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PSC News

A bi-weekly e-newsletter of the Public Service Commission

Senator Kang'ata lauds PSC for professionalism in recruitment



Senate Majority Chief Whip, Hon. Irungu Kang'ata (left) chats with the PSC Chairman Mr. Stephen Kirogo when he paid a courtesy call on the Commission on 7th July 2020

By Browne Kutswa

enate Majority Chief
Whip, Hon. Irungu
Kang'ata has urged
Public Service
Commission (PSC) to
advise Parliament on laws that
need to be amended to help
improve public service delivery.

Speaking at Commission House when he paid a courtesy call on PSC Chairman Mr. Stephen Kirogo on 7th July 2020, Hon. Kang'ata urged PSC to help build capacity of the 47 County Public Service Boards (CPSBs) as they are a mirror of PSC.

He lauded the professionalism exhibited by PSC in recruitment, noting that "Parliament is yet to receive any petitions on corruption and favouritism at PSC."

The Senator expressed satisfaction with human resource policies on Persons with Disability (PWDs), which among others allow them to

retire at a higher age.

He urged the Commission to consider placing adverts that have requirements in favour of PWDs, so that there is 'positive discrimination' in their favour.

"Parliament will enact laws that will protect the Commission in its work to ensure that citizens continue to receive best services from the public service," the Senator promised.

He was happy to note that PSC has been able to work and deliver on its critical mandate despite the COVID-19 pandemic, and that civil servants have continued being paid their salaries on time.

He said enough money will be availed to employ more civil servants to enhance services to the citizens.

Chairman Kirogo assured the Senator of PSC's commitment to ensure best services to the citizens so that they can get value for their taxes.

"The Commission's strategic plan 2019-2024 is citizen-centric, and also clearly focuses on Women, Persons with Disability, Youth and Marginalized Groups," said Kirogo.

He observed that the

He observed that the interface between PSC and Senate will be critical to dealing with improvement of citizen welfare.

Commissioner, Amb Patrick Wamoto noted that there is need for standard laws on HR to ensure uniform practices between CPSBs and PSC, which will also go a long way in improving their working relation with National and County governments.

Members of PSC Pension Scheme to hold AGM virtually

By Badi Khamis

embers of the Public Service Commission Pension Scheme will hold this year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) virtually, to adhere to the safety precautions set to manage the spread of Covid-19.

The decision was arrived at during the scheme's trustees meeting held at the Commission house on 21st May 2020.

According to one of the scheme's trustees, Mr. Collins Mbaluto, the date of the virtual AGM will be announced as soon as preparations are complete, and an internet link will be sent to all members to log in and participate in the meeting.

Initially, the AGM was scheduled for 17th April 2020 but was postponed due to the partial lockdown that was instituted to manage the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The meeting is planned at a time when legislative changes have been made by the Retirement Benefits Authority (RBA) providing pension contributors with a myriad of benefits.

The new regulations known as Post-Retirement Medical Funds and Good Governance Practices Guidelines were gazetted vide legal notice number 192 and 193 of October 2018 respectively.

The regulations require Retirement Benefits Schemes (RBS) to make provisions in



PSC CEO Mr Simon Rotich giving his remarks during the PSC pension scheme Annual General Meeting (AGM) in June 2019

their scheme rules to allow members to make voluntary contributions in respect of funding for the post-retirement medical fund.

Contributions to the postretirement medical fund can be remitted by either the Member, Sponsor, or both. The contributions are a fixed percentage of the Member's pensionable "emoluments or a shilling amount."

Under the new regulations, retirement benefits stakeholders are required to promote proper standards of conduct and sound governance practices in the management of Retirement Benefits Schemes to ensure that Sponsors, Members, Trustees, and Service Providers exercise their fiduciary duties effectively and diligently.

Other draft regulations awaiting gazettement are retirement benefits (Mortgage

Loans) (Amendment) Regulations, 2020, which propose that members be allowed to utilize a fraction of their accumulated benefits to purchasing a residential house.

The draft regulations provide for rules and limits of accessing pension savings for a home purchase where pension contributors can now channel up to 40% of their accrued benefits subject to a maximum limit of Ksh7 million to purchase a residential house.

The Trustees are required to make provisions in the scheme rules on the procedure to be followed in relation to the purchase of the house that should be consistent with the Retirement Benefits Regulations.

"These changes once effected will be brought to the attention of scheme members," said Ms. Joan Machayo, Secretary to the board of trustees.

