



ANY REPLY OR SUBSEQUENT REFERENCE SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE
FINANCIAL SECRETARY AND THE FOLLOWING REFERENCE NUMBER QUOTED:-

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**MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE
30 NATIONAL HEROES CIRCLE
P.O. BOX 512
KINGSTON
JAMAICA**

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CIRCULAR NO 9
Ref # 107/022

Permanent Secretaries
Chief Executive Officers
Board Chairmen
Heads of Departments

USE OF GOVERNMENT LAPTOP COMPUTERS

The attention of Permanent Secretaries, Chief Executive Officers, Board Chairmen and Heads of Departments is invited to the following procedures relating to the use of laptops, palmtops and other portable computers. These procedures are designed to ensure the proper monitoring and control of laptops and other portable computers in the public sector.

1. Purchase of Laptops

- (1.1) The procurement of laptops must be done in accordance with the GOJ procurement guidelines.
- (1.2) Laptops must be purchased entirely on the basis of need, demonstrated by one or more of the following reasons:-
 - (a) For assignment to officers whose job involve working offsite in the collection and retrieval of information or data;
 - (b) For the conduct of training, demonstration, experiment, testing, surveillance, audit and other operations where a desktop computer is inappropriate; and
 - (c) For assignment where necessary to consultants, contract officers, auditors, revenue agents, investigators, attorneys, medical doctors and senior executives and professionals whose job requires the use of a mobile computer.
- (1.3) The purchase of laptops shall be subject to the availability of funds.
- (1.4) The specifications for laptops must match the basic needs of the job(s) for which they are to be used. Unnecessary features or add-ons must not be included in the specification thus ensuring greater economy.

- (1.5) No approval shall be given for the purchase of a single laptop exceeding a sum equivalent to US\$3,000 without justification provided and accepted by the entity's Procurement Committee
- (1.6) Laptops acquired must immediately be recorded in the inventory of the ministry, department, agency or public body.

2. Assignment of Laptops

- (2.1) The assignment of laptops to officers for any duration must be authorized by the Permanent Secretary, Chief Executive Officer, Board Chairman, Head of Department or by any officer delegated such authority.
- (2.2) Laptop assignee should not be provided with the laptop's administrator password but should be assigned a user login and allowed to set his/her password.
- (2.3) Upon the assignment of a laptop, the Assignment Form at Appendix 1 must be completed and signed in duplicate. The original must be given to the assignee and the duplicate properly filed. Assignment Forms must be completed for all officers including those already in possession of a Government laptop. The assignment period must not exceed the assignee's contract or consultancy period.
- (2.4) An officer must not be assigned more than one (1) laptop at any given time. Where a new laptop is being assigned the existing one must be returned.
- (2.5) Officers may be assigned laptops for use while on official duties overseas.
- (2.6) Laptops must be returned immediately upon the assignee's resignation, retirement, transfer, dismissal, secondment, interdiction, going on vacation leave or study leave or upon any other form of separation from the job.
- (2.7) Unassigned laptops including laptops returned from assignment must be kept in a safe place by the officer designated with the responsibility for their custody.
- (2.8) Assigned laptops are the property of Government and may be taken from the assignee at anytime for any reason based on the directive of the Accounting Officer, Principal Receiver of Revenues, Chief Executive Officer, Board Chairman or Head of Department.

3. Maintenance of Laptop Assignment Register

- (3.1) Ministries, Departments, Agencies (MDAs) and Public Bodies must maintain a Laptop Register to track the assignment of laptops. An example of the format of the Register is shown at **Appendix 2**.

- (3.2) The remarks column of the Register must be used for indicating the condition of the Laptop and its peripheral device/hardware and other items upon its return from assignment.
- (3.3) The officer designated for the maintenance of the Laptop Assignment Register shall be responsible for reporting immediately to the designated officer the following:
 - (a) Laptops not returned on the specified date for return.
 - (b) Laptops returned with damage or defects.
 - (c) Laptops returned with missing parts or missing peripheral devices.
- (3.4) The Laptop Assignment Register should be checked periodically by the Internal Audit Department.

