

No. 1459 (01)/NIFT-HO/Vig./2026/851

सतर्कता विभाग (मुख्यालय) / Vigilance Department (Head Office)
राष्ट्रीय फैशन प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान / National Institute of Fashion Technology
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दिनांक - 10 अगस्त/August, 2026

कार्यालय ज्ञापन /OFFICE MEMORANDUM

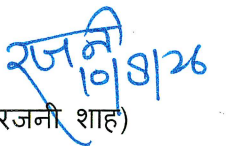
Subject: Master Circular on Timely Initiation and Finalisation of Disciplinary Action – regarding / अनुशासनात्मक कार्रवाई समय पर शुरू करने और उसे पूरा करने के बारे में मास्टर सर्कुलर के संबंध में -

अधोहस्ताक्षरी को केंद्रीय सतर्कता आयोग द्वारा जारी मास्टर परिपत्र संख्या 08/MC/2026 (024/VGL/017-8) दिनांकित 27.07.2026 जो कि अनुशासनात्मक कार्रवाई समय पर शुरू करने और उसे पूरा करने के बारे में मास्टर सर्कुलर के संबंध में है, की प्रति, अग्रेषित करने का निदेश हुआ है।

The undersigned is directed to forward herewith a copy of Master Circular No. 08/MC/2026 (024/VGL/017-8) dated 27.07.2026 regarding Master Circular on Timely Initiation and Finalisation of Disciplinary Action.

कृपया इसे सभी संबंधितों को जानकारी तथा अनुपालन हेतु संज्ञान में लाएं।

This may be brought to the notice of all concerned for their information and compliance.


(रजनी शाह)

सतर्कता अधिकारी

संलग्न: उपरोक्त

Encl.: As above.

To:

1. सभी निफ्ट केंद्र निदेशक /Campus Directors of all NIFT Campuses
2. निदेशक (मुख्यालय) / Director (Head Office)
3. पंजीयक (मुख्यालय) / Registrar (Head Office)
4. उप-निदेशक (आई. टी.), निफ्ट मुख्यालय / Deputy Director (IT), NIFT-HO – for uploading the same on Website



सत्यमेव जयते

केंद्रीय सतर्कता आयोग
CENTRAL VIGILANCE COMMISSION



सतर्कता भवन, जी.पी.ओ. कॉम्प्लेक्स,
ब्लॉक-ए, आई.एन.ए., नई दिल्ली-110023
Satarkta Bhawan, G.P.O. Complex,
Block A, INA, New Delhi-110023

सं./ No. 024/VGL/017-8

दिनांक / Dated 27.07.2026

Master Circular No. : 08/MC/2026

Subject: Master Circular on Timely Initiation and Finalisation of Disciplinary Action.

The Central Vigilance Commission as part of its mandate of effective superintendence over the vigilance administration of the organisations covered under its advisory jurisdiction, has issued a number of guidelines, circulars etc. from time to time, about the procedure for timely initiation and finalisation of disciplinary action.

2. The Commission, in order to ensure ease of reference about the procedure for timely initiation and finalisation of disciplinary action, has consolidated, updated and revised the earlier guidelines, circulars etc. issued by it on the above mentioned subject. The same have been compiled in the form of Master Circular No 08/MC/2026 titled '**Timely Initiation and Finalisation of Disciplinary Action**' which is enclosed to this Office Memorandum. With the issuance of this Master Circular, all earlier guidelines, circulars etc. issued by the Commission on the above mentioned subject, stand superseded.

3. The Commission welcomes suggestions and inputs on the Master Circular. Any communication or clarifications sought in this regard may be addressed to 'The Secretary, Central Vigilance Commission'.

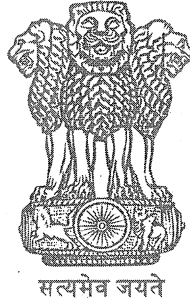
4. This Master Circular is available on the website of the Commission, i.e. www.cvc.gov.in under the head 'Publications' and sub-head 'Master Circulars'.

Encl: As above.

(Trishaljit Sethi)
Secretary

To

- (i) The Secretaries of all Ministries/Departments of GoI
- (ii) All Chief Executives of Central Public Sector Enterprises / Public Sector Banks / Public Sector Insurance Companies / Autonomous Bodies etc.
- (iii) All CVOs of Ministries / Departments of GoI / CPSEs / Public Sector Banks / Public Sector Insurance Companies / Autonomous Bodies etc.
- (iv) Website of Central Vigilance Commission.



