



## **GOMBE STATE OF NIGERIA**

### **EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 11 OF 2023**

#### **ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM**

**WHEREAS**, Gombe State Government has continually demonstrated its commitment to accountability, transparency, and responsiveness to the concerns of the public:

**WHEREAS**, the Government is now determined to establish and implement a formal Grievance Redress Mechanism ("GRM") to address grievances or feedback that may be raised by the public to enhance trust, responsiveness, and effectiveness in addressing grievance and promoting good governance:

**NOW THEREFORE**, I, **Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya**, CON, Governor of Gombe State, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and all other laws enabling in that behalf do hereby order as follows:

#### **ESTABLISHMENT OF GRIEVANCE REDRESS PANEL**

1. To promote fairness, accountability, and transparency within the Grievance Redress Mechanism, there is hereby established for the State a Grievance Redress Panel ("the Panel") to be composed of the following:-
  - a) The Commissioner, State Ministry of Finance and Economic Development ("Ministry of Finance") as Chairman;
  - b) The State Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice;
  - c) The Commissioner, State Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism;

- d) The Commissioner, State Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Cooperatives
- e) The Chairman, Gombe State Internal Revenue Service ("the GIRS");
- f) The Chairman, Gombe State Urban Planning Development Authority (GOSUPDA);
- g) The Director-General, Gombe State Geographic Information System (GOGIS);
- h) Director, Administration and Finance, Ministry of Finance, who shall serve as Secretary of the Panel.

### **POWERS OF THE PANEL**

2. (1) The Panel shall have the power to:

- a) receive, register, and document grievances from any person (hereinafter called "aggrieved person") who feels aggrieved by the actions or decisions of any MDA in the State over the services provided or to be provided or ought to have been provided by the MDA;
- b) conduct thorough investigations into the grievance received, which may involve gathering evidence, interviewing relevant parties and witnesses, and examining and reviewing relevant documents;
- c) facilitate mediation between the aggrieved person and the MDA to reach a mutually acceptable resolution;
- d) resolve all grievances within ten (10) working days from the date of receipt of such grievances;
- e) make additional rules of procedure in addition to the ones provided herein;
- f) co-opt any person whose advice the Panel requires on any matter as an interim member for such period as the Panel may deem fit;
- g) setup any committee to carry out such functions on its behalf, as it may determine from time to time;

- h) monitor the implementation of its recommendations and ensure that the MDAs follow through on addressing the grievances;
- i) regularly report to the Governor on the grievances received, actions taken, and outcomes achieved to ensure transparency and accountability;
- j) provide training and capacity-building initiatives to staff responsible for managing grievances to ensure they are equipped to handle grievances effectively and sensitively;
- k) regular monitoring and evaluation of the Grievance Redress Mechanism to identify areas for improvement;
- l) have the Secretariat of the Panel domiciled in the Head Office of the State Ministry of Finance and Economic Development;
- m) authorise MDAs to establish Grievance Redress Desks to receive grievances;
- n) refer a grievance to Grievance Redress Desk of an MDA to handle.

#### **ESTABLISHMENT OF GRIEVANCE REDRESS DESKS**

3. 1) The Panel in authorising MDAs to establish Grievance Redress Desks should ensure that the MDAs are guided by the following Grievance Redress Mechanism components:-

- a) clear and accessible channels for submitting grievances, such as online forms, email addresses, hotlines, or physical grievance boxes;
- b) guidelines on how grievances will be handled, including timelines for acknowledgment, investigation, and resolution;
- c) confidentiality and protection of the identity of aggrieved persons; and
- d) transparent communication with aggrieved persons about the status of their grievances and the outcomes of investigations;
- e) mechanism for escalating complaints if they are not resolved satisfactorily at lower levels.

- 2) When required by the Panel, Grievance Redress Desk of an MDA may handle a grievance, Provided that in handling the grievance, the Grievance Redress Desk shall be guided by the Rules of Procedure of the Panel prescribed herein.
- 3) Where a Grievance Redress Desk of an MDA is unable to resolve a grievance within seven working days, the grievance shall be returned to the Panel for consideration.

### **CHANNELS OF LODGING OF GRIEVANCES**

3. To make the process effective and accessible, and depending on preferences and circumstances, an aggrieved person can lodge a grievance through established channels to be provided by the Panel:-
  - 1) The Panel shall provide the following channels for lodging grievances:-
    - a) **An online portal:** Aggrieved persons can submit their grievances electronically through an online platform created by the Panel by completing the Grievance Redress Form **(FORM GRF 01)** found in the Schedule hereto;
    - b) **Email:** Aggrieved persons can submit their grievances via email provided by the Panel;
    - c) **Helpline:** Aggrieved persons can call and speak to representative who can assist them in lodging their grievances through a dedicated helpline;
    - d) **In-person:** Aggrieved persons can submit their grievances in person at physical locations provided by the Panel;
    - e) **Written Grievance:** Aggrieved persons can submit written grievances via mail or drop-off locations provided by the Panel;
    - f) **Third-Party Organisations:** The Panel shall collaborate with third-party organisations, such as Non-Governmental

Organisations or community groups, to receive grievances on its behalf;

g) **Anonymous Reporting:** The Panel shall offer the option for aggrieved persons to lodge grievances anonymously.

