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Departmental Order No.J- 05 /2158- General Orders Dated 07-01-2026

In order to streamline, standardize, and strengthen the system of recording notes in official files, the Guidelines on Noting have been prepared. These guidelines contain comprehensive instructions regarding the method and procedure to be followed while noting on files at various levels of the organization.

The guidelines clearly outline the processes, responsibilities, formats, and functional approach to be adopted in the preparation of notes, including the specific duties of Dealing Assistants, Section Incharge, and higher officers; the use of Standard Process Sheets; norms governing electronic file noting in eOffice; and the prescribed procedures relating to oral discussions, confirmation of instructions, and recording of decisions. By promoting clarity, accuracy, accountability, and uniformity, these guidelines aim to enhance the overall efficiency of file management and improve the quality of decision-making within the department.

In continuation of the Departmental Order No.J-268/2158-General Orders dated 25.11.2025, the following instructions regarding the Guidelines on Noting are hereby issued for information and strict compliance by all concerned.

GUIDELINES ON NOTING

1.1 Note:

- (i) A 'Note' is remarks recorded on a case to facilitate its disposal. It includes a precise of previous papers, analysis of issues requiring decision, financial, legal or other implications, if any; suggestions with justifications; final decision along with the authority competent to take the decision.
- (ii) 'Noting' is the process of recording a note on the note sheet of a file. Note is recorded by the 'dealing assistant' and 'other officers' in the hierarchy to facilitate decision making by the 'competent authority'.

1.2 Guidelines for noting:

- (i) All notes shall be recorded on note sheet (Green Sheet).
- (ii) A note is submitted either to seek approval of the competent authority or for information.
- (iii) A note must be concise and to the point. Lengthy notes are to be avoided. 'Verbatim reproduction' of extracts from or paraphrasing of the paper under consideration, fresh receipt, or any other part of correspondence or notes on the same file, should also be avoided. Instead, a summarized version of the issues raised in PUC / FR are to be brought on the note.
- (iv) For effective noting and to decide the quantum of noting, guidelines given on functional approach to noting (Para 1.12) are to be adopted.
- (v) When passing orders or making suggestions, an officer will confine his/her note to the actual points he proposes to make without reiterating the ground already covered in the previous notes. If he/she agrees to the line of action suggested in the preceding note, he/she will merely append his signature. In case, he/she takes a decision different from the one suggested on file, he may do so giving reasons for his decision.
- (vi) Any officer, who has to note upon a file on which a running summary of facts is available will, in drawing attention to the facts of the case, refer to the appropriate part of the summary without repeating it in his own note.
- (vii) Relevant extracts of the provisions of the Act, Rules and / or guidelines will be placed on the file and attention to it will be drawn in the note, rather than reproducing the relevant provisions in the note, unless such an extract on the note is essential to arrive at a decision.
- (viii) Unless a running summary of facts is already available on the file or the last note on the file itself serves that purpose, a self-contained note will be put up with every case submitted to the Head of the Department. Such a note will bring out briefly but clearly the relevant facts.
- (ix) When a paper under consideration raises several major points which require detailed examination and respective orders, each point (or group of related points) will be noted upon separately in sectional notes; such notes will each begin with a list of the major point(s) dealt with therein and placed below the main note in a separate folder.

- (x) If apparent errors or incorrect statements in a case have to be pointed out or if an opinion expressed therein has to be countered, care should be taken to make observations in courteous and temperate language free from personal remarks.
- (xi) Black or blue ink will be used by all category of staff and officers.
- (xii) A note will be divided into serially numbered paragraphs. In case of problem solving or policy cases, paragraphs may have brief titles, if necessary. (See 'Structure of a problem solving & policy case' – para 1.12(4) & 1.12(4)(iii).
- (xiii) Hand written notes should be normally avoided. Notes should be electronically printed if it is half a page or more. Notes are to be printed on both sides of a note sheet.
- (xiv) A small margin of about one inch will be left on all sides (left, right, top and bottom) of each page of the note sheet to ensure better preservation of notes recorded on the files as at times the paper gets torn from the edges making reading of the document difficult.

Box-e.1.1.

Creation of electronic file:

In e-File, electronic file or physical file* (*a file on which file number is created by the system but processing of the file is done physically) is created before recording a note, using appropriate Menu option.