Master Circular No. : 08/MC/2026

**MASTER CIRCULAR
ON
TIMELY INITIATION AND FINALISATION
OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION**



CENTRAL VIGILANCE COMMISSION

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Timely Initiation and Finalisation of Disciplinary Action

SHORT TITLE, APPLICABILITY AND COMMENCEMENT

This circular shall be referred to as the 'Master Circular on Timely Initiation and Finalisation of Disciplinary Action'. This circular shall be applicable to all ministries, departments and organisations of the Central Government covered under the jurisdiction of the Central Vigilance Commission (hereinafter called as the Commission) and shall come into effect from the date of its issuance.

2. PURPOSE

This circular is being issued in supersession of all earlier circulars / guidelines / office orders / letters etc. issued by the Commission from time to time regarding Timely Initiation and Finalisation of Disciplinary Action and is aimed at bringing clarity about the same.

3.0 IMPORTANCE OF TIMELY ACTION

Principles of natural justice demand that disciplinary proceedings are finalised in an expeditious manner. Delay may cause undue harassment and demoralization of an innocent official, who, at the end of the disciplinary proceedings, may be exonerated of the charge(s) framed against him. Delay also enables the guilty official to evade punitive action for a longer period of time. On the other hand, delay in completion of proceedings acts as a disincentive for other officials in the organisation. Hence, it is important that disciplinary proceedings, once instituted, are completed within the prescribed time frame.

3.1 The Commission has observed that in some cases, the prescribed time limit is not being adhered to by the authorities concerned in completion of disciplinary proceedings. Inordinate delay on the part of authorities concerned has also attracted adverse comments from courts and tribunals and has also led to quashing of the charge-sheet(s) on the sole ground of unexplained delay in handling of disciplinary cases. The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in its judgement dated 16.12.2015¹ has inter alia observed as under:-

¹ Judgment dated 16.12.2015, in Civil Appeal No. 958 of 2010, titled Prem Nath Bali Vs. Registrar, High Court of Delhi & Anr.

"One cannot dispute in this case that the suspension period was unduly long. We also find that the delay in completion of the departmental proceedings was not wholly attributable to the appellant, but it was equally attributable to the respondents as well. Due to such unreasonable delay, the appellant naturally suffered a lot because he and his family had to survive only on suspension allowance for a long period of 9 years.

We are constrained to observe as to why the departmental proceedings, which involved only one charge and that too uncomplicated, have taken more than 9 years to conclude the departmental inquiry. No justification was forthcoming from the respondents' side to explain the undue delay in completion of the departmental inquiry except to throw blame on the appellant's conduct which we feel was not fully justified.

Time and again, this Court has emphasized that it is the duty of the employer to ensure that the departmental inquiry initiated against the delinquent employee is concluded within the shortest possible time by taking priority measures. In cases where the delinquent is placed under suspension during the pendency of such inquiry then it becomes all the more imperative for the employer to ensure that the inquiry is concluded in the shortest possible time to avoid any inconvenience, loss and prejudice to the rights of the delinquent employee.

As a matter of experience, we often notice that after completion of the inquiry, the issue involved therein does not come to an end because if the findings of the inquiry proceedings have gone against the delinquent employee, he invariably pursues the issue in Court to ventilate his grievance, which again consumes time for its final conclusion.

Keeping these factors in mind, we are of the considered opinion that every employer (whether State or private) must make sincere endeavour to conclude the departmental inquiry proceedings once initiated against the delinquent employee within a reasonable time by giving priority to such proceedings and as far as possible it should be concluded within six months as an outer limit. Where it is not possible for the employer to conclude due to certain unavoidable causes arising in the proceedings within the time frame, then efforts should be made to conclude within reasonably extended period depending upon the cause and the nature of inquiry but not more than a year."

