circumstances) with the approval of the Disciplinary Authority.

- 12. The Inquiry Officer shall submit the inquiry report after completing the inquiry within ninety days from the date of his/her appointment as the Inquiry Officer. Extension of time beyond ninety days can be granted only by the Disciplinary Authority.
- 13. The rates of honorarium and other allowances payable to the Inquiry Officer will be as under:-

Particulars/Details		Rate per case (in Rupees)		
Items	Category	Time taken to complete the inquiry proceedings	Dy. Secretary/Director	Joint Secretary and above
Honorarium	'I'	Within 45 days	Rs. 60000	Rs.75000
	'П'	Within 90 days	Rs. 40000	Rs. 50000
	'III	Beyond 90 days	Rs. 30000	Rs. 40000
Transport Allowance		Rs.40000/- per ca		
Secretarial Assistance		Rs.30000 per control provided by the M	ase if no secretarial Ministry/Department co	assistance is oncerned

Payment will be made to the Inquiry Officer only when the report is accepted by the Disciplinary Authority. In case it is not possible to proceed with the matter due to stay by courts etc., the Inquiry Officer may be discharged from his/her duties and payment of honorarium and other allowances will be made on pro rata basis.

- 14. Before the payment is received by the Inquiry Officer, it will be his/her responsibility to ensure that:-
 - (a) All case records and inquiry report (two ink signed copies) properly documented and arranged is handed over to the Disciplinary Authority.
 - (b) The report returns findings on each of the Articles of Charge which has been enquired into should specifically deal and address each of the procedural objections, if any, raised by the charged officers as per the extant rules and instructions.
 - (c) There should not be any ambiguity in the inquiry report and therefore every care should be taken to ensure that all procedures for conducting departmental inquiries have been followed in accordance with the relevant rules/instructions of disciplinary and appeal Rules to which the delinquent Government officials are governed.

- 15. Letter regarding engaging a retired officer as the Inquiry Officer will only be issued with the approval of the Disciplinary Authority of the Ministry/Department/ Office concerned.
- 16. The Department of Personnel & Training (AVD.I) may be consulted in case of clarification(s) on any of the issues related to empanelment of retired officer as an Inquiry Officer for conducting departmental inquiries.

17. The services of Inquiry Officers whose performance is not upto the mark will be terminated with the approval of appointing authority.

(K.Srinivasan)
Under Secretary to the Government of India
Tel.No. 23040291

To

All Ministries / Departments (As per Standard List)

F.No.142/40/2015-AVD.I Government of India Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Department of Personnel and Training

New Delhi Dated, the 15th September, 2017

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject:- Procedure for empanelment of retired officers as the Inquiry Officers for conducting Departmental Inquiries- reg.

The undersigned is directed to state that the issue of utilizing the services of retired officers for conducting departmental inquiries had been under consideration of the Department. It has now been decided that panels of retired officers from the Ministries/Departments under Government of India and PSUs would be created and maintained by the respective Cadre Controlling Authorities for conducting Departmental Inquiries against the delinquent officials.

- 2. Procedure for empanelment of retired officers as the Inquiry Officers Panels of retired officers not below the rank of Deputy Secretary in Central Government and equivalent officer in the State Governments/PSUs to be appointed as the Inquiry Officer for the purpose of conducting departmental inquiries would be maintained level/rank wise and place-specific by each cadre controlling authority where its offices are located.
- 3. Validity of the panel The panel of the retired officers created for the purpose of appointing Inquiry Officers for conducting departmental inquiry will be valid for a period of three years. The respective Cadre Controlling Authority will ensure that a panel of retired Inquiry Officers is available with them.
- 4. Following are the eligibility conditions for appointment of willing retired officers as the Inquiry Officers to conduct departmental inquiries:-
- (i) Retired officers who are willing to serve as Inquiry Officer.
- (ii) He/she should not have been penalized in a Disciplinary Proceeding case (no penalty in DP or prosecution in criminal case)
- 5. The respective Cadre Controlling Authority will immediately take necessary action for inviting applications from willing and eligible retired officers to serve as the Inquiry Officer for conducting departmental inquiry. In this regard, a format for inviting applications is annexed.

