

Statement delivered by Josiah F. Joekai Jr., Director General of the Civil Service Agency

June 18, 2024.

Hon. Jerelimick M. Piah, Minister of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism;

Hon. Augustine C. Fayiah, Solicitor General of the Republic of Liberia;

Hon. Anthony Myers, Deputy Minister for Fiscal Affairs, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning

Other Officials of Government;

Members of the Press

Fellow Citizens, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

On May 22, 2024, the Civil Service Agency (CSA) officially announced the start of the Employees Status Regularization Project (ESRP). This project, of utmost importance, aims to effectively strengthen and manage the payroll system for transparency and efficiency. It is a crucial step in our commitment to minimize waste and abuse of government resources in strict compliance with the CSA's statutory regulations. The accumulation of ghost names, incomplete personnel action notices, and outdated information have significantly compromised the integrity of the Government's payroll system. The gravity of these situations necessitates the comprehensive cleaning of the payroll to ensure accuracy, transparency, and effective utilization of public resources.

To achieve this vital goal, the CSA has embarked on a meticulous journey to sanitize the payroll. We are conducting a comprehensive physical verification and headcount of employees of the more than 100 spending entities. This process is designed to leave no stone unturned, ensuring the following:

- Identify legitimate employees on the Government of Liberia payroll;**
- Regularize the statuses of civil servants who did not complete their Personnel Action Notices (PAN) in keeping with section 35 (1-6) of the revised human resources policy manual who are already on the Government's payroll**
- Identify and collect pertinent missing employee data to update the missing fields on the payroll; and**
- Remove ghost names, illegitimate employees, and double dippers.**

Forging partnerships with relevant government institutions is a key strategy for the CSA in its quest to sanitize the national payroll. The CSA has approached and is partnering with the National Identification Registry (NIR), a crucial ally in our mission. The NIR has agreed to provide the Civil Service Agency (CSA) with an Application Programming Interface (API) to access the national database. This integration will ensure seamless data synchronization and accuracy between our critical systems, further bolstering our efforts.

Besides, the Civil Service Employees Headcount and Verification System (CSEHVS) offers duplicate detection functionality. Under this functionality, the system can detect and flag any duplicate National Identification Registry (NIR) or Social Security numbers, ensuring the integrity of employee records. Necessarily, the duplicate detection mechanism in this undertaking has the potential to track double dippers and other malfeasances that have attended to payroll padding or blotting.

Another functionality of our Application is the Time and Attendance Function. Under this function, the Application provides robust time and attendance tracking capabilities, allowing for efficient monitoring of employee work hours and leave management. Some civil servants often come to work without compliance with the required time of being in the office at least 8:00 AM and at most 9:00 AM and leave work before 4:00 PM or 5:00 PM, as required by law and policy.

Therefore, the Time and Attendance Function is essential to ensure that legitimately employed civil servants manageably use their eight (8) hours to ensure efficiency and at working properly. Also, our newly released app has a Dashboard for each Spending Entity. The system offers a comprehensive dashboard view for Heads of Spending Entities and provides real-time insights and analytics on employees under their purview. The Dashboard for the Director General of the CSA provides a 360-degree view, monitoring, and control of the overall interactions of Spending Entities and their employees, and the ability to make changes as may be required.

At this juncture, the CSA reports that physical verification and headcounts of employees have been concluded at 26 Government Spending Entities, from which we have blocked 210 unverified individuals from 12 Entities pending verification in one month.

No.	SPENDING ENTITIES	EMPLOYEES	SALARY	ANNUAL SAVING	REASON
1	102 - Ministry of State for Presidential Affairs	5	3,597.46	899,986.68	Headcount proves they were not verified
2	111 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs	7	1,893.50		Headcount proves they were not verified
3	121 - Liberia Broadcasting System – Central Office	20	7,634.06		Headcount proves they were not verified
4	134 -National Water Sanitation and Hygiene Commission	5	1,677.28		Headcount proves they were not verified
5	316 - Agricultural & Industrial Training	2	536.00		Headcount proves they were not verified
6	318 - Monrovia City Corporation	69	15,624.23		Headcount proves they were not verified
7	340 - Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection	16	11,299.55		Headcount proves they were not verified
8	102 - Ministry of State for Presidential Affairs	5	3,597.46		Headcount proves they were not verified
9	301 - Ministry of Education – Central Office	37	7,698.54		Inactive employees did not show up at work
10	Ministry of Mines and Energy	18	6,413.29		Headcount proves they were not verified
11	Liberia Institute for Public Administration	14	6,922.52		Headcount proves they were not verified
12	National Center for Coordination and Response Mechanism	12	8,105.00		Headcount proves they were not verified
SUB - TOTAL		210	74,998.89	899,986.68	

Additionally, the CSA has finalized the analysis of three Government Spending Entities' attendance records from January to March 2024. The analysis reports showed that several employees are in direct violation of Section 4: 3,4 and 16 of the Revised Civil Service Standing Orders of 2012 which states that “unauthorized absence from work for a period of 14 consecutive days may be considered by an Agency Head as resignation.” In keeping with this provision, the Civil Service Agency has recommended dismissal, suspension, and warning actions against employees from the three Spending Entities:

