

C/95/2024

Complaint from Acting Higher Social Security Officers

On 28th March 2024, this Office received a complaint from Social Security Officers averring that although they had followed an In-Service Training course, they had not yet been promoted to the post of Higher Social Security Officer (HSSO). Most of them had been performing duties at the level of HSSO since 2022. The delay in their promotion has been causing prejudice to them in terms of passage benefits, commuted traveling, mileage, loan facilities and other fringe benefits. The views of the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity which were sought were as follows:

- i. According to the scheme of service, appointment to the grade of HSSO is made by promotion, on the basis of experience and merit, of officers in the grade of Social Security Officer (SSO) who:
 - a) Reckon at least four years' service in a substantive capacity in the grade and
 - b) Have successfully followed the in-service training course for SSOs.
- ii. The in-service training course was run at the level of the Ministry. SSOs were promoted as and when vacancies arose. The last promotion exercise was made on 23 August 2022 whereby four most senior SSOs were appointed as HSSO.
- iii. As from year 2020, the in-service training course was replaced by the "Certificate in Social Protection" run by the Open University. Consequently, after filling of all vacancies that existed at that time, action was initiated in September 2022 to amend the scheme of service to include the Certificate in Social Protection so that appointment to the grade of HSSO would be by promotion, on the basis of experience and merit, of officers in the grade of SSO who:
 - a) Reckon at least four years' service in a substantive capacity in the grade; and
 - b) Have successfully followed the in service training course for SSOs

OR

- c) possess a Certificate in Social Protection
- iv. After required consultations with Staff Associations and Federations of Unions, the final proposed amendment was submitted to the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms (MPSAIR) on 30 October 2023. The MPSAIR has, in a letter dated 18 April 2024, submitted the proposed scheme of service for the grade of HSSO to the Public Service Commission. Upon agreement by the Commission, the scheme of service would be prescribed by the MPSAIR.
- v. Thereafter, recommendation for the filling of vacancies in the grade of HSSO would be submitted to the PSC

The Office concluded that there was no maladministration in the part of the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity.