

**“YEAR OF RESOURCEFULNESS”**

**PUBLIC SERVICE MINISTRY**

164 Waterloo Street,  
Georgetown.

Ref: PS: 8/0/11 <sup>11</sup>

DATE: 1984-10-22

Dear

**Dress and the Public Servant**

This circular is intended to support your own efforts at maintenance of standards in the Public Service in the area of dress.

This existing Public Service Rule No. R3 reads as follows: -

**“Dress on the Job**

1. Public Servants not required to wear uniforms are required to dress soberly and tidily having regard to the desirability of maintaining a reasonable standard of attire throughout the Public Service.
2. The suitability of any particular form of dress to the requirements of the office should be determined at the discretion of the Permanent Secretary/Head of Department.”

This is being amended to be made more explicit and in keeping with prevailing circumstances.

Permanent Secretaries in Ministries/Departments where uniforms are not worn are asked to ensure that:

At all times their members of staff are appropriately dressed for work in an office.

The attached circular issued to the staff of the Public Service Ministry may be used as a guide.

Yours Co-operatively,

.....  
**J.E. Sinclair,**  
**Permanent Secretary.**

**“YEAR OF RESOURCEFULNESS”**

**PUBLIC SERVICE MINISTRY**

164 Waterloo Street,  
Georgetown.

Dated: 1985-10-15

Ref. No. PS: 8/0/11<sup>11</sup>

Dear

**DRESS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

The Public Service Ministry has on a number of occasions make known its views on Dress and the Public Service. Minister Yvonne Harewood-Benn as Minister responsible for the Public Service has spoken to Parliament Secretaries on more than one occasion. There has also been a circular from this Ministry dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1984, on the same subject. Please see relevant attachment on Office Wear.

However, the Public Service Ministry despite its efforts has been the object of a considerable amount of blame for the present poor state of dress in the Public Service. I am appealing once more for your personal intervention in this important area.

The Cde Prime Minister has been visiting Ministries and Departments and has reported to this Ministry his shock, in some case his utter disgust and disappointment, at what we as Managers permit as office wear in the Service. A few days ago he witnessed a female employee at work in a red track- suit. There was the case of another very indecently attired for the office – her underwear top and bottom being clearly visible. Dresses with what are called ‘Spaghetti’ straps are not uncommon in the office. Supervisors have also been turning a blind eye to the night-club type slits on skirts that are worn to work by some officers.

Office wear on Saturdays seems to have become almost completely ‘out of hand’. We permit officers to be at work wearing sweaters with alien captions. Sun dresses are not for the office, neither are white washed-out-denims. Officers must show more respect for themselves and for the public they serve.

As Managers, we must speak with our supervisors about these lapses and take corrective action. The problem needs more positive action than merely placing the circular on your notice board. You need to speak with your Department Heads about the seriousness with which office wear is viewed. After warning, disciplinary action must be taken against persons who are inappropriately dressed for work. We cannot as Managers ignore the

problem or “shrug it off”. It exists and we need to confront it and deal with it. Please ensure that the general standard of dress especially at public counters, reception desks or wherever members of staff come in contact with the Public is such as to bring credit to the respective agencies.

I am seeking your active co-operation in this matter. The Public Service Ministry has overall responsibility for proper management of the Service, but we depend very heavily on the Managers of the Ministries/Departments/Regions for effective management of their own agencies. Please help us by showing your own concern for standards.

Yours co-operatively,

.....  
J.E. Sinclair  
Permanent Secretary

Extract of P.S.M. 'S  
Staff Circular  
Dated: 1983-05-24

REVIVAL OF STANDARDS

OFFICE WEAR

It is customary on Saturdays to dress in a more relaxed manner for work. There is no quarrel with this as long as Officers continue to observe the basic standards for office wear. You can all recall the strong views of our Minister on the question of office wear of Public Servants. It seems however, that some Officers need to be reminded from time to time of what is not considered suitable apparel for the office.

2. We all have a part to play in the maintenance of high standards generally in the Public Service Ministry. We should be the ones to be the pace-setters for other Ministries.
3. The following are not permitted as part of dress in the office on any day of the week.

- (a) T-shirts with advertisements of any kind

T-shirts with reading of any kind whether it is "I love New York"

" I love Curacao"

" I love Guyana"

" It is better in the Bahamas,  
Barbados etc."

OR

"I am a Virgin"

OR T-shirt advertising Football team numbers or institutions

T-shirts worn in the office (these tend to be worn on Saturdays) must be plain.  
They may be striped, dotted or figured but should not contain any captions.

- (b) Untidy Shirts

This concerns both male and female. Shirts if they are worn over pants must be square bottomed and not scalloped at the two (2) sides (referred to as shirt-tails).

- (c) Slippers

Slippers are not permitted as office wears except in cases of injury to your body in which case you so indicate to your supervisors.

- (d) Pedal Pushers

Please keep your pedal pushers for after 4 outings. Gaudily decorated or indecently tight pants with elastic or bands at the bottom are not permitted in the office.

(e) Jeweler and Make-up

Keep these simple.

Excessive amounts of jewellery and/or make-up distract.

They are not suitable for the office.

(f) Bright Coloured stocking

Bright coloured stockings look out of place in the office. Do not wear them.

They may be more appropriate for the disco.

(g) Tube Tops and Strap Tops

These are not to be worn in the office.

(h) Transparent blouse

It is indecent to reveal the stitches in your underwear through thin transparent blouses. Do not wear these in the office.

4. Some of the current fashions among young people are no doubt very attractive, but there is a time and place for everything. Until such time as our uniform becomes a reality, officers are asked to pay more attention to dress for the office.
5. Infractions of our dress code will be dealt with harshly.

A HINT

Remember that one does not need a high salary, to be appropriately dressed. It requires a certain attitude to your work and to your employer, a degree of self respect and a concern for high standards.

Look in the mirror before you leave home!