Public servants plant trees to mark Africa Public Service Day

By Badi Khamis and Habel Shiloli

ommissioner
Amb. Salma
Ahmed
represented
the Public
Service Commission in
tree planting at the
Ngong Hills Forest to
mark this year's Africa
Public Service Day,
23rd June 2020.

The event was graced by Cabinet Secretary (CS) Ministry of Public Service and Gender, Prof Margaret Kobia and her Ministry of Environment and Forestry counterpart,



Commissioner Amb. Salma Ahmed plants a tree at the Ngong Hills Forest to mark this year's Africa Public Service Day, 23rd June 2020. Looking on (right) is the Deputy Commission Secretary Mr. Remmy Mulati

Mr. Keriako Tobiko.

President Uhuru Kenyatta in his speech read by Prof. Kobia said the Kenya Public Service has remained a catalyst of Social and Economic Growth that has propelled our Nation Building since Independence.

He noted that the Public Service has laid a strong foundation upon which the Government has continued to meet the needs of its Citizens implementation through transformative programs in all sectors of the economy.

"It (Public Service) is the cornerstone of National stability, prosperity and unity; it creates the enabling environment for all other sectors of the economy to thrive... When Public Service goes to work, the entire Nation goes to work," said the President.

He revealed that the

Government is strengthening management practices to make the Public Service more responsive to the needs of the Citizens, and acknowledged the invaluable contribution of the Public Service in enabling the Nation mitigate National Emergencies.

Amb. Ahmed reiterated the Commission's commitment to ensure that all government services focus on citizen's needs.

"PSC is transforming the public service, focusing on ensuring that all services are citizen-centric," she stated.

She added that the PSC is currently leveraging technology to ensure that the Commission's mandate to recruit competent personnel is not affected by the covid-19 pandemic.

Over 5,000 tree seedlings were planted to mark the day. This

year's theme was "Entrenching Good Governance: Developing Transparent and Accountable Public Institutions."

The event was attended by among others, Chief Administrative Secretaries Ministry of Youth Gender and Public Service Maureen Mbaka (ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs), Rachel Shebesh (Public Service and Gender).

Others were Principal Secretaries Collette Suda (Gender), Mary Kimonye (Public Service), Julius Korir (Youth) and Dr Chris Kiptoo (Ministry of Environment and Forestry). The Deputy Head of Public Service Mr Wanyama Musiambo was also present.

Deputy Commission Secretary, Mr. Remmy Mulati accompanied Commissioner Amb. Ahmed at the event.

PSC enhances safety measures for staff against COVID-19



PSC CEO Mr. Simon Rotich (third right) and a section of senior staff of the Commission pose with the medical team

By Pauline Muriuki and Habel Shiloli

s the number of positive cases of COVID-19 continues to rise nationally, Public Service Commission has enhanced commitment to contain the spread.

In line with guidelines given by the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization (WHO, the Commission has put in place several measures to minimize risk and manage the spread of the pandemic.

The measures include checking staff and visitors' temperature using an Infrared thermometer as they report for work or visit the Commission House: and ensuring staff and visitors sanitize their hands as they enter the building,

Hand sanitizers have been placed at strategic points in the building for both staff and

visitors; and the Commission has also placed social distancing signs appropriately.

A record is taken of persons entering and leaving the building; and staff provided with face masks.

The Commission has also conducted a COVID-19 test on over 270 members of staff, interns and contracted service providers at Commission House

Further, the Commission has leveraged virtual technology to recruit and provide critical personnel to Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) managing the spread of Covid-19 in a timely manner.

The Commission through WebEx and telephone recruited 193 interns to support the implementation of the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) under the Ministry of Health.

The Commission also

386 health recruited personnel for Nairobi Metropolitan Service; Kitui County; Mombasa County; Kirinyaga County; and Lamu County under the UHC programme Local on Agreement Terms of Service.

The CEO, speaking from his office said infrastructure has already been put in place that will allow senior staff meetings to be held online.



Registrar and Assistant Registrars of Political Parties interviewed

By Pauline Muriuki

ublic Service
Commission
concluded
interviews for
the positions of
Registrar and Assistant
Registrar of Political
Parties on Thursday
2nd July 2020.

Ten shortlisted candidates, five male and five female were interviewed for one position of Registrar **Political Parties** of while 37 shortlisted candidates, 24 males and 13 females were interviewed for three positions of Assistant Registrars of Political Parties.

The interviews were preceded by a media briefing session by the PSC Chairman Mr. Stephen Kirogo at the Commission House, where 10 media houses were represented.

In his remarks Mr. Stephen Kirogo said the interview panel would strictly adhere to the safety protocols stipulated by the Ministry of Health.

