

Salient Features of Tottenham System

Objectives

On completion, you will be able to:

- Explain the organisational structure of an office
- List the duties and responsibilities of:
 - * Sections
 - * Section Heads
- List out various registers to be maintained
- Describe the formats to be used in the registers
- List out the main features of Tottenham System

2.1. Background

The office system that is followed in all offices in Government of Andhra Pradesh is Tottenham System. We are sure that you have some doubts in your mind about 'what is Tottenham?'

Sir Richard Tottenham was a British ICS officer who worked as District Collector of North Arcot District in pre independent India. North Arcot is a district in the State of Tamilnadu now. The district of Chittoor was a part of North Arcot in those days. In fact Sir Richard Tottenham on the request of the then British Government has developed three manuals. Viz:

Secretariat Office Manual (SOM)

Board of Revenue Office Manual (BOM)

District Office Manual (DOM)

The Secretariat Office Manual prescribes the procedure to be followed in the state secretariat. The Board of Revenue Office Manual or the Board's Office Manual prescribes the procedure to be followed in the Board of Revenue, which was abolished and different Commissionarates are created.

The District Office Manual is intended for the District Offices particularly the Revenue department or the Collectorate and Tahasil offices. Considering its usefulness and time tested utility the Government of Andhra Pradesh have issued orders adopting the system in all Government offices in the state with effect from the year 1958. Presently the District Office Manual (DOM) is applicable in all Heads of Departments, Collectorates, other district, mandal and all other subordinate offices irrespective of its size, nature of work and geographical location.

2.2. Organisational Structure of Office

The present system of administration is called Bureaucracy, which is also called Desk Government. The salient features of bureaucracy are:

1. Hierarchy
2. Following Rules and Procedures
3. Written Documents
4. Impersonal Order

Bureaucracy aims at rational or impersonal Government because all the decisions are taken based on rules and regulations on written documents.

Tottenham system is based on the principles of Bureaucracy. The first step in the system is to divide the office into various sections. In this system the office appears like a pyramid. The Management head will be at the top and the cutting edge level functionaries will be at the bottom of the pyramid. Depending on the size and functions of the office, the nomenclature will be different. It may be Commissioner or Director or District Collector who will be at the top level. Different levels of functionaries are working in a hierarchy.

2.2 Sections:

Simply, "Section" means a small part. The organisation (Office) is divided into several sections for administrative convenience. Each "section" deals with specific assigned activities of the organisation. For example; Establishment section deals with all service and establishment matters; Accounts Section deals with all money matters of the organisation.

That means, in Government administration, every office is divided into various sections depending on the activities/functions of the office. These functions are allotted to the sections.

Normally a Section consists the following personnel:

1. Section head or superintendent
2. Four or Five Senior/Junior Assistants
3. Typist

Administrative Officer:

The present Administrative Officer till recently in District Collectorate used to be called as Shiristadar in Andhra Area and as Revenue Assistant in Telangana area of the State. In every department you may notice that the administrative functions are entrusted to either an Administrative officer or a Joint/Deputy/Assistant Director or Commissioner. In small offices in district or mandals and other places the person who deals with administrative functions be treated as administrative officer.

Duties of Section Heads:

The section head is being called as superintendent or section officer or supervisor. Whatever name is used you may notice similar functions entrusted to the section head. It is said that the Supervisor should not only 'supervise', he/she should be 'Super wise' and have 'super vision' in discharging his/her functions. The functions of a "Supervisor" are:

- i) Exercise overall control and supervision over the section and employees working in the concerned section
- ii) Review of the currents and mark to the concerned dealing assistant for appropriate action and give proper direction to the concerned assistant on the endorsement, if any, made by the officers
- iii) Scrutinize the papers/files thoroughly before sending to the higher authorities for decision.
- iv) Closely monitor whether the approved letters/communications are despatched properly in time
- v) Check various registers maintained by dealing assistants periodically to ensure that they are maintained properly
- vi) Oversee the maintenance of files and suggest for improvement
- vii) Check the Personal Registers maintained by the concerned assistants periodically to arrest the delays in processing of papers
- viii) Ensures discipline in the section
- ix) Maintain the attendance register and mark late attendance, if any
- x) Support and suggest the higher authorities for smooth and effective functioning of the office

Duties of Assistants:

- i) Follow the instructions of the supervisor in conduct of office business
- ii) Acknowledge the receipt of the currents
- iii) Enter the currents in the Personal Register immediately after receipt and fill the relevant columns as and when action is taken
- iv) Put up the papers, normally, within three days of their receipt or as ordered
- v) Put up DO letters and other urgent communications within 24 hours of their receipt or as per directions of the superior officers
- vi) Prompt submission of drafts as and when files are received
- vii) Timely fair copying and despatch of the letters
- viii) Put up reminders at regular intervals as prescribed and maintain Reminder Dairy
- ix) Maintain and update Periodical Register and submit the periodicals with required information in time

- x) Close the files as per the prescribed procedure as and when action is not required in that file and send them to "Record Room"
- xi) Prepare index slips before sending the disposal to record room
- xii) Maintain Stock File(s)
- xiii) Prepare monthly arrear list and submit for check to the section head and other officers along with other registers (PR, Pdl. Reg., SF etc. as per time schedule)
- xiv) Take appropriate action suggested by the superiors in the run on note within 24 hours
- xv) Not divulge any official secrets

Registers to be maintained:

Tottenham system prescribes various Registers to monitor the progress of work in the office. These Registers will help not only to watch the progress but also arrest the delays and cut down the arrears.