Recording a note in an electronic file:

The inner page of a file has 'Add Green Note' option to record the note, and do the referencing, docketing, etc. 'Yellow note' option is selected to prepare a rough note, which may then be confirmed as a Green note. Details of name etc. of the officer who confirms it will appear in Green note.

It is mandatory for all officers of the rank of Dealing assistants and above or equivalent to use Digital Signature Certificates (DSC) or e-sign for electronically signing the eFiles in eOffice system before forwarding.

DSC are to be procured by offices. For using the e-sign it is required that individual's mobile number is linked to his/her Aadhar Number.

The how part of noting on eFile is available in the User Manual of eOffice at <https://docs.eoffice.gov.in/eFileMU.pdf>.

There are provisions for **standardized one-line quick noting**.

eFile has the facility of delegating access of eFile of a user to another user with complete or restricted rights. There are different kinds of delegation as follows –

Sl. No.	Signatory Delegation	Secretarial Assistance (Personal staff)	Authority Delegation
1.	User to whom charge is delegated have to login using his/her own eOffice account and DSC token	User to whom charge is delegated have to login using his/her own eOffice account and DSC token	User to whom charge is delegated have to login using his/her own eOffice account and DSC token.

2.	User has the Read/ Write/ Send rights of files belonging to the delegated account.	User has the Read (for both physical & electronic) /Write (for both physical & electronic) / Send (only for physical) rights of files belonging to the delegated account.	User has the Read/Write/Send rights of files belonging to the delegated account.
3.	Signature includes the name of both the users' i.e. to whom charge is delegated and the user whose charge is delegated.	Signature includes the name of the user whose charge is delegated.	Signature includes the name of the user to whom charge is delegated.
4.	Movement History contains the name of the delegator as well as delegated person.	Movement History contains the name of the user whose charge is delegated.	Movement History contains the name of the delegator as well as delegated person.
5.	This delegation is always with respect to an officer and not staff. There should be departmental instructions relating to such a provision.	This delegation is with respect to the personal staff attached to the officers.	This delegation is with respect to the link officers designated by the concerned department.

1.3 Examination in Section by Dealing Assistant:

When the line of action on a receipt is obvious or is based on a clear precedent or practice, or has been indicated by a higher officer, and a communication has to issue, a draft will be put up without an elaborate note. In other cases, the Dealing Assistant, while submitting a note on a case, will:

- (i) See whether all the statements, so far as they are open to check, are correct.
- (ii) Point out mistakes, incorrect statements, missing data or information, if any.
- (iii) Obtain the missing and / or correct information from the sources concerned either over phone or using correspondence handling category of functional approach to noting.
- (iv) Furnish other relevant data or information available in the Section / Office, if any.
- (v) Prepare a note based on functional approach to noting (Para 1.12), especially use of standard process sheet.
- (vi) State the issues for consideration and bring out clearly the points requiring decision.
- (vii) Draw attention, if necessary, to the statutory or customary procedure and point out the relevant provisions of the Act, rules, instructions to the given case.

- (viii) Draw attention to precedent(s), if any.
- (ix) Suggest the course of action to be taken with justification(s) along with alternative courses of action for consideration of the competent authority.
- (x) Indicate the authority competent to take decision along with the copy of the delegation of powers.
- (xi) Affix full signature with complete date (dd/mm/yyyy) on the left below the note.
- (xii) Leave space not less than one quarter of a page below the last recorded note in the note sheet of the file, especially when the file is submitted to the Head of the Department.

Box-e.1.2.

In eFile, with every note the dealing officers' signature consisting of his full name and post is appended to the noting along with date and time.

1.4 Examination by Section Incharge:

Examination by Section Incharge will include:

- (i) Check if technique of functional approach to noting (Para 1.12) has been adopted.
- (ii) Consider possibility of using Standard Process Sheet either by using an existing Standard Process Sheet or developing a new one.
- (iii) Evaluate adequacy and relevance of inputs provided.
- (iv) Section Incharge and above are to simply sign, on the right side below the note with date, month and year (dd/mm/yyyy), if they agree with Section note. Else, they are to record their note.