"As you are all aware of the Covid-19 pandemic concerns, the select committee shall endeavor to keenly adhere to the laid down safety precautions by the Ministry of Health, which you will agree with me, is a delicate balancing act with the requirement of the law," he said.

He assured Kenyans that due process had been and would



PSC Chairman Stephen Kirogo addresses the media team during the media briefing session for the Interviews for Registrar and Assistant Registrars at the Commission House on 29th June 2020. together with him are PSC Commissioners and CEO

continue being followed to undertake the assignment to its conclusion.

"I am aware that the positions we seek to fill are of great interest to many Kenyans. Therefore, I assure all of us that due process has been followed and will continue to the end of the exercise," noted Kirogo.

The process of selecting nominees was guided by provisions of Section 33 and 34 of the Political Parties Act, 2011 (No. 11 of 2011) and the Sixth Schedule as amended by the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act, 2012.

The Commission invited applications from suitably qualified candidates to fill the positions through the print

media on 8th, 12th and 27th May, 2020.

The advertisement which closed on 2nd June 2020 attracted 88 applications for the position of Registrar of Political Parties and 618 for the position of Assistant Registrar of Political Parties.

The Select Committee shall forward to His Excellency the President names of three nominees from among whom one will be appointed to the Office of Registrar of Political Parties.

It shall also forward names of nine nominees from among whom three will be appointed to the office of Assistant Registrar as provided for in the law.

Managing human capital in Public Service during and after COVID-19

By Dr. Gabriel Juma

he Kenya School of Government should develop programmes geared towards capacity building of public officers in econferencing, virtual meetings and e-training.

Mr. Wesley Kipng'etich, PSC's Deputy Director Ethics and Governance said this during a webinar seminar on **Navigating** Ethical and **Psychological** Issues in Management of Human Capital in the Public Service During and After the Covid-19 Pandemic, hosted by the Kenya School of Government on 29th and 30th June 2020.

He observed that the Covid-19 pandemic had occasioned new working norms and the necessity to enhance the use of digital technology to provide efficient services to the citizens.

Noting that this is in line with the Commission's commitment in its strategic plan to adapt and leverage digital technology to ensure timely and cost effective service delivery to the citizens, Kipng'etich emphasized the need for public institutions to re-orient themselves to adapt citizen-centric service delivery models which emphasized on outputs and outcomes instead of processes.

He further observed that the public service is a highly regulated business environment.

"This calls for public officers to ensure that the discharge of public services is in accordance with the laws, policies, regulations and procedures as issued by the government from time to time," he said.

Over 200 public servants from across the country logged in, to



Panelists during the Webinar on "Navigating Ethical and Psychological Issues in Management of Human Capital in the Public Service During and after COVID-19 Pandemic" on 29 and 30 June 2020 at the Kenya School of Government, Nairobi

participate in the two-day seminar.

Kipng'etich urged the participants to acquaint themselves with the ethical standards as provided under the public service code of conduct and ethics issued by the Public Service Commission.

"Some of the provisions in the include efficiency, code effectiveness and prudent use of resources; prompt, responsive of public delivery services: transparency and accountability; professionalism in the discharge of duty; honesty; courtesy and respect for the rule of law amongst others," he stated.

He said challenges posed by the pandemic presented opportunities for institution and individual officers to review their business processes and tweak them to conform to the new norm.

"This may include maintenance of confidentiality by officers working away from the office to ensure that confidential government information and documents are protected," said Kipng'etich.

He reminded that the emerging challenges may necessitate officers taking the initiative to acquire the necessary competencies to deliver on e-platforms and this means that they may need to retool themselves to fit into the new working models.

Kipng'etich encouraged participants to innovate around the challenges posed by the pandemic by applying the protocols and guidelines issued by government in their day to day business processes as some of the return to work guidelines issued by the government include staggering of work.

"This will help accommodate officers working in shifts where the office space is strained and to allow for social distance measures," he said.

He advised that the official working hours even for persons working from home be maintained for ease of consultation, work facilitation and virtual meetings.

"Consequently, all the requirements which obtain in a normal working environment personal including dress code, grooming and hygiene should at all times be observed by officers working remotely," he noted.

He further encouraged such officers to configure an appropriate working environment not prone to interruptions, intrusion to home privacy and devoid of other background noises and distractions.

Kipng'etich together with Dr. Purity Gitonga of the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission's National Integrity Academy moderated discussions on the first day of the seminar.

Post COVID-19 Citizen-centric public service

By Dr. Gabriel Juma

he COVID-19 pandemic is providing unprecedented challenge the world over, threatening our health, livelihood and peace of mind.