4.0 MODEL TIME SCHEDULE FOR CONDUCTING INVESTIGATION AND SUBSEQUENT DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

4.1 It is important that the various stages from receipt of complaint to issuance of final orders are completed within the specified time limit so that a case involving misconduct of any kind is brought to its logical conclusion without any delay. To ensure timely action, the following model time schedule is advised for processing of complaints and subsequent possible actions:-

S No	Stage of Investigation or Disciplinary Action	Time Limit
1	Decision by CVO regarding involvement of vigilance angle in a complaint and further action, that is: a) To be forwarded to Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) b) To be taken up for investigation by vigilance unit c) To be sent to the authority concerned (within the organisation) for necessary action d) To be filed	Within 02 months ¹ from the date of receipt of complaint in vigilance unit.
2	Conducting investigation and submission of report (I&R).	03 months ²
3	Approaching the Commission for First Stage Advice (FSA)	01 month from the date of submission of investigation report.
4	Forwarding comments of Competent Authority (CA) on CBI's report to the Commission for advice, if required.	03 weeks from the date of receipt of CBI's report by the CA.
5	Reconsideration of Commission's FSA	02 months from the date of receipt of advice of the Commission.
6	Issue of Charge Sheet, receipt of defense statement and appointment of Inquiry Officer (IO) and Presenting Officer (PO), if required.	02 months from the date of receipt of FSA of the Commission.
7	Issue of Charge Sheet and appointment of IO and PO, in those cases where advice of the Commission is not required.	The time period as may be specified in the Conduct, Discipline and Appeal (CDA) Rules of the organisation concerned, may be followed.

¹[02 months' time limit would include the time for seeking / obtaining confirmation from the complainant, if required.]

²In respect of complaints forwarded by the Commission for investigation and report, the time limit as may be specified by the Commission, shall be adhered to.



8	Issue of final orders in cases where Minor Penalty charge-sheet has been issued.	02 months from the receipt of defence statement.
9	Conducting departmental inquiry and submission of report.	06 months from the date of appointment of IO ¹ .
10	Disciplinary Authority (DA) to form a tentative view on IO's report and provide to the Charged Officer (CO), a copy of IO's report along with other relevant documents and reasons for disagreement with IO's findings, if any, for obtaining CO's representation.	Within 15 days of receipt of IO's report.
11	Consideration of CO's representation and issuance of final orders.	Within 01 month from the date of receipt of representation ² .

4.2 At Sl. No. 9 of the table given in Para 4.1 of this circular, a time period of 06 months has been advised for conducting departmental inquiry and submission of report by the Inquiry Officer (IO). The bifurcation of the 06 months' period into different stages of departmental inquiry is given in the following table:-

Stage of Departmental Inquiry	Time Limit prescribed
• Fixing date of preliminary hearing, inspection of listed documents, submission of list of Defence Documents (DD) / Defence Witnesses (DW) and nomination of a Defence Assistant (if not already nominated)	Within 04 weeks from the date of appointment of IO
• Inspection of Relied Upon Documents (RUDs) / Examination of relevancy of DDs / DWs, procuring additional documents and submission of certificates confirming inspection of additional documents by CO / DA • Issue of summons to witness(es), fixing date of Regular Hearing (RH), arrangement for participation of witness(es) in RH and conducting RH on day-to-day basis	03 months
• Submission of the written brief by PO to CO / IO	15 days
• Submission of the written brief by CO to IO	15 days
• Submission of Inquiry Report from the date of receipt of written brief from CO	30 days

¹ In respect of cases where the advice of the Commission has been obtained, the total time taken from the stage of issuance of charge-sheet to submission of inquiry report by the IO, should not exceed a period of 09 months from the date of receipt of Commission's advice.

² Department of Personnel & Training's (DoPT) OM No. 372/3/2007 AVD-III (Vol. 10) dated 14.10.2013, prescribes that "all Ministries / Departments shall ensure that all major penalty proceedings against government servants under their control are completed and final orders are passed by the concerned Disciplinary Authority within 18 months from the date of delivery of charge-sheet on the delinquent government servant".

4.3 In case, in the Conduct, Discipline and Appeal (CDA) / Service Rules or Regulations of any organisation, the schedule for conducting departmental inquiry is different from the schedule as mentioned in Paras 4.1 and 4.2 above, the organisation's rules / regulations may be followed, otherwise the time limit as prescribed in Paras 4.1 and 4.2 above may be followed.

