

Forms of Correspondences

The following types of correspondences are used in Government and Department.

- (i) Letter;
- (ii) Proceedings (Government Order);
- (iii) Official Memorandum;
- (iv) Circular;
- (v) Demi-Official Letter;
- (vi) Un-Official Note;
- (vii) Notification;

Each one of the above forms has a use and in some instances a phraseology of its own.

Letter

(i) "Letter" form is used for all formal communications to such authorities as Government of India, State Governments or their attached or subordinate offices and other offices, such as the High Court, State Legislature, Public Service Commission, Vigilance Commissioner, Vice-Chancellors of Universities, Public Bodies or Associations of the public or class of employees or Government servants.

(ii) A letter is composed of the following parts;

- (a) Letter head bearing the name of the State Government and that of the Department/Office, PIN, Telephone Number;
- (b) Number and date of communication;
- (c) Designation of the sender;
- (d) Designation of the addressee;
- (e) Salutation;
- (f) Subject;
- (g) Main text of the letter;
- (h) Subscription; and
- (i) Signature and designation of sender

(iii) Official letters emanating from a department of the Secretariat and purporting to convey the views or order of the Government must specifically be expressed to have been written under direction of Government. In case of letters by means of which formal sanction of Government is sought to be communicated or issued, it is necessary to invoke the authority of the Governor by prefixing the

words 'Governor' is pleased to sanction/authorize/approve, etc, to the main text or contents of the sanction.

(iv) Letter addressed to official authorities should begin with the salutation 'Sir' and those addressed to non-official individuals or groups of individuals with 'Dear Sir/Sirs'. Those addressed to firms should begin with the salutation 'Dear Sirs' or 'Gentlemen'. All official letters should terminate with the subscription 'Yours faithfully' followed by the signature and designation of the person signing the letter.

(v) Ordinarily, the letter to the Government of India, is addressed to the Secretary of the appropriate Ministry and if the Ministry has Divisions or departments under it, the name of the Division or department is also written below the name of the Ministry. In the case of other State Governments, the letter is addressed to the Secretary of the Department concerned or to the Chief Secretary, if the name of the department is not known. Generally, letters to the Government of India or other State Governments are to be signed by officers of the rank of Under Secretaries and above, depending upon the importance of the communication.

(vi) The subject wherever necessary should be indicated clearly in suitable words, which will be in the nature of an index to the contents, and reference to previous communication may also be cited after the subject, and before the main text of the letter.

Proceedings

(i) Decisions of Government or orders of general applicability on questions of policy or other important matters should be communicated, issued or promulgated in the form of 'Proceedings'. The form of proceedings shall be used in the following cases –

- (a) communication containing financial sanction;
- (b) disciplinary proceedings involving imposition of a penalty on a Government servant;
- (c) orders or decision of general applicability on important questions of policy; and
- (d) any other decision of Government considered sufficiently important to warrant such form of communication.

The proceedings shall always be drafted in the third person.

(ii) Proceedings generally consist of –

- (a) letter head bearing the name of the State Government and the department;
- (b) subject matter of the order in suitable words which will be in the nature of an index to the contents of the order;
- (c) number and date of the order;
- (d) “Read’ portion giving the number and date of several previous orders or communications which have been taken into account in formulating the present decision;
- (e) “Preamble” portion referring to the circumstances or requirements or reasons which have actuated the formulation of the proposal;
- (f) the order portion which is the most significant part of the proceedings should be self- explanatory and should clearly indicate the final decision of Government in precise and unambiguous terms so that it should not be necessary to make a reference to the introductory preamble to know the importance of the order;
- (g) the signature of the officer authorized to issue the order along with his name and designation, which shall be in the following form.

“By Order and in the name of the Governor of Karnataka,

(Name)
Designation of the Officer
Authorized to sign.”

- (h) the officers or the persons to whom copies of the proceedings are to be distributed.

(iii) Where an Order is to be issued under any enactment which provides for the making of an Order or Instrument by the State Government, the expression ‘the Government of Karnataka’ should be used in the body of the Order or the Instrument, as the case may be.

Official Memorandum

This form is used for correspondence between the departments of the Secretariat or between a Secretariat department and a Government department not included in the Secretariat Organization or between one Government department and another. This is written in the third person and bears no salutation or subscription except the signature, and designation of the officer signing it. The designation of the addressee is indicated below the signature on the left side of the page.

Circular

The ‘Circular’ differs from the ordinary letter or memorandum in that it is addressed to several departments or persons simultaneously.

Demi-Official Letter

(i) This form is used in correspondence between the Government Officers for an inter-change of communication of opinion or information without the formality of the prescribed procedure and also when it is desired that a matter should receive the personal attention of the individual addressed or when it is intended to bring to the personal notice of an officer a case in which action has been delayed and official reminders have failed to elicit a suitable reply.

In certain cases communication addressed to non-officials may also be in the form of demi-official letters.

(ii) A demi-official communication is addressed personally to an officer by name. It is written in the first person singular in a personal tone with the salutation 'My dear..' or 'Dear' and terminating with 'Yours sincerely'. It is signed by the officer without mentioning his designation.

Un-official Note

(i) Un-official reference can be made in two different ways, namely –

(a) by sending the file itself to the department/office with a note recorded thereon; or

(b) by sending a self-contained note or memorandum;

(ii) This method is generally employed in Secretariat departments (or between a Secretariat department and its attached office) for obtaining the view, comments, etc, of other Secretariat departments on a proposal, obtaining a clarification, etc, of the existing instructions, of requisitioning papers or information, etc. No salutation or complimentary closing words are used in this form. Use of formal letters for communication in between one Department and another is to be avoided;

Notification

Notifications are used by Government only for publishing Rules and orders passed under legal enactments: for making announcement about appointments, postings, transfers, grant of leave, etc, of Gazetted Officers and publishing any matter required to be published in the Gazette under provisions of any Law or Order of Government.

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