Together with the unfolding digital technology, the pandemic also offers unmatched opportunities.

The advent of the virus and the technological disruptions arising from the 4th Industrial revolution that begun two years ago compels public service agencies to rethink their performance management strategies and service delivery models if they are to keep pace with the changes, and still deliver citizencentric public services.

The crisis is therefore a wakeup call for public service practitioners, policy makers, and HR practitioners to re-examine and adopt new models of performance management and service delivery that are flexible and robust.

Dr. David Nabarro, the World Health Organisation (WHO) special envoy and Director General on COVID-19, has thus recommended a COVID-Ready society in which people learn to live with the virus.

This view was amplified by CAS Mercy Mwangangi during the daily briefing on 14th May 2020. "The virus may be with us for a long time to come and this requires us to maintain the current containment measures and chart a way forward on how we can adapt and live with the



Gabriel Juma, PhD, MKIM

virus," she said.

With no end in sight, governments, public and private institutions, communities, families and individuals must adapt to the new normal.

The emergence COVID19 makes it mandatory for public institutions to be innovative and think outside the box in order to deliver efficient services to clients.

Meeting the needs of the citizens in these extraordinary times demands an approach grounded in technology, boundary breaking collaboration and innovative way of working.

It places an increasing pressure from society on governments to become more efficient and effective while paying keen attention to user needs, demands and satisfaction.

Many governments around the world today recognize that e-government is a key tool that can support and enhance public sector functions and processes in general. This is because digital or e-platforms, while improving efficiency also reduce human contact and the possibility of corruption.

The concern is whether citizens can sit in the comfort of their homes and still access public services through various eplatforms, including mobile phones, and the number of services that are available on a digital platform.

Despite ICT being regarded as the "Silver Bullet" that could improve performance of the public sector and its service delivery, the adoption and use of e-government services remain low and far from satisfactory for many countries including Kenya.

For instance, findings of the 2018/19 PSC Values report revealed that despite 62% of institutions evaluated adopting

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Post COVID-19 Citizen-centric public service

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online platforms to provide expeditious service to a wider population, only 3% had migrated their services to e-citizen platform, notwithstanding its potential to serve more clients.

At the county level, only three county governments were on the e-citizen platform, namely Mombasa, Nyeri and Kisumu.

Only 37 services were being offered on the e-citizen platform compared to Singapore that had transitioned over 1600 services to the Web.

In the age of COVID-19 it is necessary that all public institutions aspire to migrate their services to the e-citizen platform.

Integrating a citizen-centric approach to public service delivery in Kenya raises a number of questions for public service practitioners and policy makers.

These include how public sector can transform itself into a coherent whole, meeting users on their terms and not under terms set by public administrators and other government organizations, traditions and cultures; and whether the existing legal and cultural barriers for collaboration and cooperation within across and levels government be reviewed to allow for an attractive, integrated and user focused e-government platform that can effectively deliver e-services.

Others questions are whether there a need for a shift in mind-set of public officers; Whether it is time to re-think the Huduma model of service delivery because of the social distancing rule even as the centres have served us well as physical Citizen Service Centres (CSCs) that deliver one-stop shop for government services; and whether it is time we

In the age of COVID-19 it is necessary that all public institutions aspire to migrate their services to the e-citizen platform.

consider migrating the services provided on the Huduma platform to a digital platform so that citizens can access those services from the comfort of their homes.

Having a single government website that acts as a one-stop

shop for e-government services makes it easier for users to find and access those services.

Services should be organized around a holistic rather than agency or service specific view of the users. However, for this to be realized, it requires increased collaboration and co-ordination among government agencies.

It should be realized that e-Government is not limited to web-based government. It also encompasses the full range of ICTs including radio, Television and telephone (fixed and mobiles).

Mobile phones provide the main form of internet access in many parts of the country. The rapid spread of mobile phones across the country provides an opportunity to reach the poorest and most vulnerable.

This further calls for accelerating the adoption of M-Government. Due to CIVID-19 most banking institutions have migrated a good number of their services on the M-platform which is convenient, efficient, affordable and time saving. NHIF has also not been left behind.

BEREAVEMENT

Mr. George Mukabi, Acting Director Board Management Services (BMS) lost his dear mother, Mama Gladys Kamendi Mukabi on 13th June 2020. The late Mama Kamendi was laid to rest in Raini, Njeke Village, Kiambu County on 19th June 2020.

Mr. Nevelly Kisaghi (Driver) lost his dear Mama Mary Mutheu on 18th June 2020. She was buried on 20th June 2020 in Wundanyi, Taita Taveta County.