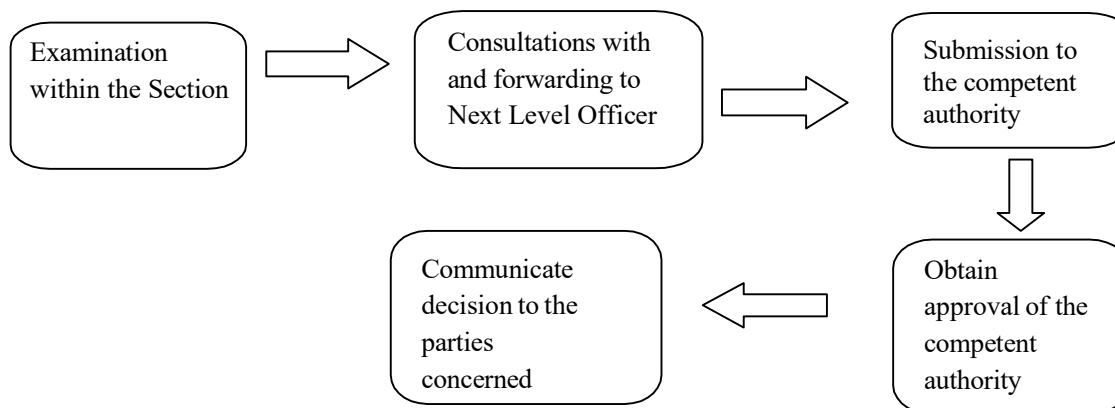
1.5 Examination by next level officers above Section Incharge:

- (i) A Next Level Officer or Wing-in-charge will discuss, wherever necessary, with his team to decide the course of action to be taken on a case involving a new or a complex matter.
- (ii) For dealing with such problem solving or policy cases, the technique of writing a discussed note may be used. Discussed note is submitted as a draft. After clearance from the senior officers, it is faired and submitted by the Dealing Assistant.
- (iii) After discussion, the Dealing Assistant is entrusted with preparing a comprehensive/self contained note which will be put up to the decision making level clearly indicating that it is a discussed note. Such discussed note shall also be a reasoned note based on the provisions of the relevant Act, rules, instructions, etc. The note will contain the background to the problem, issues arising out of its precedents, if any, analysis of all relevant facts with reference to the provisions of the relevant Act, Rules and / or guidelines, and the recommended course of action for approval by the competent authority.

1.6 Level of disposal and channel of submission:

The process of decision making in cases that are dealt with in Survey of India which are within the powers of officers in the office of the Surveyor General of India, Zonal Offices and GDs is as follows:-

Process of decision making in cases that are within the delegated powers of the Head of the Department / Zonal Head / Director:-



- (i) Dealing Assistant will take action on a case in accordance with the Office instructions prescribing the level of final disposal as per the Office instructions on channel of submission for each category of cases. Suitable instructions are to be issued for the channel of submission of files for each category of cases by SGO. The channel of submission of cases, other than the classified ones, must be made available on the website of Survey of India. Similarly, name, telephone number and e-mail ID of the officers dealing with various subjects must also be made available on the website.
- (ii) Survey of India will review the instructions on level of disposal and channel of submission at least once in three years keeping the number of levels to the minimum by delegating powers to lower formations. To facilitate quicker decision making, channels of submission should not be more than four. Powers are to be delegated to operationalize this principle.
- (iii) Wherever level jumping is done in respect of any category of cases, each such case on its return, will pass through all the levels jumped over who in suitable cases could resubmit the cases for reconsideration, if necessary.

Box-e.1.3.

In eFile, sending / marking of receipts / files are flexible. The system allows a user to send a receipt / file to any other user and the movement of record is maintained (who has sent, to whom has been sent and when has been sent).

Physical file which is marked to another officer has to be received by him/her by clicking appropriate button in his/her inbox indicating that the physical file has been received at his/her end. The acknowledgement for the same should be obtained from the recipient.

Electronic file once marked to the next user goes to his/her inbox indicating that it has been received by him/her.

1.7 Deviation from normal procedure or rules:

In every case where a material or substantial deviation of the existing procedure or rules, is sought to be made, it shall be the responsibility of the decision making authority to

ensure that reasons are recorded in writing, justifying such a deviation from the rules or procedures.

1.8 Oral discussions:

- (i) All points emerging from discussions (including telephonic discussions) between two or more officers of the office or from discussions between officers of other offices or Departments, and the conclusions reached will be recorded on the relevant file by the officer submitting a note.
- (ii) All discussions, points which the officer recording them considers to be important enough for the purpose, should be got confirmed by all those who have participated in or are responsible for them. This is particularly desirable in cases where the policy of the government is not clear or where some important deviation from the prescribed policy is involved or where two or more levels differ on significant issues or the decision itself, though agreed to by all concerned, is an important one.