4. Physical Care of Laptops

- (4.1) To ensure proper security, optimum performance and longevity of laptops, public officers must ensure that the laptop assigned is:
 - (a) Never left in vehicles or in open offices unattended for any period of time;
 - (b) Not exposed to water, excessive heat or other hazards;
 - (c) Not loaned to any person;
 - (d) Used only for the performance of their official duties.

5. Repairs to Laptops

- (5.1) Laptop assignees must not without prior authorization give the laptop out for repairs or to do the repairs themselves.
- (5.2) The terms and condition of the warranty on laptops must be noted, taken advantage of and not jeopardized by conducting unauthorized repairs or through improper use.
- (5.3) MDAs and public bodies must ensure that servicing/maintenance is done on all assigned laptops at least once every three (3) months. A log must be maintained in this regard

6. Licensed Software

- (6.1) Laptops must be loaded only with licensed software thereby preventing the Government from being in breach of local and international copyright Acts.

7. Loss or Damage to Laptops

(7.1) Loss or damage to laptop must be promptly reported to the Auditor General and the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service in accordance with this Ministry's Circular # 9 Reference 107/022 dated May 21, 2007. The report must state the following:-

- (a) The serial number of the laptop.
- (b) The date of the loss or damage.
- (c) Whether the loss or damage was due to negligence on the part of the laptop's assignee
- (d) The action which is recommended to be taken in respect of the loss or damage.

In the case of public bodies, the above report must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer and the Board.

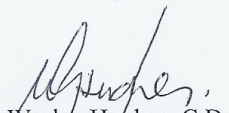
(7.2) Where a laptop is stolen, it is the duty of the Permanent Secretary, Chief Executive Officer, Board Chairman or Head of Department concerned to make a report to the Police forthwith.

8. Board of Survey

(8.1) Laptops that are unserviceable must be reported to the Assets Management Unit of Ministry of Finance & the Public Service for approval to be board surveyed and disposed of. In respect of public bodies this must be done by their local Board of Survey unless one has not been established in which case the matter must be referred to the Assets Management Unit of the Ministry of Finance & the Public Service.

Conclusion

Permanent Secretaries, Chief Executive Officers, Board Chairmen, Heads of Departments must ensure that this Circular is brought to the attention of all relevant public officers in their ministry, department, agency or public body.


Wesley Hughes, C.D.
Financial Secretary

LAPTOP ASSIGNMENT FORM

ASSIGNEE _____ DATE _____

LAPTOP & OTHER ITEMS ASSIGNED	Serial Number	CONDITION			COMMENTS
		Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	
LAPTOP					
MOUSE					
SPARE BATTERY					
REMOVABLE DRIVE					
PCMCIA MODEM CARD					
ADDITIONAL KEYBOARD					
AC ADAPTER (CABLE)					
Other Items , Specify					

The above computer peripheral devices and other items in the condition as stated above is the property of the _____ and is being assigned to you for _____ day(s)/week(s)/months/ year(s) for the purpose of conducting the work of the ministry/department/agency/public body. It is your responsibility to safeguard this computer, the peripheral devices and other items from theft, loss or damage and to ensure its proper care and use. The computer is being loaned to you on the following conditions:-

- (1) No additional software is to be loaded to the computer without the permission of the ministry/department/agency/public body.
- (2) In case of damage, theft or loss, a formal report is to be made immediately by you to the ministry/department/agency/public body (NB. You will be held personal liable for any loss or damage caused by negligence based on an internal investigation).
- (3) The ministry/department/agency reserves the right to recall the computer at any time.

The computer is subject to the audit of the Chief Internal Auditor and the Auditor General

NAME OF ASSIGNEE	NAME OF ISSUING OFFICER
SIGNATURE OF ASSIGNEE	SIGNATURE OF ISSUING OFFICER
DATE	DATE

LAPTOP ASSIGNMENT REGISTER

ASSIGNMENT					RETURN		
DATE ASSIGNED	NAME OF ASSIGNEE	LAPTOP PERIPHERAL DEVICES/ & OTHER ITEMS ASSIGNED	SERIAL NUMBER	DATE TO BE RETURNED	DATE RETURNED	RECEIVED BY	REMARKS