Following Registers are prescribed in District Office Manual (DOM).

1. New Case Register
2. Inward Register
3. Distribution Register
4. Security Register
5. Personal Register
6. Fair Copy Register
7. Register for Despatch by Local Delivery
8. Register of Stamp Account
9. Periodical Register
10. Call Book
11. Copy Application Register
12. Record Issue Register
13. Government Suits Register
14. Pauper Suits Register
15. Register of Immovable Properties purchased by Government in Civil Court Cases

New Case Register:

This register is maintained only in the Collectorates and offices attached to Revenue Department. In other offices only an "Inward register" is maintained. The format of the New Case Register is given below:

Current number	Section letter clerks number	Nature (R.D.F.L. or N., and date of disposal	Record-keeper's initials
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)

Inward Register:

All tappals received in an office, after they are seen by the Head of the office, will be entered in the "Inward register". A continuous serial number is given starting from 1st January to 31st December of each year. The tappal once entered in this register with a serial number is called a "Current". In many offices signature of the Assistant receiving the currents is obtained as an acknowledgement in the same Inward Register.

Distribution Register:

This is also in practice that the currents are separated section wise and distributed to each section through a "Distribution Register" and Acknowledgement from the concerned Assistant is taken in the register. The format of the Distribution Register is as follows:

Serial No.	Date	Sufficient description of communication or enclosure (outside number, if any)	Section letter and clerk's	Clerk's initials
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

Personal Register:

Every Dealing Assistant (Junior/Senior assistant) will have to maintain a Personal Register. Two types of Registers are maintained in government offices. In Heads of Departments and State Secretariat, the PR contains 15 columns. Where as the PR maintained in District and other offices contains 10 columns.

The difference is that columns 4,5,&6 of the PR maintained in the offices of HODs dealing with "Title; from whom; & out side No. & Date" are clubbed into one column i.e., column No. 4 in the PR maintained in the subordinate offices. Similarly columns 9,10,&11 are clubbed into one column No. 8 of PR maintained in subordinate offices. All currents received will have to be entered in the PR by each Dealing Assistant.

Security Register:

The title of the register itself is communicating the purpose of maintaining this Register. All valuables, such as, Cheques, Demand Drafts and valuables received in the office are entered in this Register instead of Inward Register. The format of this is given below:

Consecutive number	Date of receipt	From whom received	Date and number of the current	Purpose of the current	Particulars of valuables enclosed	Section and group dealing with the subject and the initials of the officer receiving custody of valuables	Signature of the head of the office and date of receipt by him	Remarks
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Papers should be numbered in this register in the presence of the officer opening the tappals who should affix his initials to the entries

Fair Copy Register:

We are sure that you are well aware of what fair copying means. Draft letters/communications after approval of the competent authority are to be typed neatly with out any mistakes duly formatting the text and incorporating all the corrections and modifications done in the draft before sending for despatch. This is called fair copying. Utmost care should be taken while fair copying a letter as it will go to a person or organisation. Any mistakes in the fair copy reflects on the functioning the office.

In bigger establishments, such as, Collectorates & Heads of departments etc., there will be a separate fair copying section headed by a Superintendent. In smaller establishments (offices) a typist will be working under the control of office Superintendent. The purpose of maintaining a “Fair Copy Register” is to monitor the progress and to know about the workload. Depending on the workload, if necessary, alternate arrangements will be made. The format of the “Fair Copying Register” is given below:

FORMAT (When there is a separate section in the office)

Serial number	Number of description with date of approval of the draft	Date of receipt of Superintendent	Number of pages (Single line spacing)		Designation of typist to whom allotted
			Estimated	Actual	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Date of receipt by typist	Date of receipt of fair copy from typist	Date of signature of fair copy	Date of despatch	Initials of the fair copy Superintendent	
(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	

Local Delivery Register:

Once a letter is fair copied, this is to be sent to the concerned addressee. The addressee may be from the same place where your office is located or from other place. Local delivery means the addressee is in the same place.

Any letter delivered is to be acknowledged. For this purpose a “Local Delivery Register” is to be maintained. Some times it may be necessary to send local letters also urgently. In such a case an acknowledgement will be taken on a separate paper and that will be pasted in the register so that entire information relating to local delivery will be available at one place.

Stamp Account:

In case of the letters to be sent to places out side the place where the office is located, they are sent by “Post” for which postal stamps are to be pasted. That means, sending by post involves money. The format for maintaining “Stamp Account” is given below:

Value of stamps		
Received Rs. P	Spent Rs. P	In hand Rs. P.

