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# Current State of the Personnel Management System of the Penal Enforcement System



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#### Abstract

Introduction: the article analyzes a current state of the personnel management system in the penal enforcement system, which developed after the adoption of the Federal Law No. 197-FZ dated July 19, 2018 "On service in the penal enforcement system of the Russian Federation and on amendments to the law of the Russian Federation "On institutions and bodies executing criminal penalties in the form of deprivation of liberty". Purpose: to analyze key elements of the system of organizing work with personnel in the penal enforcement system and propose measures to improve it. Methods: the comparative legal method and the theoretical method of formal and dialectical logic were used. The specific sociological method was also applied when collecting and analyzing information received from students taking Higher Academic Courses at the Academy of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia. Results: the personnel function is one of the most important elements of penal system performance. Activities of personnel units requires appropriate legal regulation not only in terms of work with personnel of the penal enforcement system, but also internal organizational activities of human resources departments themselves. The most attention is required in the areas, such as recruitment, professional training, service, organization of work with a talent pool, termination of service. Conclusions: it is difficult to determine a legal status of structural subdivisions of the personnel departments in territorial bodies of the penal enforcement system due to the problem of distributing functions among structural subdivisions and legal consolidation of the organization of systems and information flows, as well as regulation of certain types of personnel work. To solve this problem, it is advisable to improve regulations on structural subdivisions of personnel departments and programs for regular training of succession pool members,

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# Introduction

Human resources management of the penal enforcement system should be legally regulated. For this purpose, the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia is developing a Concept for personnel policy of the penal enforcement system, which should contribute not only to disclosure of the legal nature of public service in the penal enforcement system, but also to linking it with psychological and pedagogical conditions of its implementation. This concept should be

considered as a foundation of the unified system to enhance professional competence of penal enforcement employees and further expand measures for their social protection.

Certain work on systematization of regulations is carried out by the Personnel Department of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia. At the same time, it is reasonable to prepare a list of key orders, instructions and directions of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia for employees of personnel departments, which could

be included in the collection of regulations on the work with human resources.

Undoubtedly, systematization of regulations is a long and time-consuming process. To streamline the legal regulation of work with personnel, it is possible to prepare a codified act and a consolidated act combining substantive, administrative, procedural and organizational and technical norms. Elaboration of such acts, united by a common regulatory purpose, ensures creation of a coherent, stable and dynamic system of regulations as a necessary prerequisite for establishing law and order in personnel management.

Personnel function of the penal system

The personnel function, which is the most important supporting function of the activity of the penal enforcement system, should have a clear legal regulation. It is expressed in the form of purposeful organizational and legal activity. This requires an appropriate system of legal acts regulating this function and ensuring its implementation through the system of legal relations. Therefore, one of the main factors in improving the efficiency of personnel services of the penal enforcement system at various levels is a clear definition of their powers [1; 3; 5].

The study of relations between HR departments and employees of the law enforcement system reveals not only social awareness, but also effectiveness of managerial decisions. Feedback from a management subject helps determine optimal programs and make adjustments to those variants of regulatory decisions, the forecasted assessment of which turned out to be inaccurate or incorrect.

It is obvious that estimation of the effectiveness of legal norms in general and legal innovations in particular cannot be based solely on the public opinion of law enforcers. In this case, the respondents' position is more indicative of the estimation of the procedure to assess and further employ a candidate rather than of the perfection of the relevant norms.

The activities of personnel units require appropriate legal regulation in terms of work with personnel of the penal enforcement system and intra-organizational activities of personnel units.

The specifics of legal regulation of activities of personnel subdivisions of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia in RF subjects are insufficiently studied in special literature. This issue is relevant, as the penal enforcement system still operates based on outdated normative acts that regulated its activities prior to

the adoption of the Federal Law No. 197-FZ of July 19, 2018 "On service in the penal enforcement system of the Russian Federation and on amendments to the law of the Russian Federation "On institutions and bodies executing criminal penalties in the form of deprivation of liberty". (hereinafter – Federal Law No. 197-FZ). In addition, the newly adopted normative acts do not completely resolve the accumulated problems, and therefore nowadays new normative acts are being worked out and existing ones are being improved.

