



OFFICE OF THE CABINET SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
GANGTOK

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OFFICE MEMORANDUM

General guidelines for preparation and submission of Cabinet Memorandum

Cabinet is the highest executive body in the State and the decisions taken by the Cabinet are fundamental to the governance of the State and define the course in which the Government desires to move forward in achieving its goals, both long term and short term. Hence, it also has a huge significance to the state administration.

A good Cabinet Memorandum is essential, as it helps the Cabinet to take decisions based on facts and correct presentation concerning any proposal that is brought to it by various departments. The proposals that are placed before the Cabinet are often the culmination of a series of steps, which may include a direction from the State Government on a certain issue which may further require inter departmental consultation, study on the economic impact, social impact and so on. Thus a Cabinet Memorandum should include all these vital information, with due diligence with regard to the style of presentation as well as content. Care should be taken to avoid unnecessary repetition and use of superlatives. There should be no room for confusion or misconstruction.

It is often seen that the Cabinet Memorandum/ proposals that are prepared and submitted by the departments are sketchy and lack important details like the Budget Head, fund provision, funding pattern, approval of the Minister concerned, concurrence of the Finance and Planning department(s) etc. As the Memorandum is a single document which is examined by the Cabinet during its meeting for consideration of a

proposal, it is important that this document is prepared with care and effort should be made to make the proposal self-sufficient. Important papers which the departments feel will aid the Cabinet in understanding the proposal in a better light should be annexed to the main Memorandum as Annexures.

Therefore, with a view to aid the departments in drafting of a good Cabinet Memorandum and also to bring a uniform format, these general guidelines are prepared for reference of the departments. These are indicative; and whereas the general format will remain the same for all departments, the details and subsequent headings may vary from case to case.

I. Format

1. A-4 size paper should be used to prepare and submit the Cabinet Memorandum as it is better size for filing.
2. Departments are required to use same size paper while submitting their proposal (size of paper for Memorandum and Annexure) and avoid using landscape format while preparing Annexures as it is not ideal for binding and filing.
3. All pages should be numbered.
4. The typing impression should be legible and clear in all pages.
5. The Cabinet Memorandum should be preferably typed in 1.5 inch space and font "Arial" should be used in size 12.
6. A wide margin (not less than 1.5 inch) should be left towards that edge of paper which is stapled or tagged.
7. All paragraphs should be appropriately numbered.
8. Annexures should be indicated clearly and appropriately referred in the text of the Memorandum.
9. Cabinet Memorandum should be signed by the Secretary – in – charge of the Department and the File Number should be given in the lower left side of the last page.

A specimen of the format is annexed as Annexure –I to these guidelines for reference.

II. Language

1. Special attention needs to be paid to the quality of drafting. The Memorandum should bring out all relevant details and no material fact should remain unstated. It should be self-contained, lucid, straightforward and contain only the relevant details.
2. All abbreviations should be expanded when the term is first used in the text.
3. There should not be any repetition and unnecessary verbosity.
4. The "Subject" of the Cabinet Memorandum should capture the essence of the proposal in an accurate and appropriate manner.

III. Sections

1. A Cabinet Memorandum shall consist of following sections:
 - a. Heading-** It consists of the Crest on the "Top Centre" followed by the Name of the Department and the Cabinet Memorandum issue number and date as prescribed by the department concerned. It is followed by the details with regard to Name of the Department, Minister –in – charge and Secretary – in – charge.
 - b. Subject-** Subject should contain all relevant information in a short sentence. It should not be more than 2 to 3 sentences long.
 - c. Introduction/ background-** Introduction should bring out the essence of the proposal in three to four sentences, followed by a brief background concerning the instant proposal or the programme/ scheme. The main objective of the proposal should also be defined in the introduction.
 - d. details of the proposal-** all relevant information should be given in this section and if necessary more than one paragraph may be devoted to this section. However, the sentences should not repeat ideas or comments. Any unique component/ feature should also be included in this section.
 - e. financial implication-** this section should clearly bring out the financial implication of the proposal both to State as well as Central Government. Detail of the manner of funding, sharing pattern (90:10/50:50 etc), in case of a proposal to be financed by Central Government or any other entity other than the State

Government should be clearly mentioned. The budget head along with actual fund position should also be mentioned clearly, especially in cases where the proposal is to be implemented in a phased manner.

The financial details should also include the following:

- (i) Total cost of the project with a brief scope/ cost break- up.
- (ii) Fund allocated during Current Financial Year (State Share and Central Share).
- (iii) In case of a State specific project, the fund allocated by the State during Current Financial Year.
- (iv) Project completion period.
- (v) Mode of implementation.
- (vi) The comments of the Planning and Development Department and Finance Department while obtaining concurrence/ approval (s) should be reproduced verbatim in the Cabinet Memorandum. If the concurrence obtained is conditional, the same should be mentioned along with the steps/ measures taken by the Department to address the same.
- (vii) Proposals where availability of land is required, the Department should clearly mention that 'land is available which is free from all encumbrances'.
- (viii) Forest clearance, where applicable should be obtained before a proposal is brought before the Cabinet for consideration. Where it is not possible, at least Stage- I clearance should have been obtained.
- (ix) A written NOC from the land holder regarding their consent to build the proposed project on their land at Government rates in case of road works should be included as an Annexure.
- (x) Proposals submitted for consideration of change in 'Scope of Work' of a project should contain the following details –
 - Justification for the change in scope.
 - Reasons for not envisaging the same in the first instance, when the project was prepared initially.