

THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

The civil service commission is an independent body set up by the government with the responsibility of remitting workers into the service based on merit. The body also is in charge of the discipline, promotion and dismissal of workers. Either the president or governor appoints the chairman and members.

COMPOSITION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

The 1989 constitution of Nigeria provides for the establishment of the federal civil service commission. Section 51 states that its composition should consist of a president or chairman and a maximum of 9 members.

FUNCTIONS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

1. **Employment:** The commission is empowered to remit highly qualified personnel into the civil service either by competitive examination or oral interview.
2. **Promotion:** The body is responsible for the promotion of workers from one salary scale to another when they are due to it.
3. **Transfer:** The transfer of civil servants from one ministry to another within the civil service is done by the commission.
4. **Discipline:** The commission is empowered to take actions against any civil servant who goes against the rules of the general order.
5. **Retirement:** The civil servants who have reached the stipulated retirement age are retired by the commission.
6. **Dismissal:** the commission dismisses civil servants who are found to be corrupt.
7. **Condition of Service:** The commission states the terms and condition of service, allowances and salaries of civil servants.
8. **Advice:** The commission offers advice to the government in the appointment of senior officers in departments and ministries.
9. **Efficiency:** Efficiency and integrity are the watchwords of the civil service and the commission works towards its realization.

OMBUDSMAN/PUBLIC COMPLAINT COMMISSION (PCC)

This is a government institution established to investigate and examine cases of injustice, corruption and unfair treatment by public officers against citizens. The Ombudsman, which is known as public complaint commission, was first introduced in Sweden in 1809. It was introduced in Nigeria in October 1975 by the military administration of General Murtala Mohammed.

FUNCTIONS AND IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMISSION

1. To ensure that public officers discharge their duties in line with the laid down rules of the commission.
2. The body protects the rights and liberties of the citizens.
3. The body investigates cases of maladministration by any public officer.
4. The Ombudsman has the power to suggest some changes in the laws of the land.
5. It investigates cases of undesirable conditions and practices in public places like hospitals and prisons.
6. It is empowered to investigate any acts of corruption and nepotism.
7. It presents public officers and authorities that have violated the law and neglected their duties.
8. Cases of loss of documents and papers are investigated by the commission.
9. The commission offers help to citizens whose rights have been infringed upon to seek redress.

LIMITATIONS TO THE POWERS OF THE OMBUDSMAN

1. The ombudsman does not have the power to enforce its investigations. It can only investigate and recommend.
2. It cannot investigate top government officials like Director-General, State Governor etc. It can only be involved in matters affecting junior workers.
3. It lacks the power to reverse court decisions.
4. The need to preserve state security and vital national interests hinders the commission access information and documents.
5. Lack of confidentiality of ombudsman constitutes a limitation.

GENERAL EVALUATION

1. Discuss five problems of the civil service.
2. State five functions of the Ombudsman.