- 6. A three-member committee consisting of Joint Secretary level officers including CVO of the concerned Ministry/Departments/PSUs would be constituted by the respective cadre controlling authority. The other two members can be from the same Ministry/Department or from the attached or subordinate office. After receipt of willingness of the retired officers, names of the officers will be screened by the committee so constituted. The formation of panel will be a continuous and ongoing process. The DA will decide on the appointment of the IO based on willingness for a case, experience in the sector and status of residence. Committee constituted for making panels of retired officers as the Inquiry Officer has to keep in mind that applications of retired officers willing to serve as an Inquiry Officer should be scrutinized carefully to ensure that the applicant meets the eligibility criteria.
- 7. The number of disciplinary cases assigned to an Inquiry Officer may be restricted to 8 cases in a year, with not more than 4 cases at a time.
- 8. Terms and conditions for appointment of retired officers as the Inquiry Officer.

The designated Inquiry Officer shall require to give an undertaking as follows:-

- (i) that he/she is not a witness or a complainant in the matter to be inquired into or a close relative or a known friend of the delinquent Government officer. A certificate to this effect will be obtained from the Inquiry Officer with respect to every inquiry and placed on record
- (ii) shall maintain strict secrecy in relation to the documents he/she receives or information/data collected by him/her in connection with the inquiry and utilize the same only for the purpose of inquiry in the case entrusted to him/her.
- 9. No such documents/information or data shall be divulged to anyone during the Inquiry or after presentation of the Inquiry Report. All the records, reports etc. available with the Inquiry Officer shall be duly returned to the authority which appointed him/her as such, at the time of presentation of the Inquiry Report.
- 10. The Inquiry Officer shall conduct the inquiry proceedings at a location taking into account the availability of records, station/place where the misconduct occurred as well as the convenience of the witnesses/ PO etc. Video Conferencing should be utilized to the maximum extent possible to minimize travel undertaken by the IO/PO/CO. The cadre controlling authorities will facilitate necessary arrangements for the Video Conferencing.

- 11 The Inquiry Officer shall undertake travel for conducting inquiry (in unavoidable circumstances) with the approval of an authority as may be nominated by the concerned Ministry/Department.
- 12. The Inquiry Officer shall submit the inquiry report after completing the inquiry within 180 days from the date of his/her appointment as the Inquiry Officer. Extension of time beyond 180 days can be granted only by the Authority as may be prescribed.
- 13. The rates of honorarium and other allowances payable to the Inquiry Officer will be as under:-

Items	Category	Time taken to complete the inquiry proceedings	Rate per case (in rupees)	
Honorarium	'I'	Where the number of witnesses cited in the charge sheet is more than 10	80% of monthly basic pension drawn	
	'II'	Where the number of witnesses cited in the charge sheet are between 6-10	60% of monthly basic pension drawn	
	'111	Where the number of witnesses cited in the charge sheet is less than 6	50% of monthly basic pension drawn	
Transport		Rs. 40,000/- per case Subject to the condition that the for outstation journey, the actual expenses for Air/Railway AC 1 will be reimbursed in addition. (subject to the approval of the competent authority and for outstation journey by Air journey will be performed by Air India in the cheapest of the entitled class a per their status before retirement and tickets will have to be arranged through authorized /permissible sources as per MoF's guidelines;. If journey is not performed by Air India, prior approval for travelling in airlines other than Air India would be required as per the prescribed procedure; Similarly traveling by train would also be permissible/restricted as per the far of class entitled to the officer before retirement.		
Secretarial Assistance	'T'	witnesses cited in the charge sheet is more than 10	Rs.40,000/-	
	'II'	witnesses cited in the charge sheet are between 6-10		
	'III	Where the number of witnesses cited in the charge sheet is less than 6	Rs.20,000/-	

50% will be paid on submission of the Inquiry Report. Remaining amount will be paid within 45 days. In case it is not possible to proceed with the matter due to stay by *courts* etc., the Inquiry Officer may be discharged from his/her duties and payment of honorarium and other allowances will be made on *pro rata* basis.

- 14. Before the payment is received by the Inquiry Officer, it will be his/her responsibility to ensure that:-
 - (a) All case records and inquiry report (two ink signed copies) properly documented and arranged is handed over to the office of Disciplinary Authority.
 - (b) The report returns findings on each of the Articles of Charge which has been enquired into should specifically deal and address each of the procedural objections, if any, raised by the charged officers as per the extant rules and instructions.
 - (c) There should not be any ambiguity in the inquiry report and therefore every care should be taken to ensure that all procedures for conducting departmental inquiries have been followed in accordance with the relevant rules/instructions of disciplinary and appeal Rules to which the delinquent Government officials are governed.
- 15. Letter regarding engaging a retired officer as the Inquiry Officer will only be issued with the approval of the Disciplinary Authority of the Ministry/Department/ Office concerned.
- 16. A review of every empanelled Inquiry Officer will be done after receipt of 2 inquiry reports where adherence to time lines and the procedure and quality of work will be assessed by the concerned Ministry. Subsequent allocation of work may be done only after such evaluation. The services of Inquiry Officers whose performance is not upto the mark will be terminated with the approval of appointing authority.