5.0 REDUCING DELAY IN CONDUCTING DISCIPLINARY ACTION

5.1 The Commission has observed that some of the factors contributing to the delay in disciplinary action are as follows:-

- (i) faulty charge-sheets;
- (ii) delay in inspection of original or certified documents;
- (iii) non-availability of listed or additional documents;
- (iv) frequent adjournments, non-attendance of witness(es), especially private witness(es);
- (v) laxity on the part of the IO;
- (vi) frequent change of IO / Presenting Officer (PO); and
- (vii) lack of monitoring of cases by the Disciplinary Authority (DA) & the CVO.

5.2 In order to plug these loopholes and to ensure that there is no undue delay in processing disciplinary matters, the following steps need to be ensured by the authorities:-

- (i) In order to ensure timely progress of inquiry proceedings, the authorities concerned should establish a proper mechanism for safe custody of the documents that may be required during the inquiry proceedings.
- (ii) At the time of drafting the charge-sheet, it needs to be ensured that all the Relied Upon Documents (RUDs), as well as copies of relevant rules / instructions are available with the CVO / DA.
- (iii) As per extant instructions, while the CBI can pursue the prosecution cases in the courts, simultaneous departmental disciplinary action is also permissible. In case it is decided to hold departmental inquiry, in addition to criminal proceedings, it is the responsibility of the CVO / DA to obtain legible, certified copies of all those required documents from CBI, which have been seized by it, before issuing the charge-sheet. The departmental authorities may also make efforts to keep attested copies of the documents at the time of seizure by CBI, for meeting the organisations' requirement.



- (iv) It should also be ensured that the required documents / certified copies of the same are made available to the PO, immediately after his appointment, so that the same can be produced during the course of departmental inquiry, as and when required.
- (v) As far as practicable, the IO should be chosen from amongst the serving / retired officers at the same station where the Charged Officer (CO) is posted.
- (vi) It may be ensured that the same IO continues to conduct inquiry, even after his transfer or promotion, till the inquiry report is submitted by him. In case of transfer of the IO to a new station, either his transfer orders may be given effect after submission of the Inquiry Report or digital mode / video conferencing may be resorted to for conduct / continuation of the departmental inquiry. However, in case of unavoidable circumstances, the IO may be allowed to visit the earlier station for conducting the ongoing inquiry. Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT), vide their Office Memorandum (OM) dated 15.09.2017¹ and 05.08.2020² has also issued guidelines in this regard.
- (vii) It may also be ensured that a person who is due to retire shortly i.e. within a period of 01 year, is not appointed as IO. In case the departmental inquiry gets delayed due to any reason and the IO retires before submission of Inquiry Report, his continuation as IO may be considered even after his retirement, subject to his willingness and other conditions applicable to the appointment of retired officials as IOs.
- (viii) DoPT's OM dated 15.09.2017¹ and dated 16.11.2022³ regarding empanelment of retired officers as IO and grant of honorarium to IOs / POs may also be kept in view.
- (ix) It may be ensured that the PO is also appointed simultaneously, along with the appointment of the IO.
- (x) Change of IO / PO should be resorted to only in exceptional cases. In those cases, where departmental action has been initiated on the advice of the Commission, the Commission should also be kept informed about the change of IO / PO.

¹ DoPT OM No. 142/40/2015-AVD.I dated 15.09.2017 on the subject "Procedure for empanelment of retired officers as the Inquiry Officers for conducting Departmental Inquiries", refers, which may have been amended from time to time.

² DoPT OM No. 11012/03/2020-Estt.A-III dated 05.08.2020 on the subject "Completion of Disciplinary proceeding through Video Conferencing in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic", refers, which may have been amended from time to time.

³ DoPT's OM No. 1668597747466 dated 16.11.2022 on the subject "Grant of Honorarium to Inquiry Officers / Presenting Officers in the departmental inquiries conducted by the Ministries / Departments", refers, which may have been amended from time to time.

