

## **Outline of 2022 NPA Report on Public Employee Personnel Management**

In conjunction with its 2022 NPA Remuneration Recommendation, the NPA made a report on public employee personnel management. In the report, the NPA identified the following three issues (1 to 3) and presented measures to deal with these issues. Below is the outline of the report.

### **1. Securing talents**

#### **【Challenges】**

As the competition with private companies for talent becomes fiercer and the number of applicants for national public employee recruitment examinations is declining, review of the recruitment examination system is an urgent issue. In addition, to smoothly recruit talented individuals with various experiences and expertise from the private sector, there is a need to resolve operational and systemic issues with a sense of urgency.

#### **【Measures】**

##### **(1) Review of the recruitment examination**

To improve accessibility for candidates and increase the number of applicants, the NPA will make necessary reviews to the modality of the recruitment examination to make the application easier for candidates and come to a conclusion within FY 2022. These reviews include (i) moving forward the date of the spring Examination for Comprehensive Service, (ii) lowering the minimum eligible age and adding examination locations for the “Liberal Arts” division, and (iii) extending the effective period of validity of the examination.

The NPA will continue to consider additional measures and come to its conclusion by FY 2023. These measures will include (i) lowering the minimum eligible age for the Examination for Comprehensive Service for the university graduate level (other than the “Liberal Arts” division) and the Examination for General Service for the university graduate level, (ii) creating a new division of the Examination for General Service for the university graduate level and (iii) reviewing applicant eligibility for the Examination for Comprehensive Service for postgraduate students.

##### **(2) Facilitation of personnel exchange with the private sector**

To promote the utilization of talent in the private sector, the NPA has clearly specified the standard for ensuring fair recruitment, which is also applied to the recruitment of highly digital-skilled personnel as Specialized Fixed-term Employees and the recruitment of general fixed-term personnel at the Division/Office Director level in ministry headquarters, so that each ministry can recruit such personnel without the NPA’s approval. The NPA will provide each ministry and

agency with operational and systemic support, which will include a clear stipulation of the flexible treatment in determining pay for personnel recruited from the private sector that can be taken under the current system. The NPA is also considering reviewing the Standards for Public-Private Personnel Exchange.

## **2. Human resources development and promotion of human resources management based on merit and performance**

### **【Challenges】**

To demonstrate employees' abilities and organizational performance to the maximum extent possible, it is important to train up employees in light of their abilities and aptitude, and to reflect the results of their personnel evaluation appropriately to appointment and remuneration. Also, for employees to autonomously consider their own future career paths, the personnel management section needs to take measures such as presenting model career paths for organization employees, actively offering opportunities for their development, and encouraging supervisors to ensure appropriate communication with their subordinates.

### **【Measures】**

#### **(1) Human resources development through training**

To strengthen the management ability of personnel, the NPA will newly establish Administrative Training courses for personnel at the director level and create fundamental course materials for the unit chief level. The NPA will also enhance training courses to support the career development of young employees. The NPA will further increase training materials for employees with prior private sector experience so that they can adapt to the public service quickly and demonstrate their abilities. Finally, the NPA will conduct training courses for supervisors to promote changes in their thinking with regard to the promotion of female employees

#### **(2) Promotion of human resources management based on merit and performance**

The NPA will communicate with ministries/agencies to allow them to promote the appropriate employees based on merit and performance and treat these employees in a well-balanced manner in light of the recently revised personnel evaluation system. The NPA will also support training within each ministry and agency to improve the supervisor's evaluation ability and development of subordinates to realize more satisfactory personnel management in each organization.

## **3. Improving working environment**

### **【Challenges】**

It is essential to improve the working environment to realize employees' well-being. Therefore, it is

imperative to reform working practices, and among these, correcting the custom of long working hours is an especially urgent issue from the standpoint of securing talent. As telework becomes more widely adopted and employees' lifestyles are becoming more diverse, it is necessary to review the working hour system to accommodate flexible work styles. Furthermore, as organizational health management is becoming popular in the private sector, it is necessary to promote management of employee health in the public sector as well.

## **【Measures】**

### **(1) Corrections to the custom of long working hours**

The NPA newly established the Office of Investigation and Guidance on Working Hours. This Office (i) instructs ministries and agencies on the appropriate management of overtime hours based on objective records, (ii) provides ministries with guidance on the scope of the divisions/offices where work duties are exempt from overtime restriction because of an inability to control the volume and deadlines of tasks, (iii) strictly compels ministries to provide employees who undertake excessive overtime hours of work with counseling with a physician, (iv) gives managerial advice to supervisors, and (v) shares good examples of reviews to work practice such as the utilization of digital technologies.

The NPA also stresses the need for flexible operation in the capping of number of employees and securing of actual staffing levels depending on workload, and will call on the bureau responsible for personnel quota management as appropriate. Earlier notification of questions for Diet sessions and wider usage of online briefings with Members of the Diet has contributed to the reduction of overtime work at ministries/agencies. The NPA will continue to seek the understanding and cooperation of the Diet in these regards.

### **(2) Review of the working hour system corresponding to flexible work styles such as telework**

The NPA will promptly take measures to increase the flexibility of the flex time and rest period systems, as recommended in the interim report of a research group composed of experts with relevant knowledge and experience. The research group continues to consider the improvement of telework, securing of work intervals, and a more flexible working hour system, and will reach its conclusion by the end of this fiscal year.

### **(3) Promotion of employees' health**

To consider improvement of health management in the ministries and agencies, which bear the responsibility of promoting their employees' health, the NPA will conduct a survey on the actual situation, both in the public and private sector. The NPA will also promote further implementation of stress checks and expand the online mental health consulting service for employees.

**(4) Support for work-life balance**

In order to create an environment where employees may use childbirth support leave for fertility treatment and childcare leave without hesitation, the NPA is building awareness by holding events and providing training materials about fertility treatment and is supporting ministries and agencies. The NPA will also conduct a survey on the nursing care leave and self-development leave systems with regard to the rising needs for caregiving and reskilling.

**(5) Harassment prevention measures**

The NPA will review the training for executive and managerial employees to include the viewpoint of organization management and will start this renewed training program from FY 2023. The NPA will grasp the actual situation and problems to improve the expertise of the people in charge at ministries and agencies and develop a consultation system for prompt and appropriate resolution of any harassment incidents.