Exposure and networking during PSIP lands me a Scholarship

By Stephen Naboth

y journey as an Intern at Public Service Commission (PSC) under the Public Service Internship Programme (PSIP) has been a tremendous learning opportunity, which has gone beyond my expectation.

Apart from gaining useful knowledge and skills in accounting at the Accounts Section of the Directorate of Finance and Planning, I am able to appreciate government bureaucracy, which I was initially skeptical about.

The weekly colloquia that PSC introduced for us (interns) just before COVID-19 enabled me to deepen my understanding of public service and put me in a better prospect for a future career in the public sector. I was able to network with fellow interns and senior staff at PSC.

The first colloquium, titled "How the Public Service Works," was significant for me. It was facilitated by Dr. Sylvester Obong'o, Director, Performance Management, and Service Delivery Improvement.

What inspired me more was his career path, especially, how he studied up to Ph.D. level abroad. He encouraged us to look for and take opportunities to advance our skills and education level.

I remembered his talk after we were asked to stay at home, following the partial lockdown occasioned by the COVID-19 outbreak in mid-March. It made me start looking for Master's degree scholarships online.

After several searches, I found one called MathMods. This is a two-year Joint Master's Degree run by four European universities, aimed at providing students with a cross-cultural education.

At the same time, students get acquainted with both theory and applications of mathematical modeling in engineering.

Mathematical modeling refers to the use of mathematics and related



Mr. Stephen Naboth

computational tools to bring realworld, challenging and important socio-economic and industrial problems into a form, simple enough so that a good solution can be found in a reasonable time while keeping the relevant features of the problem.

Having graduated with a Bachelors's degree in Applied Mathematics at the University of Nairobi in September 2018, this attracted my interest.

I made my application on the deadline day, and the problem was finding two referees as required, at that instance. I contacted Dr. Obongo the next day and explained to him the situation.

He advised that we write to the institution to request for an extension. The University accepted the request but gave us only 24hrs to submit the reference. Dr. Obongo managed to do the reference letter within the extended period and submitted.

Unfortunately, I did not find another referee within the short period; so my application had only one referee.

The selection period was for one month, and all through it, I was prayerful and ready for any result, for I knew that my application was competing with thousands of others globally.

When results came on Ist May 2020, I had been selected. This was not only a surprise but very exciting. I

shared the results with my family and Dr. Obongo; and I truly appreciate their support.

The next day I received an email from MathMods University requiring me to provide a picture of a valid passport within three weeks. The challenge was that I did not have a passport and had never applied for one.

I quickly started the application process online, finished and was a given a booking date on 19th June 2020 to take biometrics to the Immigration Department. This meant the deadline would pass before I did the biometrics!

Once again, I contacted Dr. Obongo and explained to him the issue. He called me to his office and made a call to the Director General of Immigration, to explain my situation

After the call, he told me to go and give the biometrics on that same day. Within three weeks, I had the passport and was able to upload it as was required!

I am thankful to Dr. Obongo and the Public Service Commission as a whole for this exposure and networking that enabled me to achieve this goal. Without them, it would not have been possible.

Subject to the COVID-19 pandemic situation, I expect my admission in September or October 2020, to the University of L'Aquila, Italy or any of its full partner Universities namely Vienna University of Technology in Austria; University of Côte d'Azur in France; or University of Hamburg, Germany.

I urge other interns to take advantage of any opportunity available. Currently, we should equip ourselves with knowledge and skills to work online, and to train and empower other youths to find alternative means of working, to make income.

This can be achieved by taking the Ajira Training Program keenly. I look forward to utilizing the skills and knowledge gained in future.

PICTORIAL



Staff of the Commission register at the PSC gymnasium Commission House on 1st July 2020 in readiness for Covid-19 testing



PSC CEO Simon Rotich speaks during the burial of mother to Mr George Mukabi, Ag Director Board Management Services on 19th June 2020 in Lari Sub-Location, Kiambu. Standing are staff of the Commission who attended the burial with Mr Mukabi (left).



Mr Rotich (second right) handing over a monetary token to Mr Mukabi following the demise of his beloved mother. Looking on are the Deputy Commission Secretary Mr Mulati (second left) and Director Administration Mr Gerald Kuhaka (right)

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Vision

A Citizen-centric public service

Mission

To reform and transform the public service for efficient service delivery

Core Values

- Citizen Focus
- Professionalism
- Innovation
- Team-work

Public Service Commission Directorate

- Recruitment and Selection
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