- (xi) Before appointment of an official as PO, continued availability of the official concerned during the course of departmental inquiry needs to be ensured. In extreme cases where the transfer is unavoidable, efforts should be made to complete the inquiry proceedings as expeditiously as possible. It should also be kept in view that, to the extent possible, an official of appropriate seniority, with reference to the status of the CO, is appointed as the PO.
- (xii) In a case involving more than one CO, as far as practically possible, same IO / PO should be appointed against all COs.
- (xiii) Copies of relevant Rules / Regulations / Instructions etc. must be readily available with the PO. The organisation should also ensure online availability of all rules / regulations / instructions etc. so that the same can be downloaded without any loss of time, if required, during the inquiry.
- (xiv) It may be ensured that the Defence Documents (DDs) are made available within the time limit allowed by the IO. Responsibility should be fixed on the custodian of such documents for any undue delay / non-production or for the loss of the required documents.
- (xv) The IO should normally conduct Regular Hearing (RH) on a day-to-day basis. He should not normally grant more than one adjournment for appearance of witness(es).
- (xvi) It may be endeavoured that all the Prosecution or Defence Witnesses (DW) are summoned and examined in separate but simultaneous batches expeditiously.
- (xvii) In those cases, where lack of integrity is a charge or a part of the charges and where the witness(es) try to evade appearance before the IO, the provisions of the Departmental Inquiries (Enforcement of Attendance of witness(es) and Production of Documents) Act, 1972 may be invoked to enforce attendance of the witness(es). Under this Act, the IO is conferred with the powers of a Civil Court to summon witness(es)/document(s) and such summons are to be served through a District Judge. As per the provisions of this Act of 1972, the authorisation to summon can be issued only by the Central Government. Hence, wherever required, a proposal should be made to the Central Government by the IO concerned for issue of a notification under this Act of 1972, conferring the powers of the Civil Court upon him.
- (xviii) The IO should, as far as practicable, desist from allowing interlocutory documents as additional documents sought by the CO or PO during the deposition of witness(es).
- (xix) It may be ensured that the time-limit for various stages of departmental inquiry, as indicated in Para 4.2 of this circular, are followed by the IO & PO.



- (xx) In case the CO does not co-operate in the matter of attendance, production of document(s), witness(es) etc., IO may, after affording reasonable opportunity, may proceed ex-parte and submit the report, based on facts, document(s), witness(es) etc. produced before him.
- (xxi) In case the PO fails to attend the hearing, fails to produce document(s), witness(es) in a timely manner, the IO after affording reasonable opportunity, may proceed ex-parte and submit the report, based on facts, documents, witness(es) etc. produced before him. The matter may also be brought to the notice of the CA for initiation of action against the PO.
- (xxii) Where, the DA decides to remit the case back to the IO for further inquiry and submitting a report, as far as possible, the case should be remitted back to the same IO, who had conducted the inquiry earlier.

5.3 The IO is required to submit a monthly report to the DA concerned, indicating the present status / progress of the inquiry / inquiries being conducted by him. A copy of the monthly report should also be endorsed by the IO to the CVO of the organisations concerned. The report should be submitted by the IO latest by 10th day of the succeeding month. A copy of the format in which the information is to be submitted by the IO is enclosed as Annexure-I to this circular.

5.4 In case, it is found that the inquiry proceedings are getting delayed beyond the prescribed time limit, the CVO should immediately take up the matter with the respective IO and DA to ensure timely completion of the same.

5.5 One of the reasons contributing to delay in completion of departmental inquiry may be refusal / reluctance of the retired official(s) or private person(s) to appear as prosecution or defence witness(es) due to non-payment or delay in payment of Travelling Allowance (TA) / Daily Allowance (DA) to them. The authority concerned in each organisation is required to ensure timely payment of Travelling Allowance / Daily Allowance to the retired official(s) or private person(s) appearing as prosecution or defence witness(es) in a departmental inquiry. Ministry of Finance has also issued guidelines in this regard¹.

¹Ministry of Finance U.O. Note 3221-E IV(B)/61 dated 20.11.1961 and O.M. No. F.5(15) F.IV (B)/68 dated 15.09.1969 relating to payment of TA / DA to private persons / retired employees appearing as prosecution or defence witness(es) in departmental inquiries, refers, which may have been amended from time to time.

5.6 In order to enable the Commission to examine the cases received by it in a comprehensive manner and to tender advice expeditiously, it is important that the cases forwarded to the Commission are complete in all respects and in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Commission in 'Master Circular No. 06/MC/2026 Procedure for Obtaining and Implementing the advice of the Central Vigilance Commission'.

5.7 All pending cases of departmental inquiries are to be reviewed at regular intervals by the CVO and the DA concerned in each organisation to ensure that the proceedings are completed / finalised expeditiously. The DA and CVO should ensure that the disciplinary actions are completed within the prescribed time limit as laid down in Hon'ble Supreme Court's judgement dated 16.12.2015¹, as also mentioned in Para 4.2 of this circular.