- 17. Any issue arising out of this O.M. between the Inquiring Officer and the Disciplinary Authority will be decided by the Secretary, DoPT whose decision shall be final and binding on both parties.
- 18. These guidelines are issued for internal use of DoPT and other Cadre controlling authorities may adopt the same with suitable amendments.

(K. Srinivasan)

Under Secretary to the Govt. of India Tel:23092957

To

All Ministries / Departments (As per Standard List)
All State Chief Secretaries (As per Standard List)

No.DOPT-1668597747466 Government of India Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions Department of Personnel and Training AVD(AVD-I/C-I)

North Block, New Delhi Dated 16 November, 2022

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

<u>Subject:- Grant of Honorarium to Inquiry Officers / Presenting Officers in the departmental inquiries conducted by the Ministries / Departments - reg.</u>

The undersigned is directed to refer to the subject mentioned above and to say that the rates of honorarium payable to Inquiry Officer (IO) / Presenting Officer (PO) in the case of departmental inquiries were last revised vide O.M. No.142/15/2010-AVD.I dated 31st July. 2012 in the case of serving Government Servants functioning as part time IO/PO and vide O.M. No.142/40/2015-AVD.I dated 15th September, 2017 in the case of retired Govt. Servants functioning as IO.

- The existing rates of honorarium as prescribed in the aforesaid OMs were reviewed in consultation with Department of Expenditure and it has been decided to revise the existing rates of the honorarium payable to IO/PO.
- Accordingly, these consolidated guidelines are being issued in supersession of DoPT's OM's dated 31.07.2012 and 15.09.2017.
- 4. The rates of honorarium as revised are indicated in the table below:-
- a. The rates of honorarium payable to the Inquiry Officer:
- (i) Retired officers:

Items Cate		gory	Rate per case (in rupees)	
Honorarium	I	where number of witnesses cited in the charge sheet is more than 10	An amount equal to 90% of the monthly basic pension drawn.	
	II	where number of witnesses cited in the charge sheet are between 6-10	An amount equal to 70% of the monthly basic pension drawn.	
	Ш	where number of witnesses cited in the charge sheet is less than 6	An amount equal to 60% of the monthly basic pension drawn.	
Transport Allowance		Rs. 40,000/- per case Subject to the condition that the for outstation journey, the actual expenses for air travel / railways journey will be reimbursed in addition as per their entitled class at the time of their retirement (further subject to the approval of the competent authority and in compliance of the instructions issued by DoPT/DoE from time to time for air travel regarding booking of air tickets through authorized agencies and cheapest available fare).		
Daily Allowance		Same as the officer was entitled to im	mediately prior to retirement.	

Subject:- Grant of Honorarium to Inquiry Officers / Presenting Offi...

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Secretarial Assistance	I	where the number of witnesses cited in the charge sheet is more than 10	Rs. 40,000/-
	II	6-10	Rs. 30,000/-
	III	where the number of witnesses cited in the charge sheet is less than 6	Rs. 20,000/-

(ii) Serving officers:

Rate per case (in rupees)	
An amount equal to 15% of the monthly basic pay drawn.	

- (iii) In case of common disciplinary proceedings, an additional amount of honorarium of Rs. 5000 will be payable to Inquiry Officer (both retired and serving) for every additional charged officer.
- (b) The rates of honorarium payable to the Presenting Officer:

Rate per case (in rupees)	
An amount equal to 10% of the monthly basic pay drawn.	

- 5. The revised structure of rates of honorarium and allowances as indicated above are intended to be made applicable to Departmental Proceedings including inquiry proceedings undertaken by the committee on Sexual Harassment, by Ministries / Departments in respect of officials / officers serving under different cadres of services under their administrative control. However, in case a cadre of a service or organizations such as autonomous bodies have a separate set of rules and instructions for regulating honorarium to IO / PO in existence, they may choose to continue with their own set of instructions. Fully or partially funded autonomous bodies may retain their own provisions so long as they are not more beneficial than what has been proposed in this O.M.
- 6. The grant of Honorarium in the case of serving Government servants who are appointed as part time Inquiry Officer/ Presenting Officer and retired Government servants appointed as Inquiry Officers will be subject to the following conditions:
 - i. The honorarium will normally be regulated under the financial powers delegated to the Ministries/Departments and taking into account the quantum of work involved in individual disciplinary cases.
 - ii. In the case where serving officers are appointed as IO/PO, the controlling department or the administrative department should make all efforts to relieve the IO/PO of his normal duties to enable him/her to complete the proceedings expeditiously.
- 7. Before the payment is received by the Inquiry Officer/Presenting Officer, whether serving or retired, it will be the responsibility of IO/PO to ensure that:

