

STATE SECRETARIAT

Meaning

Every state has a Secretariat of its own. It is the nerve centre of state administration. It consists of several departments of state government. The departments are headed politically by the ministers and administratively by the secretaries. The Chief Secretary is the head of the entire State Secretariat while, a Secretary is head of one or two departments. The Secretary is usually a senior IAS officer (a generalist). An exception to this rule is the Public Works Department which is headed by the Chief Engineer (a specialist). It should be noted here that the Secretary is the Secretary to the State Government as a whole and not to the individual minister concerned.

Organisation

The number of Secretariat departments vary from state to state. It ranges from 15 to 35 departments. The departments which are common to most of the states are mentioned below.

- General Administration
- Home
- Finance
- Jail
- Revenue
- Forest
- Agriculture
- Labour and Employment
- Irrigation and Power
- Law
- Social Welfare
- Housing
- Civil Supplies
- Transport
- Local Government

- Excise and Taxation
- Panchayati Raj
- Public Works
- Education
- Planning
- Industries
- Publicity and Information
- Cooperation
- Health

Usually, each secretary is given the charge of more than one department. Hence, the number of secretariat departments would be more than the number of secretaries.

Personnel

A Secretariat department consists of officers who are appointed for a fixed tenure. The heirarchy of the Secretariat officers is:

- Secretary
- Special Secretary/Additional Secretary
- Joint Secretary
- Deputy Secretary
- Under Secretary
- Assistant Secretary

The office component of the Secretariat consists of the following personnel.

- Superintendent (or section officer)
- Assistant Superintendents
- Upper Division Clerks
- Lower Division Clerks
- Steno-typists and Typists
- Manual Workers

Functions

A Secretariat is a staff agency. Its basic function is to assist the minister in the fulfillment of his role. It performs the following functions.

- (i) To formulate the policies and programmes of the state government.
- (ii) To coordinate the state government policies and programmes.
- (iii) To prepare the state budget and impose control on public expenditure.
- (iv) To frame legislation, rules and regulations.
- (v) To supervise the implementation of policies and programmes by field agencies.
- (vi) To review the results of the execution of a policy.

- (vii) To maintain contacts with Central and other state governments.
- (viii) To initiate measures to develop greater organisational competence, that is, O and M work.
- (ix) To assist ministers in discharging their responsibilities to the state legislature, like answering questions.
- (x) To appoint heads of departments and to look into the consequent establishment work like salary administration.
- (xi) To serve as a think-tank of the state government.
- (xii) To explore the possibilities of improving the financial position of the state.
- (xiii) To receive the complaints, representations and appeals from the people and solve them.
- (xiv) To approve service rules and their amendments.

CHIEF SECRETARY

Position

The office of a Chief Secretary had its origin in the Central Government during the British rule. It was created in 1799 by Lord Wellesly, the then Governor-General of India. G.H. Barlow was the first occupant of this office. However, in course of time, this office disappeared from the Central Government and was adopted by state governments much before the attainment of Independence.

The Chief Secretary is the executive head of the State Secretariat. He is the administrative head of the state administration and stands at the apex of the state administrative hierarchy. His position *vis-a-vis* other secretaries is more than *primus inter pares* (first among equals). He is, in fact, chief of the secretaries and his control extends to all the Secretariat departments. He leads, guides and controls the entire state administration. He holds a pivotal, pre-eminent and coveted position and assumes different roles in the administrative system of the state.

Since 1973, a Chief Secretary is the senior-most civil servant in all the states. Before that, for instance, he was considered junior to the Financial Commissioner in Punjab and members of the Board of Revenue in UP. In Tamil Nadu, on the other hand, he was the senior-most civil servant. However, this office was standardised in 1973 on the recommendation of the Administrative Reforms Commission of India, and this post was equated with that of the Secretary to the Government of India, both in status and emoluments.

The chief secretary is chosen by the Chief Minister from the senior IAS officers of the state cadre. Generally, the Chief Minister takes into account three factors in this regard: seniority of the officer; service record, performance and merit of the officer; and his trust and confidence in the officer.

Further, the office of Chief Secretary has been excluded from the operation of the tenure system. In other words, there is no fixed tenure for this post.

Powers and Functions

The powers and functions of the Chief Secretary are mentioned in the 'Rules of Business' framed by a state government. He also derives some of his powers and functions from conventions. These are explained below.

As an Advisor to the Chief Minister The Chief Secretary acts as the principal advisor to the Chief

Minister on all matters of state administration. The Chief Minister consults the Chief Secretary on all policy issues related to the governance of state. He explains to the Chief Minister about the administrative implications of the proposals forwarded by the state ministers. He also acts as a link between the Chief Minister and other secretaries of the state government.

