

CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT

EXPECTATIONS – MINISTER’S OFFICE

1. Introduction

The purpose of this note is to clarify roles and responsibilities in the Minister’s Office with a priority on providing necessary and appropriate support to the minister while fostering a positive, supportive, safe and professional workplace culture.

2. Support for the minister

The Minister is accountable for delivering on the government’s agenda as defined by the mandate letter, the ministerial service plan and cabinet direction. To this end, the minister requires:

- Timely provision of decision notes, briefing information and background material, in hard copy whenever possible, well before decision deadlines;
- Timely and thoughtful policy and planning advice that reflects input from both the ministry, through the Deputy’s Office, and the Premier’s Office, through political staff in the minister’s office

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The Deputy Minister (DM) and the Senior Ministerial Assistant (SMA) are jointly accountable for the provision of this support. To this end:

- The DM and SMA should jointly prepare a weekly meeting s.22
s.22 with a fixed agenda to give the minister high level oversight over upcoming events, meetings and decision points;
- The direction agreed at that meeting should provide the workplan for both the DMO and political staff for the coming week; and
- Changes to that plan should not be made except in exceptional circumstances and in consultation with the minister, the DMO and political staff; and
- Where changes are agreed, the impact on previously-agreed priorities should be clearly identified and understood.

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3. Expectations for work assignments and regular scheduling

Adherence to agreed schedules, to the largest degree possible, is essential to complete priority tasks. To this end:

- The senior ministerial assistant is the link between the minister and minister's office staff to provide direction to staff and relay information to the minister
 - A single 30-minute daily meeting for the minister with the MO team should be sufficient to ensure appropriate planning and follow-up on daily and weekly priorities. Additional meetings should be avoided to allow staff to complete assignments.
- The Ministers' requests for information will continue to be met as much as possible with the understanding that work generated from requests for information will be prioritized by the SMA on the basis of considering the amount of time/work required to acquire such information, availability within the Ministry to provide the information and its relevance mandate.
- The Senior MA or the MA must be present for all meetings between the Minister and the DM to ensure a full understanding of emerging issues.
- The SMA and MA are responsible for ensuring the minister is updated frequently and in a timely way on event and meeting requests.

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4. Workload management

All members of the MO team are entitled to appropriate work-life balance, notwithstanding the pressures and uncertainty of work in a minister's office.^{s.22}

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That said, political staff should strive to keep weekly work hours under 50 hours with a goal of 40 hours.

- Until further notice, MO staff should work to a hard stop time of 7 p.m.
- Until further notice, MO staff must take two full days a week off, on the weekend if possible.
- The SMA and MA must remain on call for emergencies, but provide the minister with a clear duty schedule to ensure each one also has uninterrupted personal time.
- Assigned work that cannot be completed within the available hours should be identified by the SMA and the DM for review at the weekly planning meeting.

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