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- a. All case records and inquiry report (two ink signed copies) properly documented and arranged is handed over to the office of Disciplinary Authority.
- b. The report returns findings on each of the Articles of Charge which has been enquired into should specifically deal and address each of the procedural objections, if any, raised by the charged officers as per the extant rules and instructions.
- c. There should not be any ambiguity in the inquiry report and therefore every care should be taken to ensure that all procedures for conducting departmental inquiries have been followed in accordance with the relevant rules/instructions of disciplinary and appeal Rules to which the delinquent Government officials are governed.
- 8. Terms and conditions for appointment of Inquiry Officer: The designated Inquiry Officer shall be required to give an undertaking as follows:
 - i. that he/she is not a witness or a complainant in the matter to be inquired into or a close relative or a known friend of the delinquent Government officer. A certificate to this effect will be obtained from the Inquiry Officer with respect to every inquiry and placed on record;
 - ii. shall maintain strict secrecy in relation to the documents he/she receives or information/ data collected by him/her in connection with the inquiry and utilize the same only for the purpose of inquiry in the case entrusted to him/her.
- 9. No such documents/information or data shall be divulged to anyone during the Inquiry or after presentation of the Inquiry Report. All the records, reports etc. available with the Inquiry Officer shall be duly returned to the authority which appointed him/her as such, at the time of presentation of the Inquiry Report.
- 10. The Inquiry Officer shall conduct the inquiry proceedings at a location taking into account the availability of records, station/place where the misconduct occurred as well as the convenience of the witnesses/ PO etc. Video Conferencing should be utilized to the maximum extent possible to minimize travel undertaken by the IO/PO/CO. The cadre controlling authorities will facilitate necessary arrangements for the Video Conferencing.
- 11. The Inquiry Officer shall undertake travel for conducting inquiry (in unavoidable circumstances) with the approval of an authority as may be nominated by the concerned Ministry/Department.
- 12. The Inquiry Officer shall submit the inquiry report after completing the inquiry within 180 days from the date of his/her appointment as the Inquiry Officer. Extension of time beyond 180 days can be granted only by the Authority as may be prescribed.
- 13. Letter regarding engaging a retired officer as the Inquiry Officer will only be issued with the approval of the Disciplinary Authority of the Ministry/Department/ Office concerned.
- 14. Any issue arising out of this O.M. between the Inquiring Officer and the Disciplinary Authority will be decided by the Secretary, DoPT whose decision shall be final and binding on both parties.
- 15. These instructions will be applicable prospectively for processing the Bill submitted by the IOs / POs.
- 16. All the Ministries/Departments are requested to bring these instructions to the notice of all

concerned under their control.

17. This issues with the concurrence of Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance vide their I. D. Note No. 14/4/2009-E.II(B) dated 26/10/2022.

(Sign of Authority) Rupesh Kumar Under Secretary to the Govt. of India 23094799

To,

- i. All Ministries/Departments of the Govt. of India.
- ii. Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, Jeevan Deep Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi.
- iii. Department of Public Enterprises, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi.
- iv. Railway Board, Rail Bhavan, Delhi.
- v. Union Public Service Commission/Supreme Court of India/ Election Commission of India/ Lok Sabha Secretariat/ Rajya Sabha Secretariat/Cabinet Secretariat/Central Vigilance Commission/President's Secretariat/ Prime Minister's Office/Planning Commission.
- vi. Staff Selection Commission, CGO Complex, Lodi Road, New Delhi.
- vii. Office of the Chief Commissioner for Disabilities, Sarojini House, 6, Bhagwan Das Road, New Delhi.
- viii. Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India, 10, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi.
- ix. All Officers and Sections in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions and all attached/subordinate offices of this Ministry.

Reference:

- 1. DoPT's O. M. No. 142/15/2010-AVD.I dated 31st July, 2012
- DoPT's O. M. No. 142/40/2015-AVD.I dated 15th September, 2017
