Fictional Organisation: Public Officer Policy Handbook

1. Introduction and Scope

1.1 This handbook defines the terms of employment, standards of conduct, and administrative procedures for all personnel employed by the Ministry of Civic Administration. It operates in conjunction with the Public Service (Administration) Order, Government Instruction Manuals (IM), and prevailing national legislation.

1.2 This document applies to all public officers, seconded personnel, and temporary staff. Where specific clauses differ from an officer's individual letter of appointment, the letter of appointment takes precedence.

2. Core Principles of the Public Service

2.1 Officers must uphold the reputation of the public service by adhering to these statutory principles:

- **Integrity:** Officers must act with honesty and ensure that personal interests never conflict with their official duties.
- **Impartiality:** Officers must serve the elected government of the day without political bias and administer public policies fairly.
- **Accountability:** Officers are responsible for their decisions, the accurate reporting of outcomes, and the proper management of public funds.
- **Objectivity:** Officers must base their policy advice and administrative decisions on rigorous analysis, evidence, and established procedure.

3. Code of Conduct and Ethics

3.1 Declaration of Interests

Officers must avoid situations where their personal, financial, or commercial interests intersect with their official duties. Any potential conflict must be declared via the Ministry's HR portal within three working days. This includes declaring investments in companies that bid for Ministry contracts, or relationships with individuals applying for Ministry grants.

3.2 Gifts, Hospitality, and Anti-Corruption

The Ministry operates a strict policy against bribery and corruption, in accordance with the Prevention of Corruption Act.

- Officers must not solicit or accept gifts, hospitality, or any form of inducement from vendors, contractors, or the public.
- If refusing a gift is impractical, culturally insensitive, or causes undue offence, the officer must accept it on behalf of the Ministry and log it in the Gift Register immediately.
- The Ministry will retain the item. If an officer wishes to keep the gift, they must apply for approval and pay its assessed market value.

3.3 Outside Employment and Commercial Activities

Officers must devote their working time to their official duties. Taking up outside employment, consulting work, or running a business (often termed "moonlighting") is strictly prohibited unless written approval is granted by the Permanent Secretary.

3.4 Political Participation

To maintain the impartiality of the civil service, officers are prohibited from:

- Holding membership in any political party or participating in partisan political activities.
- Canvassing on behalf of political candidates.
- Publishing statements or speaking publicly on matters of political controversy.

3.5 Public Comment and Social Media

Officers must not speak to the media or publish articles concerning government policy without prior authorisation from the Corporate Communications Division. This restriction applies to personal social media accounts. Officers must not post content that brings the Ministry or the public service into disrepute.

4. Information Security and Confidentiality

4.1 The Official Secrets Act (OSA)

Officers will routinely handle classified information, structured into Restricted, Confidential, Secret, and Top Secret tiers.

- Unauthorised transmission, copying, or retention of classified material is a criminal offence under the OSA.
- The obligations imposed by the OSA apply permanently and continue after an officer ceases employment with the civil service.

4.2 IT Acceptable Use

Officers must comply with the Government IM on Information Technology.

- Government-issued devices must only be used for official work.
- The use of unauthorised external storage devices (e.g., personal USB drives) on government networks is prohibited.
- Officers must adhere to Internet Surfing Separation (ISS) protocols, ensuring sensitive internal networks remain isolated from external web access.

5. Employment Conditions and Remuneration

5.1 Working Hours

The standard working week is 42 hours. Normal operating hours are 08:30 to 18:00 from Monday to Thursday, and 08:30 to 17:30 on Fridays.

- **Staggered Hours:** Officers may request to shift their start time (e.g., 07:30 to 17:00), subject to their reporting officer's approval and operational continuity.
- **Telecommuting:** Roles that do not require front-line public interaction or the handling of Secret/Top Secret materials may qualify for up to two days of telecommuting per week.

5.2 Salary, CPF, and Bonuses

- **Central Provident Fund (CPF):** The Ministry makes statutory employer contributions to the CPF for all Singapore Citizen and Permanent Resident officers.
- **Annual Wage Supplement (AWS):** A non-pensionable annual supplement, typically equivalent to one month's salary, paid in December.
- **Performance Bonus (PB):** A variable bonus awarded annually in March, determined by the officer's performance appraisal grade and the economic performance of the country.

5.3 Medical Benefits

Officers are enrolled in the Medisave-cum-Subsidised Outpatient (MSO) scheme.

- The Ministry provides an additional monthly Medisave contribution in lieu of comprehensive inpatient insurance.
- Officers receive subsidised outpatient consultations at standard government polyclinics and participating Community Health Assist Scheme (CHAS) clinics.
- A capped annual dental subsidy is available for routine treatments.

6. Leave Entitlements

Leave Category	Entitlement	Conditions
Annual Leave	18 days (rising to 21 after 5 years of service)	Must be cleared within the calendar year; maximum 14 days can be carried forward.
Sick Leave	14 days outpatient, up to 60 days hospitalisation	Requires a Medical Certificate (MC) from a registered medical practitioner.
Maternity Leave	16 weeks full pay	For mothers of Singapore Citizen children.
Paternity Leave	4 weeks full pay	For fathers of Singapore Citizen children.
Childcare Leave	6 days per annum	For parents of a Singapore Citizen child under the age of 7.

Leave Category	Entitlement	Conditions
Compassionate Leave	Up to 3 days per incident	For the critical illness or death of an immediate family member.
National Service (NS)	Full paid leave for statutory duration	For mandatory In-Camp Training (ICT) obligations.

7. Performance and Career Development

7.1 Appraisal System

Performance is assessed on an annual cycle spanning April to March. Officers will have a mid-year review in October and a final appraisal in March. The appraisal evaluates the achievement of specific work targets and the demonstration of core public service competencies.

7.2 Training and Sponsorship

The Ministry mandates a minimum of 100 training hours per financial year.

- Mandatory compliance courses (e.g., cybersecurity, data protection) must be completed within the first 30 days of service.
- Officers may apply for sponsorships or study leave for higher education (e.g., Masters programmes) if the qualification aligns directly with the Ministry's operational needs.

8. Disciplinary Procedures

Failure to comply with this handbook, the Government IM, or the law will result in disciplinary action. The process aligns with the Public Service Commission (PSC) framework:

1. **Administrative Action:** For minor infractions (e.g., isolated lateness), a reporting officer will issue a formal written warning, which remains on the officer’s personnel file for one year.

2. **Formal Investigation:** For serious breaches (e.g., misuse of data, insubordination), the Ministry will convene an internal investigation panel. The officer may be suspended from duty on half-pay during the investigation.

3. **Sanctions:** Proven misconduct can result in financial penalties, a reduction in rank or salary, or dismissal.

4. **Criminal Conduct:** Matters involving corruption, fraud, or breaches of the OSA will be referred directly to the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) or the Singapore Police Force.

9. Separation of Service

9.1 Resignation

Officers must provide written notice of their intention to resign. The standard notice period is one month for executive officers and three months for management and senior leadership roles. Officers must surrender all government-issued equipment and security passes on their final day.

9.2 Retirement

The statutory retirement age is 63. The Ministry offers re-employment contracts to eligible officers up to the age of 68, subject to satisfactory work performance and medical fitness, in accordance with national tripartite guidelines.