

Copy of Punjab Government Circular letter No. 3574-G 48/35863, dated 5th July, 1948 from the Chief Secretary to Government, Punjab addressed to all Heads of Departments, etc., etc.

Subject :—Efficiency Bars

Gazette

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To ensure uniformity of action by different Departments in the matter of stoppage of officers at efficiency bars, Governments consider it necessary to lay down certain general principals for the guidance of all concerned.

2. The crossing of an efficiency bars is to be distinguished from the earning of an annual increment. In the case of the annual increment, onus is on the authority to show cause why it should be withheld; in the case of crossing a bar the onus is on the official, tacitly or otherwise, to show cause why he should cross it.

3. Crossing of an efficiency bar amounts to promotion stoppage at one is a form of punishment under Rule 49 of the Civil Service (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules or Rule 14.10 of Civil Services Rules (Punjab) Volume I (Part I). It is, however, not necessary, before it is decided to stop an officer at a bar to inform him in writing of the grounds on which it is proposed to take such action. The order is, however, appealable accordingly as the officer concerned is a member of the All-India or Provincial and Subordinate Service and it is desirable that every case should be scrutinised carefully by the Head of the Department and good reason given in support of an order of stoppage.

4. As the efficiency of a service depends to a great extent on the quality of the officials at the top, it is essential that each case is dealt with care and that the passing of an efficiency bar is not regarded as a mere matter of formality.

Broadly speaking, efficiency and honesty should, taken together, be the deciding factors. These factors do not always hang together, on the contrary, a dishonest officer is more often efficient than otherwise while an honest officer may not necessarily be efficient.

5. There are usually two bars in every time-scale, the first at the stage when an officer may be considered as ceasing to be a 'Junior' and as fit to perform satisfactorily the ordinary duties of his service, and the second at the stage when he becomes a 'Senior' and may be expected to be fit to perform any of the duties which the service is called upon to undertake. No particular difficulty should arise with regard to the first bar, and in respect of this bar, Government only desire to lay down that no officer should be allowed to pass this bar until he has proved himself competent to perform satisfactorily the ordinary duties of his service.

6. The second bar presents greater difficulty, and it is clear that, in the absence of definite instructions as to the standard required, number of officers, who are not fit to perform the highest duties that could be allotted to them in their service, have been nevertheless allowed to rise to the highest pay in the ordinary scale. Government consider that in future no officer should be allowed to cross the second and final bar unless he is adjudged fit to be placed in charge of the full duties attaching to the heavier charges which officers of his rank can be called upon to fill. Heads of Departments will be able to fix in their minds the standard charge which each grade of officer should be expected to be able to fill before passing the bar but in each case it should be remembered that the charge should be one which an officer can be called upon to fill in the ordinary course of duties of his grade.

7. While Heads of Departments are required to exercise their judgement and discretion in each case, the following instructions will be helpful and should be kept in view.

- (1) The efficiency bars must be real, and recommendations for passing them should not be given as a matter of course to those Government servants who just manage to avoid getting into trouble.
- (2) For the purpose of crossing the efficiency bars, Government servants will broadly fall into three divisions as below and their case will be dealt with as explained

(b) **Fair**—Are those who secure at least 50 per cent good reports. They should not be permitted to cross the bar unless the head of department is satisfied, on a careful study of the record, that they merit promotion and give promise of satisfactorily filling the heavier charges in the grade.

(c) **Poor**—Are the remainder, and they will not be permitted to cross the bar.

8. Heads of Departments while considering each case on the basis of the above classification should take into account the severity or leniency of the officers whose reports are under consideration and the nature of the work on which the Government servant was employed.

9. Stoppage at an efficiency bar should be for general bad work and inefficiency continued over several years and not for one or two lapses for which ordinary stoppage of increment (with or without future effect) should be the punishment.

10. As there is at present no definite provision for periodical review of orders stopping Government servants at efficiency bars, Government consider that there should be such a provision and have accordingly decided that cases of stoppage at efficiency bar should be reviewed at the expiration of the period of one year from the date of the order, and, if necessary, at the same interval thereafter. In the case of a officer who is stopped at the bar by the Provincial Government, the most convenient procedure would be at the time of the passing of the order, to ask for a special report on his work at the end of one year or to require his superior officers to deal with the matter in the annual confidential report on him.

11. The procedure for giving effect to the orders regarding the review of cases of officers of services other than the provincial services is left to the Head of the Department to settle.

12. These instructions supersede all previous instructions whether Departmental or general on the subject.