5.8 In a case, where undue delay is observed on the part of IO, the authority concerned may not hesitate to take appropriate action against the IO, as per the prescribed procedure.

5.9 It may be noted that the responsibility of bringing the disciplinary proceedings to a logical conclusion, including implementation of the First Stage Advice (FSA) / Second Stage Advice (SSA) of the Commission, rests with the administrative authorities. Hence, administrative authorities would be required to explain delays, beyond prescribed time limit, in issuance of orders for implementation of the advice of the Commission. The Commission may recommend adverse action against the authorities concerned found responsible for any unexplained delay observed in a particular case. DoPT has also issued instructions in this regard².

5.10 It may be noted that the responsibility of monitoring the timelines for finalization of disciplinary proceedings and ensuring adherence to the same has also been given to the CVO. DoPT has also issued guidelines in this regard³.

¹ Supreme Court judgement dated 16.12.2015 in Civil Appeal No. 958 of 2010, titled Prem Nath Bali Vs. Registrar, High Court of Delhi & Anr., refers.

² DoPT's O.M. No. 11013/2/2004-Estt.(A) dated the 16th February 2004 on the subject "Accountability for delay in decision making", refers, which may have been amended from time to time.

³ DoPT's OM No. 425/04/2012-AVD-IV(A) dated 29.11.2012 on the subject "Guidelines for monitoring and expeditious disposal of the disciplinary proceeding cases", refers, which may have been amended from time to time.



6.0 PETITIONS OF BIAS BY CHARGED OFFICERS

6.1 One of the main reasons noticed for delay in disciplinary proceedings is that, the CO, during the course of departmental inquiry, raises concerns of bias against the IO and the inquiry proceedings are stayed till the disposal of the bias petition by the Competent Authority. Para 4 of DoPT's OM dated 09.11.1972¹ also provides that *'whenever an application is moved by a Government servant against whom disciplinary proceedings are initiated under the CCS (CCA) Rules against the inquiry officer on grounds of bias, the proceedings should be stayed and the application referred, along with the relevant material, to the appropriate reviewing authority for considering the application and passing appropriate orders thereon'*.

6.2 It may be noted that as per Rule 22 (iii) of Central Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) [CCS (CCA)] Rules, 1965 and Rule 15 of All India Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1969 *'no appeal shall lie against any order passed by an inquiring authority in the course of inquiry'*.

6.3 Hence, while considering the bias petition in accordance with the provisions contained in DoPT's OM dated 09.11.1972, the provisions of Rule 22 (iii) of CCS (CCA) Rules, 1965 and Rule 15 of All India Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1969 may also be kept in mind. In order to ensure that there is no undue delay in completion of disciplinary proceedings due to the bias petition, the Competent Authority may dispose off the bias petition expeditiously, preferably within a period of 30 days, while observing the principles of natural justice.

6.4 Railway Board have issued guidelines / clarifications² regarding handling of a bias petition. The organisations may consider the guidelines issued by Railway Board for adoption, with suitable modifications / changes as may be deemed appropriate.

7.0 UNIFORMITY IN LEVELS OF PROCESSING OF VIGILANCE CASES

7.1 Another reason for delay in disciplinary proceedings is that the levels of examination / processing of vigilance matters are more than required number of levels. The levels of processing of vigilance matters in different organisations also lack uniformity.

¹DoPT's OM No. 39/40/70-Ests-A dated 09.11.1972 on the subject 'Departmental Inquiries against Government servants - appointment of Inquiring Authority', refers, which may have been amended from time to time.

²Railway Board's letter No. E (D&A) 2022 RG6-12 dated 27.12.2022 on the subject 'Inquiry under Railway Servants (Discipline & Appeal Rules), 1968- Appointment of Inquiry Authority-clarification', refers, which may have been amended from time to time.

7.2 It may be noted that Department of Administration Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG) have issued guidelines¹ prescribing that "each ministry / department shall review the instructions on levels of disposal and channels of submission keeping in view that the number of levels shall not exceed four by delegating powers to lower formation".

7.3 In order to avoid delay in vigilance matters, the organisations concerned should review the levels of processing of such matters and should bring down the levels to a maximum of four. The limit of four levels would be applicable to each administrative unit separately, in the hierarchy of the organisation. In this regard, each organisation may take the following steps:

- (i) Delaying
- (ii) Adoption of Desk Officer System in Vigilance Wing.
- (iii) Delegation of powers, wherever possible (with due approval), to ensure limiting the steps / layers for decision making to four, including merger of levels.