1.9 Oral instructions by higher officers:

- (i) Where an officer is giving direction (including telephonic, social media platforms, sms, whatsapp) for taking action in any case in respect of matters on which he/she or his/her subordinate has powers to decide, he/she shall ordinarily do so in writing. If, however, the circumstances of the case are such that there is no time for giving the instructions in writing, he/she should follow it up by a written confirmation at the earliest.
- (ii) An officer shall, in the performance of his/her official duties, or in the exercise of the powers conferred on him/her, act in his best judgment except when he/she is acting under instructions of an official superior to him/her. In the latter case, he/she shall obtain the directions in writing wherever practicable before carrying out the instructions, and where it is not possible to do so, he/she shall obtain written confirmation of the directions as soon thereafter as possible. If the Officer giving the instructions is not his/her immediate superior but one higher to the latter in the hierarchy, he/she shall bring such instructions to the notice of his/her immediate superior at the earliest.

1.10 Confirmation of oral instructions:

- (i) If an officer seeks confirmation of oral instructions given by his/her superior, the latter should confirm it in writing whenever such confirmation is sought.
- (ii) Receipt of communications from junior Officers seeking confirmation of oral instructions should be acknowledged by the personal staff of the senior officers.

1.11 Modification of notes or order:

- (i) The higher officers should record their own notes giving their views on the subject, where necessary, correcting or modifying the facts given in earlier notes. In any case, the replacement or modification of the notes which have already been recorded on a file, when the file has been further noted upon by others, should not be permitted. Where a final decision already communicated to a party is found later on to have been given on a mistaken ground or wrong facts or wrong interpretation of rules due to

misunderstanding or otherwise, such replacement or modification of a note may have also legal implications. In all such cases, wherever necessary, review of the decision should be examined and the revised decision shall be taken with the approval of an officer higher than the one who took the original decision. The reason(s) for the reversal or modification of the earlier decision shall duly be recorded on the file.

- (ii) Under no circumstances a note shall be pasted over or removed from the file. In case of mistake in the note or disagreement with a previously recorded note a new note shall be recorded, keeping the previously recorded note on the file.

1.12 Functional Approach to Noting:

- (i) Noting should be kept to an optimal level. Therefore, it should be systematic and functional. One of the points for consideration while preparing a note is the size of the note. Functional Approach to Noting helps in deciding the kind and size of note to be prepared. It is a technique for more effective noting and facilitates the officer initiating a note to submit a more effective note; and the competent authority to take decisions quickly. It categorizes the types of cases and the quantum of noting to be done as given in Table – 1.1.

Table –1.1: Functional approach to noting at a glance

Sl. No	Type or category of the case	Quantum of noting
1.	Ephemeral	No noting is needed
2.	Correspondence handling or Action in correspondence cases	Short note of a few sentences
3.	Repetitive case	Develop and use Standard Process Sheet
4.	Problem solving case	A structured and detailed note is prepared
5.	Policy /Planning case	Detailed note is prepared covering various aspects, implications and expected outcome of a policy to be developed or under review

(ii) Types of Cases, Quantum of Noting and Functional Approach:

The following approach could be adopted for noting on various categories of cases:

1. Ephemeral Cases:

These cases are also known as “No-Noting” cases. The Section Incharge should record the reason, in brief, why no action is necessary, and file such cases only after getting confirmation from the next level officer. This will help ensure adequate review of decision and important matters not being filed as Ephemeral case.

2. Correspondence handling or Action-in-Correspondence Cases:

These cases too do not require detailed noting. It would be sufficient if a brief note (a paragraph of three to four sentences) is recorded indicating the issue under

consideration and the suggested action or submission of a fair communication to obtain further inputs, etc.

3. Routine or Repetitive Cases:

- a. In cases of repetitive cases, e.g. sanctioning of leave, motor car advance, pension cases, release of grant-in-aid, etc. 'a standard process sheet' will be devised by the respective offices and will be prescribed through Survey of India instructions. A standard process sheet is a standard skeleton note, or a template. It is developed by indicating pre-determined points of check. The check list contains the parameters or points that are to be taken into account while processing a case often through the instructions, if any, contained in the standard operation procedure issued by the department for examining a case. Against the check list, variables of a case are filled in to obtain approval of the competent authority on each case. No conventional note will be recorded in such cases. A fair reply is put up on file with the standard process sheet. Wherever possible, standard formats of communications should be prepared;
- b. Standard process sheets will be developed by the Section Incharge concerned with the help of the Dealing Assistants. It will be prescribed through office instructions, if necessary;
- c. Offices are to encourage developing templates to be used for cases of repetitive nature through issue of office instructions;
- d. It acts as training tool to new Dealing Assistants, as it gives points of check to process a case;
- e. A specimen of standard process sheet is given in Appendix – 1.1.