As Secretary to the Cabinet The Chief Secretary acts as a Secretary to the State Cabinet. He is the administrative head of the Cabinet Secretariat and attends the meeting of the Cabinet and its sub-committee, if necessary. He prepares the agenda for Cabinet meetings and keeps records of its proceedings. He takes steps for the implementation of the decision taken in such meetings.

As the Head of Civil Service The Chief Secretary acts as the head of the state civil service. He deals with all cases related to appointment, transfers and promotion of senior state civil servants. He plays an important role in maintaining the morale of the state civil service. He is the conscience-keeper to all state civil servants.

As Chief Coordinator The Chief Secretary is the chief-coordinator of state administration. At the secretarial level, he works towards ensuring inter-departmental coordination. He advises the secretaries on inter-departments difficulties. He is the Chairman of coordination committees set up for resolving inter-departmental disputes. He presides over the meetings of the departments' secretaries. Below the Secretariat level, he presides over the conferences attended by Divisional Commissioners, District Collectors and the heads of departments of district administration to effect coordination.

As the Head of Certain Departments The Chief Secretary also acts as the administrative head of some Secretariat departments. However, there is no uniformity throughout the country in this regard and his position varies from state to state. In most cases the General Administration Department, Personnel Department, Planning Department and Administrative Reforms Department are directly under the charge of the Chief Secretary. The General Administration Department is the most important department in the State Secretariat and its political head is the Chief Minister himself. It is concerned with various matters affecting the entire business of the state government.

As Crisis Administrator In times of crisis like flood, drought, communal disturbances, and other, the Chief Secretary plays a very significant role. He provides guidance and leads the officers and agencies engaged in relief operations. He is generally a chairman or an important member of committees set up to take high level policy decisions during a crisis situation. In fact, he acts as the crisis administrator-in-chief and virtually represents the state government for all the officers concerned with relief operations.

Other Functions and Roles The Chief Secretary also performs the following functions and roles.

- (a) He acts as the *residual legatee*, that is, he looks after all those matters which do not fall within the purview of other secretaries.
- (b) He acts as the secretary, by rotation, of the Zonal Council of which the state concerned is a member.
- (c) He exercises general supervision and control over the entire State Secretariat.
- (d) He has administrative control over the Secretariat building, the staff attached to the ministers, the central record branch, the Secretariat library, the conservancy and watch and ward staff of the Secretariat departments.

- (e) He is the principal channel of communication between his government and the Central Government and other state governments.
- (f) He plays a significant role in the administration of law and order and planning.
- (g) He attends the annually held chief secretaries conference presided over by the cabinet secretary of the Union Government.
- (h) He acts as a spokesman of the state government.
- (i) He acts as the chief advisor to the Governor when President's rule is imposed in the state, and if the Central advisors are not appointed.
- (j) He attends the meetings of the National Development Council.
- (k) He acts as the chief public relations officer of the state government.

Chief Secretary Vs. Cabinet Secretary

There is no office in the Union Government which can be equated to that of Chief Secretary in the state. To some extent, the Cabinet Secretary, at the Central level can be called as the counterpart of chief secretary. However the functions performed and the roles assumed by the chief secretary in the state administration are so vast, varied and wide that they are shared at the central level, by the Cabinet Secretary, the Personnel Secretary, the Home Secretary and the Finance Secretary.

The *similarities* between the Chief Secretary and the Cabinet Secretary are:

- (i) Both are chief advisors to their respective chief executives.
- (ii) Both are chief coordinators of their respective administrations.
- (iii) Both are secretaries to their respective cabinets.
- (iv) Both are administrative heads of their respective cabinet secretariats.
- (v) Both the offices originated at the Central level.
- (vi) Both supervise the implementation of the decisions of their respective cabinets.
- (vii) Both are heads of their respective civil services.

The *differences* between the Chief Secretary and the Cabinet Secretary are:

- (i) The powers and functions of Chief Secretary are much more than that of the Cabinet Secretary.
- (ii) The Chief Secretary is the administrative head of the State Secretariat, while the Cabinet Secretary is not the administrative head of the Central Secretariat.
- (iii) The Chief Secretary is the chief of state secretaries, while the Cabinet Secretary is not the chief of Central secretaries but only *primus inter pares* (first among equals).
- (iv) The Chief Secretary is the *Residual Legatee* at the state level, while the Cabinet Secretary is not the *Residual Legatee* at the Central level. This function at the Central level is performed by the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister who is the administrative head of the PMO.
- (v) Some departments of the State Secretariat are directly under the charge of chief secretary while no department of the Central Secretariat is under the direct charge of the Cabinet Secretary except, of course, the Cabinet Secretariat.

DIRECTORATES

Meaning

The minister, the secretary and the executive head are the three components of government at the state level. The minister and the secretary together constitute what is popularly known as the Secretariat. The office of the executive head, on the other hand, is termed as the Directorate. The directorates function under the State Secretariat.