8.0 EXPEDITIOUS ACTION IN RESPECT OF OFFICIALS DUE TO RETIRE

8.1 During investigation and subsequent disciplinary actions, as may be required, due attention should be paid to the date of superannuation of the Suspected Public Servant (SPS) / CO to ensure that all required actions are completed before the retirement of such officials. In case, the CDA Rules of an organisation do not provide for continuance of disciplinary action or for imposition of penalty after retirement / superannuation, any disciplinary action, if initiated, but not completed before retirement, would become infructuous.

8.2 It is impressed upon the authorities that in respect of officials due to retire shortly, they need to ensure conduct of investigations and completion of disciplinary proceedings well in advance. All such retirement cases should be forwarded to the Commission for obtaining its advice in such a manner that the cases are received in the Commission at least 30 days before the date of retirement of the SPS.

9. TRAINING TO IOs AND POs

It may also be kept in view that in order to ensure timely and smooth completion of disciplinary proceedings, training needs to be imparted to prospective and existing IOs and POs. This will also help in creating a pool of trained IOs and POs in the organisations. For IOs / POs who are serving public servants, timely completion of departmental proceedings by them needs to be given due weightage / cognizance by

¹DARPG's OM No. 30011/12/2015-O&M-PL1 (6452) dated 12.03.2021, refers, which may have been amended from time to time.



the reporting/reviewing officers, in the APARs of such IOs / POs¹.

10. REFERRING CASES TO UPSC FOR ADVICE

Deficiencies in cases being referred to the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) for obtaining its advice is another reason for unwarranted delay in finalization of disciplinary cases. The authority concerned in each organistaion should ensure that the cases referred to UPSC for advice are in the prescribed format and are complete in all respects, so that the cases may not be returned by UPSC without tending advice. DoPT's OM dated 10.05.2011 also refers in this regard².

¹ DoPT's OM No. 11012/3612023-PPA-111 dated 1.10.2023 on the subject "Requirement of completing/clearing a course related to procedural steps for holding Disciplinary Proceedings! Departmental Inquiries by Inquiring Authorities (IAs)/Inquiry Officers (IOs), on iGOT Karmayogi Platform", refers, which may have been amended from time to time.

² DoPT's OM No. 39035/01/2011-Estt. (B) dated 10.05.2011 on the subject "Departmental proceedings against Government servants - consultation with the Union Public Service Commission for advice", refers, which may have been amended from time to time.



Annexure-I

Name of Inquiry Officer.....Report for the Month of.....

S. No.	Name and Designation of CO	Date of appointment of IO	Date of Preliminary Hearing	Whether Brief Hearing required. If Yes, date of Brief Hearing	No. of Regular Hearings held till the end of the month	Dates of Regular Hearing(s)	Date of submission of PO's Brief	Date of submission of Defense Brief	Date of submission of IO's report	Time taken since appointment as IO (up to the stage inquiry has progressed so far)	Whether time limit given in Para 4.2 of this circular is being adhered to. if not, reasons thereof
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Signature of Inquiry Officer

To,

Disciplinary Authority

Copy to: - Chief Vigilance Officer

Note -Report to be submitted by IO by 10th day of every month to DA with copy to CVO.

**ACRONYM / ABBREVIATION**

Acronym	Full Form
APARs	Annual Performance Assessment Reports
CA	Competent Authority
CBI	Central Bureau of Investigation
CCS (CCA) Rules	Central Civil Services (Classification, Control & Appeal) Rules
CDA Rules	Conduct, Discipline & Appeal Rules
CO	Charged Officer
CVO	Chief Vigilance Officer
DA	Disciplinary Authority
DARPG	D/o Administration reforms & Public Grievances
DD	Defence Documents
DOPT	Department of Personnel & Training
DW	Defence Witnesses
FSA	First Stage Advice
IO	Inquiry Officers
I&R	Investigation & Report
OM	Office Memorandum
PO	Presenting Officer
RH	Regular Hearing
RUD	Relied Upon Documents
SPS	Suspected Public Servant
SSA	Second Stage Advice
TA/DA	Traveling Allowance/ Daily Allowance
UPSC	Union Public Service Commission