4. Problem Solving Cases:

In these cases, a detailed note providing all information on each aspect will be necessary. Even then, the note should be concise and to the point, covering the following aspects:-

- (1) What is the problem?
- (2) How has it arisen?
- (3) What are the provisions of Act, Rule, Policy or Precedent?
- (4) What are the possible solutions?
- (5) Which is the best solution proposed and Why?
- (6) What will be the consequences (implications) of the proposed solution?
- (7) Is any inter-departmental consultations needed? If so, with whom and how?
- (8) Who is the competent authority?

(iii) Policy and Planning Cases:

These types of cases would not be large in number and are normally dealt with at sufficiently higher levels of the organization. They require a thorough examination with maximum amount of noting developed systematically. A note in such cases should be structured in the following manner: -

- a. Problem: State how the problem has arisen? What are the critical factors?

- b. Additional Information: Obtain additional information to size up the problem. The information would be available on the files and other papers in the Section. If sufficient information is not available to enable thorough examination, it should be collected before preparing a policy note;
- c. Rule, policy etc.: Refer to relevant rules, regulations, policy, standing orders practices. Analyze and interpret such rules etc. in a cohesive manner bringing out their bearing on the problem;
- d. Precedents: Precedent cases having a bearing on the issue under consideration should be put up. If there are varying precedents or any precedent differs in certain respects from the case under examination, the difference should be brought out so as to arrive at a correct decision;
- e. Critical analysis: The case should then be examined on merit answering questions such as 'what are the possible alternative solutions/ which is the best solution? Attention should also be paid to other aspects like the financial and other implications, repercussions, and the modality of implementing the decision and the authority competent to take a decision;
- f. Concluding paragraph: The concluding paragraph should suggest a course of action for consideration.

Box 1.1: Structure of a problem solving / policy note

Structure of a problem solving / policy note:

- (i) File Number on right top corner.
- (ii) Subject of the case.
- (iii) Profile of the problem / issue to be resolved [Introduction or the Context].
- (iv) Apply provisions of the Act, Rules, Regulations or guidelines relevant to the case.
- (v) Precedent(s), if any.
- (vi) Analysis and sequence.
- (vii) Position of resources or financial implication including cost-benefit analysis, where required (also legal, social or gender implications, if applicable).
- (viii) Reasoned conclusions reached (proposed course of action).
- (ix) In case more than one course of action is suggested, approval must categorically be sought for a specific course of action.
- (x) Authority competent to approve the case.
- (xi) Docketing & Referencing.
- (xii) Signature of the Dealing Officer submitting the note.

NOTE: Functional Approach to Noting, however, does not mean that each of the cases is water-tight compartment. Depending on the current status of a case the type of case could be different. For instance, most problem solving and policy cases are initially correspondence handling cases to collect the requisite inputs. During the final stages they are either problem solving or policy case.

APPENDIX– 1.1.

{Para 1.12 (3)(e)}

Standard Process Sheet to process Study Leave case

Sl. No.	Points to be considered	Details
1.	Name of the Officer	
2.	Designation	
3.	Cleared probation and appointed substantively?	Yes / No
4.	Does she/he have not less than 5 years' service	Yes / No
5.	Is the proposed study relevant to the applicant's job? Briefly, explain	a) Quote the rule b) Yes / No
6.	Did she/he obtain 'No Objection Certificate' (NOC) before applying for higher studies in the University?	Yes / No
7.	In case she / he has not obtained the "NOC", is it proposed to condone this provision?	Yes / No
8.	Rule / Precedent for Sl. No 6	
9.	Has vigilance clearance been obtained?	Yes / No
10.	Has she / he submitted the Bond?	a) Refer to the rule for the Bond b) Yes / No
11.	Is the Bond in the prescribed format?	Yes / No
12.	Is arrangements for payment of leave salary has been made?	Yes / No If yes, brief details
13.	Suggested course of action	
14.	Any other relevant issue(s)	
15.	Competent authority	

Signature of the Initiating Officer

Date (dd/mm/yy)

Signature of other officers in the hierarchy till the competent authority

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