

Copy of Circular letter No. 12277-V(1)-59/13470, dated the 10th December, 1959, from the Secretary to Government, Punjab, Vigilance Department, addressed to all Heads of Departments, Registrar, Punjab High Court, etc.

Subject :—Departmental enquiries—time-limit.

I am directed to say, that the question of prescribing some time-limit to complete processes of investigation and enquiry in departmental proceedings came up for discussion in the Conference of Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners etc. held at Simla in September, 1959.

2. Government feels that officials are often harassed by the length of time taken to complete the processes of investigation and enquiry even in cases, which do not eventually result in a charge-sheet, often the official concerned is subjected to anxiety by the knowledge that an investigation is proceeding against him. Government accordingly realise that there should be a very strict limit to the time an official is subjected to such process..

3. In this background, keeping in view practical considerations, as far as possible, Government have taken the following decisions:—

- (1) The whole process of investigation and enquiry should be completed within six months (excluding period of reference to the Public Service Commission and period where proceedings are stopped owing to a reference to a court of law).
- (2) An extension of the period by another three months may be obtained under the orders of the Minister-in-charge.
- (3) If extension beyond nine months (i.e. period (i) and (ii) above, is needed, full facts and justification must be placed before the Cabinet and their approval taken.
- (4) I am to request that these instructions may be kept in view by all concerned for strict observance.
- (5) This supersedes all the previous instructions on the subject.