2) Grievances may also be registered at any of the Grievance Redress Desks established by the Panel through the use of Grievance Redress Form (**FORM GRF 01**) as in the Schedule hereto.

3) Where a grievance is made orally, the receiving officer of the Panel shall cause the grievance to be reduced into writing through the use of hard copy of **FORM GRF 01** or its equivalent electronic form.

#### **TIME WITHIN WHICH TO LODGE GRIEVANCE**

4. 1) A grievance shall be lodged in any of channels specified herein not later than 30 days from the day on which the aggrieved person first had knowledge of the grievance complained about: Provided that the Panel may conduct an inquiry in respect of a grievance not made within that period if it considers that there are special circumstances which make it proper to do so.

2) A grievance received through the Grievance Redress Desks at the Tax Stations of the GIRS must be referred to the Grievance Redress Desk at the Head office of the GIRS not later than 7 days from the date of lodging the grievance for onward transmission to the Panel within three working days.

#### **RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE PANEL**

5. To ensure accountability, fairness, and effectiveness in addressing grievances, the Panel shall follow a structured and transparent procedure.

1) The Panel in entertaining any grievance shall be guided by the following procedure and guidelines:

a) **Receipt of Grievance:** The Panel receives the grievance through designated channels (see Channels for Lodging of Grievances);

- b) **Initial Review:** The Panel conducts an initial review of the grievance to determine its validity and whether it falls within the scope of the Panel's mandate;
- c) **Acknowledgment:** The Panel timely acknowledges receipt of the grievance to the aggrieved person, providing information on the next steps and expected timeline for resolution;
- d) **Investigation:** The Panel conducts a thorough investigation and assessment of the grievance to understand the nature, scope, and underlying issues. This may involve gathering evidence, interviewing relevant parties, and reviewing relevant documents;
- e) **Attendance of Aggrieved Person:** An aggrieved person may attend and be heard or if he so desires his authorized representative may attend the sitting of the Panel.
- f) **Notice of Hearing:** The Notice of Hearing of a grievance shall be issued to the aggrieved person and the respondent at least seven (7) days before the date of the proceedings before the Panel where the appearances or representations from the parties are required for the just determination of the grievance.
- g) **Mediation or Resolution:** Depending on the nature of the grievance, the Panel may facilitate mediation between the parties involved or work towards a resolution that is acceptable to all parties.
- h) **Decision-making:** Based on the findings of the investigation and any mediation efforts, the Panel makes a decision on how to address the grievance, which may include recommendations for corrective actions or redress;
- i) **Communication of Decision:** the Panel communicates its decision to the aggrieved person and any other relevant parties, providing reasons for the decision and outlining any actions to be taken;

- j) **Follow-up and Monitoring:** the Panel follows up on the implementation of its decision and monitors the situation to ensure that the agreed-upon actions are carried out effectively;
  - k) **Documentation and Reporting:** the Panel maintains record of grievance, investigation, decision, and outcomes for documentation and reporting purposes;
  - l) **Feedback and Improvement:** the Panel may seek feedback from the aggrieved person on their satisfaction with the resolution process and use this feedback to improve its grievance redress mechanism.
  - m) **Confidentiality and Protection:** the Panel shall maintain the confidentiality of the grievance details and ensure protection of aggrieved persons from any adverse consequences.
  - n) **Continuous Improvement:** the Panel shall periodically review and enhance the GRM based on feedback, lessons learned, and evolving public needs to ensure its effectiveness and efficiency.
- 2) The Chairman of the Panel shall cause a sitting of the Panel within seven (7) days of receipt of a registered grievance to entertain the grievance.
  - 3) The Panel shall ensure that rules of natural justice are respected in the discharge of its duties.

#### **MISCELLANIES**

- 6. 1) Evidence obtained in the course of handling a grievance by the Panel may not be admissible in a court of law.
- 2) The Panel has authority to make binding decisions on grievance resolution.
- 3) The Panel shall ensure that decisions are fair, just, and in accordance with applicable policies, regulations and laws.
- 4) Panel members should not have any conflicts of interest that could compromise their ability to objectively assess and resolve grievances.

Accordingly, any member against whose MDA there is grievance shall recuse himself from deliberation of the Panel over that grievance.

- 5) Any misconduct or breaches of ethics by a Panel member shall be reported to the Governor for necessary action.

**7. Definition of terms-**

"Actions or decisions of any MDA" include omissions,

"Civil servant" includes any employee, agent, worker, and operative of an MDA,

"Grievance" includes complaint, objection, protest, criticism, accusation, demurral, disapproval, allegation, dissatisfaction, and the like,

"person" or "persons" refers to both juristic and non-juristic persons,

"State" means Gombe State of Nigeria.

8. I may revise or modify this Order as I consider necessary to give effect to the general intendment of the Order.
9. This Executive Order shall take effect within fourteen days from the date of its issuance.

ISSUED under my hand this <sup>17<sup>th</sup></sup>.....day of November, 2023.

  
**MUHAMMADU INUWA YAHAYA, CON**

**(Dan Majen Gombe)**

**Governor**

**Gombe State**