No.	SPENDING ENTITIES	EMPLOYEES	MONTHLY SALARY	ANNUAL SAVINGS	REASON
1	Ministry of Mines and Energy (Dismissal)	40	18,539.98	222,479.76	Employees, on average, did not show up to work 14-20 days monthly
-	Ministry of Mines and Energy (Suspended)	81	36,881.87	36,881.87	Employees, on average, did not show up to work 8-12 days monthly
-	Ministry of Mines and Energy (Warning)	10	514.00	514.00	Employees, on average, did not show up to work 5-7 days monthly
2	Liberia Institute for Public Administration (Dismissal)	28	17,597.17	211,166.04	Employees, on average, did not show up to work 14-20 days monthly
-	Liberia Institute for Public Administration (Suspended)	30	17,215.75	17,215.75	Employees, on average, did not show up to work 8-12 days monthly
-	Liberia Institute for Public Administration (Warning)	3	559.40	559.40	Employees, on average, did not show up to work 5-7 days monthly
3	National Center for Coordination and Response Mechanism	12	25,708.00	-0-	No evidence of employment or contractual services provided to NCCRM covering the period October to December 2023. The 12 individuals were not identified during the physical verification and headcount process. These individuals were forwarded to the LACC for investigation
SUB - TOTAL		192	117,016.17	488,816.82	

The CSA has identified and subsequently blocked 54 individuals with duplicate National Identification Numbers on the payroll pending verification in one month. The CSA is very concerned about this grave situation and will immediately engage with GEODATA, the Developer of Alternative Temporary Automated Payroll Systems (ATAPS), and the relevant authorities of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning to explain these unfortunate circumstances.

No.	SPENDING ENTITIES	EMPLOYEES	MONTHLY SALARY	ANNUAL SALARY	REASON
1	301 - Ministry of Education – Central Office	18	4,122.69	74,208.42	Headcount proves these employees shared double NIN
2	310 - Ministry of Health – Central Office	32	14,486.96	463,582.72	Headcount proves these employees shared double NIN
3	404 - Ministry of Post and Telecomm.	1	150.00	150.00	Headcount proves these employees shared double NIN
4	443 - Ministry of Mines & Energy – Central Office	3	1,210.05	10,890.45	Headcount proves these employees shared double NIN
	SUB - TOTAL	54	19,969.7	548,831.59	

Ladies and gentlemen of the press, for these grave financial resource leakages, the Civil Service Agency requests the Ministry of Justice to fully investigate the Human Resources Directors and Financial Comptrollers of the Ministry of Mines and Energy, Liberia Institute of Public Administration, and the National Center for Coordination Response Mechanism. An official communication will be appropriately sent to the Ministry of Justice to this effect. Findings from our ongoing physical verification and headcounts show that the Human Resources Directors and Financial Comptrollers of the three Spending Entities illegally processed the salaries of the concerned employees who did not work for 20 to 61 days from January to March 2024 but illegitimately received total salary payments for the three months in question.

It is also important to inform the public that the Government of Liberia fully supports this critical national initiative of sanitizing the national Payroll. The necessary modalities are being worked out by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) and the Civil Service Agency for the Government to provide the needed funding support whilst the Public Procurement and Concession Commission (PPCC) has assured the CSA of its readiness to grant the necessary approvals to facilitate the procurement process. The CSA is profoundly grateful to the President, His Excellency Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr., for his government's support of this much-needed national initiative.

The President, His Excellency Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr, on April 30, 2024 launched the National Policy Guidelines for Recruiting Independent Consultants and Consultancy Firms in the Public Service of Liberia. This policy was developed to address the challenges in effectively managing consultancy services particularly, the hiring procedures across Government Spending Entities (SE).

Since the launch of the National Policy Guidelines, the Civil Service Agency has effectively communicated the procedures for hiring Independent Consultants and Consultancy Firms. A National Consultancy Steering Committee was established comprising of five members, two from the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and three from the Civil Service Agency.

To date, the Steering Committee received a total of 180 applications through the submission of Terms of Reference and Requisitions from individuals and Firms. The Steering Committee evaluated, shortlisted, and interviewed 120. Of the total individuals and Firms interviewed, 69 individuals were accepted and 3 Firms were accepted.

The CSA will officially communicate the names and particulars of the first batch of selected individuals and firms to the corresponding entities to produce their contracts for the services to be provided under the consultancy terms and conditions. The contracts will be signed by the consultant, the head of Spending Entity, and approved by the Director-General of the Civil Service Agency. Meanwhile, the CSA wishes to inform all Spending Entities that no position in the classified Civil Service will be considered under consultancy.

Members of the press, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, the CSA will provide updates every other week on the status of the ongoing employee physical verification and headcount exercise under the Employees Status Regularization Project, the ESRP. The CSA wishes to express sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and the Ministry of Justice for their support to this critical national endeavor. Additionally, we extend thanks and appreciation to the MICAT family for availing this historic platform to the CSA. As always, we are very grateful to the media for its continuous support in disseminating public information.

Thank you!