

Copy of letter No. 921—GII—60, dated 4.2.1960 from the Chief Secretary to Government,
Punjab to all Heads of Departments etc. etc.

Subject :—Circumventing immediate Superior Officers by Government employees.

I am directed to invite a reference to Punjab Government circular letter No. 2247—AUI—59/36366, dated the 20th/24th November, 1959, in which it has been made clear that decisions should be allowed to be made at the lowest level empowered and authorised to make these and it should normally be left to processes of appeal and representation available to the parties concerned to get such decisions reconsidered. There is, however, a growing tendency among Government servants at all levels to feel that they are able to circumvent their superiors at various stages of the hierarchy and thus flout their authority. This matter was discussed in the Conference of Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners held at Simla in September, 1959. Government has decided that persons in Government service should accept the authority and control of their immediate superiors subject of course to any rights of appeal and representation available to them under the rules.

2. With a view to counteract this tendency further, Government would suggest the adoption of a strict convention that the Civil Services, through authority set up for this purpose in the various Departments, should have final control on all matters of discipline, promotion, transfer etc., for employees who are below district level, both officers and officials. In regard to personnel at or above district level, Government should exercise the necessary functions, normally on the advice of the relevant Secretariat. The suitable level in the Secretariat would be below Deputy Secretary and a corresponding level should be defined for other headquarters offices. It should, however, be made clear that the idea is not to create new rule-making or disciplinary authorities, but to ensure as a matter of executive practice that the authorities empowered under the rules or executive instructions to deal with matters of discipline, promotion transfer etc., are in fact left effectively in charge of them and the higher authorities should not generally interfere. It should also be stated that it would not mean depriving Government of any powers that it has, but as a broad matter of policy, it would ensure that personnel below district level are dealt with under orders of officers and personnel at or above district level, under orders of the Government.

3. These instructions should be brought to the notice of all Government working under you for strict observance.