Periodical Register:

Any Report/Return, which is to be sent at regular intervals, is called as Periodical Return. To monitor this activity, a "Periodical Register" will be maintained in every office in which the details about the periodical, such as date of receipt and the date of sending etc., will be entered. The format of this register is as given below:

Serial number	Name of periodical	Date due and from whom due	Date of receipt
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)

Out going periodical		
Date due and to whom due	Date of despatch	Remarks (Here enter reminders and replies to reminders)
(5)	(6)	(7)

In the format separate columns are given to enter the details about "incoming" & "out going" periodicals. Important things to note are:

1. No current numbers are given to the papers received in respect of periodicals
2. A Periodical Register is maintained for each year starting from 1st January to 31st December.
3. Continuous serial numbers are given to all periodicals
4. Every Dealing Assistant will maintain a Periodical Register in respect of periodicals dealt in his/her seat.
5. The dates of incoming periodicals and out going periodicals are to be entered in to the register.
6. Every Dealing Assistant should take adequate care for timely sending of the out going periodicals and also to obtain in coming periodicals.

Call Book:

When a paper or a file does not require action more than 6 (six) months viz; where a case is coming for hearing before a Court on a particular day, which may be after 6 or more months. Files will be sent to the "Call Book" when action is not required for more than six months duly taking orders for the competent authority. When a file was sent to "Call Book", it becomes a *disposal* and sent to record room. The Record assistant will watch the date of next action and send the file back on time for further action When the file is called back, you have to deal the file with a "fresh" number.

Serial No.	Personal or Current Register number	Date of entry in the register	Subject	Details of order to lie over, e.g., when further action is due, etc.	Fresh new case number assigned and date of revival in the personal register
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)

Record Issue Register:

Files disposed off after completion of action in those files, Registers after their use etc. are called “Records” which are to be retained for a future reference for a period of time as prescribed in the Record Room. Like in a library when a book is issued to any one, an acknowledgement will be taken. Similarly in the office, when a disposal is issued for reference purpose, the responsibility of the record assistant is to maintain such register and ensure prompt return. The Register maintained for this purpose is called “Record Issue Register”. The format of the register is as follows:

(1)	Date	(2)	Hour of handing over the sealed bag to the police guard or night watchman	(3)	Signature of the record keeper or the assistant in charge handing over the sealed bag	(4)	Signature of the head constable or constable with his number or the signature or the thumb impression of the night watchman taking over the sealed bag	(5)	Hour of taking back the sealed bag from the police guard or night watchman	(6)	Signature of the head constable or constable or the signature or the thumb impression of the night watchman handing over the bag to the record keeper or his assistant	(7)	Signature of the record keeper or his assistant acknowledging receipt of the bag.	(8)	Remarks, if any.
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Copy Application Register:

This register is maintained generally in the Revenue Department. Entries in respect of Copy Stamp Papers received with copy applications and cash for the purchase should necessarily be brought to “Copy application register”.

Government Suits Register:

It is necessary to pay more attention towards the proceedings of suits. This is a very important activity and one should not take any lenience in this regard. Some of the cases may some times prolong for years together. All such "Suits" are entered into the Register called "Government Suits register". The format of the register is given below:

Serial number	Name of court and number of suit or appeal	Result of the suit or appeal and date of decree	Date of receipt of copies of judgement and decree	Amount awarded in favour or against Government	Date of effect of decree where it is adverse to Government	Date of application for execution of decree where it is favourable to Government	Amount collected with date and head of account to which the credit is made	Amount written off with number and date of the order sanctioning the write off.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Pauper Suits Register:

This Register is maintained only in District Collectorates and hence Applicable to Revenue Department employees only. When a "decree" on a "Pauper Suit" is received, it should be entered in the New Case Register. After entering into the New Case register, it need not be entered into Personal Register but into a special Register called "Pauper suits Register". The format of this Register is given below:

Serial number in the ledger	Name of Court	Number and year of suit	Names of persons liable to pay the institution fee	Amount due	Steps taken to collect the amount with date of each action	How disposed of (amount collected written off)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

Register of Immovable Properties purchased by Government in Civil court Cases:

This also belongs revenue Department only. Like the "Pauper Suits Register", this is also maintained in the district Collectorates only to watch annually the steps taken for the disposal of property purchased by Government in civil court cases. The format of this register is given below:

(1)	Serial Number
(2)	Taluk
(3)	Village
(4)	Survey number or name of the field. In case of house and house sites the name of the hamlet or street
(5)	Description whether ryotwari inam or zamindari in case of lands. In case of lands in zamindariis and inam villages and in case of house sites note the boundaries also
(6)	Dry or wet. In the case of houses, the description tiled, thatched, etc., should be noted.
(7)	Extent. In case of lands in un surveyed tracts or in case of houses, note also measurements
(8)	Assessment or rent payable to the zamindar or inamdar
(9)	Name of the person for whose default the property was sold in the Civil Court
(10)	The name of the Civil Court which passed the decree
(11)	The number of the suit and the execution petition in which the property was purchased
(12)	Date of purchase by Government
(13)	Amount for which purchased
(14)	Particulars of subsisting encumbrances a) Nature of the encumbrance b) The amount payable to the encumbrance c) The date on which the encumbrance can be cleared; and d) The date on which the encumbrance was cleared