A secretariat is a staff agency while a Directorate is a line agency. In other words, a Secretariat is concerned with policy-making, while a Directorate is concerned with policy execution. Thus, directorates are the executive arms of state governments. Their duty is to translate into action the policies which are framed by a Secretariat. They are also known as executive departments as distinct from the Secretariat departments. Excepting few cases, each Secretariat department has a corresponding executive department.

Heads

The directorates are as a rule located outside the secretariat. They constitute distinct organisational entities headed by Director who is assisted by Additional Directors, Joint Directors, Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors. However, the head of a Directorate (i.e. executive department or executive agency) may also be known by various names viz. Commissioner, Director-General, Inspector-General, Registrar, Controller, Chief Engineer, Chief Conservator, and so on. The following table contains the names of directorates or executive departments and their heads.

Table 4.1 Directorates and their Heads		
Sl. No.	Directorates or Executive Departments	Designation of the Heads
1.	Agriculture Department	Director of Agriculture
2.	Animal Husbandry Department	Director of Animal Husbandry
3.	Cooperative Department	Registrar of Cooperative Societies
4.	Education Department	Director of Education
5.	Excise Department	Commissioner of Excise
6.	Forest Department	Chief Conservator of Forests
7.	Housing Department	Commissioner of Housing
8.	Irrigation Department	Chief Engineer (Irrigation)
9.	Jail Department	Inspector-General of Jails
10.	Labour Department	Commissioner of Labour
11.	Police Department	Director-General of Police
12.	Sales Tax Department	Commissioner of Sales Tax
13.	Printing and Stationery Department	Controller of Printing and Stationary
14.	Employment Directorate	Director of Employment
15.	Industries Directorate	Director of Industries

Functions

The functions of the Head of the Directorate are:

- (i) To provide technical advice to the ministers.

- (ii) To prepare the budget of the department.
- (iii) To exercise disciplinary powers over the subordinate officers as per rules.
- (iv) To render advice to the State Public Service Commission regarding promotions and disciplinary actions.
- (v) To inspect implementation of work by the departmental district staff.
- (vi) To allocate grants and make budget reappropriations.
- (vii) To make all appointments, confirmations, postings, transfers and promotions of all subordinate officers within the prescribed limits and approved rules.
- (viii) To organise in-service training programmes for departmental officers.
- (ix) To carry out departmental research and experiment programme to improve the efficiency of the department.
- (x) To accord sanction to the officers for the attendance of conferences (other than inter-state or Central Government conferences).

BOARD OF REVENUE

Meaning

A Board of Revenue relieves the state government of the detailed work in the field of revenue administration. It is the highest body in the revenue hierarchy of the state. It is an autonomous body created under a special act of the State Legislature. Hence, it is not a department of the state government and does not form a part and parcel of the state government machinery. However, it functions under the control of the state government.

A Board of Revenue acts as a link between the state headquarters and the divisional/district administration. Its activities are multi-functional and it is thus related to several departments.

A Board of Revenue is a multi-member body. The members have both individual as well as collective responsibilities. The number of members varies from one state to another state. It ranges between one and six. Thus, the Board in U.P. has six members whereas in Bihar and Orissa it consists of only one full-time member. The members are usually senior I.A.S. officers. The Board has a separate secretariat of its own.

Functions

The functions of the Board can be divided into three categories—advisory, appellate (quasi-judicial) and administrative. These are as follows:

1. It tenders expert advice to the state government on all matters of revenue policy and other matters which are referred to it.
2. It acts as the highest revenue court in the state. It hears appeals or petitions for revision filed against orders passed by revenue authorities like the District Collector and the Divisional Commissioner.
3. It exercises general supervision over the state revenues and recommends measures to augment those revenues.
4. It is responsible for the administration of the revenue policies as well as the revenue

legislations of the state government.

5. It undertakes tours and inspects the revenue sections in the divisional commissioner's offices and the collectorates.
6. It is responsible for civil supplies, land reforms, survey, settlement and land records.
7. In some states, the President of the Board of Revenue acts as the Chairman of the State Transport Authority.
8. In those states which do not have divisional commissioners, the Board of Revenue comes in direct contact with the district administration. Here, the Board supervises and coordinates the work of various departments at the supra-district level.
9. In some states, the Board is responsible for conducting the departmental examinations for the IAS and other categories of officers.
10. In some states, the President of the Board of Revenue is empowered to write the Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs) of the Divisional Commissioners and the District Collectors.

Alternative Bodies

The first Board of Revenue was created in Bengal in 1786. At present (2010), a Board of Revenue is existing in all the states except the following:

1. Maharashtra and Gujarat, which have the institution of Revenue Tribunal in place of the Board of Revenue.
2. Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir, which have the institution of Financial Commissioner instead of the Board of Revenue.
3. Andhra Pradesh, which has replaced the Board of Revenue with the institution of Functional Commissioners in 1977.