In addition, the implementation of legal norms largely depends on the level of professional and legal culture of heads and employees of personnel services, since the nature of managerial decisions in working with personnel is influenced by their professional attitudes, motives and value orientations.

Recently, the Personnel Department of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia has been conducting sociological and socio-legal studies. Its results are taken into account when preparing regulatory documents on human resources operation.

It seems that the measures taken and planned to improve legal regulation of work with personnel in the penal enforcement system make it possible to more effectively implement the tasks the HR departments face, since they create the legal basis for their activities [11].

At the same time, many problems in determining the legal status of structural subdivisions of personnel units require their resolution. To begin with, these are the problems of distribution of functions between structural subdivisions, clarification of functional responsibilities of employees, legal consolidation of ways of transmitting information between subdivisions, development of standard techniques for performing certain types of personnel work.

Shortcomings of the personnel departments structure are a consequence of the improper distribution and grouping of functions among HR subdivisions and its individual employees. At the same time, properly developed provisions on structural subdivisions could play an important role in improving the structure. This would make it possible to achieve rational labor differentiation among department employees, eliminating duplication and overlapping of work directions.

We believe that the elaborated regulations on HR structural subdivisions will involve improvement of moral and material incentives and increase responsibility of department heads, especially, of senior groups, who often differ little from ordinary performers.

In theoretical and practical terms, it is interesting to consider correlation of rights and duties of HR head as an organizer and coordinator of personnel work in a territorial body of the penal enforcement system, that is, the question of its legal status [13; 6].

According to departmental regulations, heads of a territorial body of the Federal Penitentiary Service of the Russian Federation are granted the right to determine duties of their deputies, delegate part of their powers to deputies, heads of structural subdivisions, as well as heads of bodies and organizations in accordance with the established procedure in order to pursue the interests of the service.

Meanwhile, the study of this issue indicates that it is insufficiently covered in the current regulations on HR departments of territorial bodies of the penal enforcement system. The relevant section of such provisions reflects mainly obligations and does not pay due attention to the issue of specific powers. The implementation of some functions assigned to these structures involves the use of various kinds of powers: implement measures of a preparatory nature; resolve problems; organize execution; and ensure enforcement.

For example, the function of monitoring work with personnel in institutions and bodies of the penal enforcement system presupposes, along with other activities, hearing reports from heads of services and subdivisions on work with personnel. The function of collecting, processing, accumulating, storing and analyzing personnel information involves granting the right to the head of the HR department to request relevant information from other bodies and departments (characteristics, reports, materials of inspections at the place of residence); the function of planning work with personnel includes not only preparation of plans, but also their official approval (to give mandatory legal force).

Heads of the HR department of a territorial body of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia, due to the specifics of the legal nature of functions assigned to them, should expand their activities in relation to heads and employees of all institutions and bodies of the penal system. Thus, certain powers are also necessary for the performance of functions, but in practice there are facts they are not endowed with the right to make decisions on recruitment of positions of a certain level. It seems that a clear delineation of powers and rights in this

matter between heads and their deputy for human resources cannot contradict the principle of unity of command existing in the penal enforcement system, since the right to make a final decision and its legal formalization remains with the head of a territorial body of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia. By transferring any authority to a lower level, the head of the territorial authority reserves the right to control any issue. In this case decision-making will be facilitated, information will not become outdated, and interaction of personnel departments with other services will increase.

In our opinion, the critical measures to improve legal support of the activities of personnel units of territorial bodies of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia should be the following:

- 1. Organization of interaction of heads of penal institutions, personnel departments and bodies of the prosecutor's office, the court, and the public defender's office on the provision of legal assistance in obtaining special knowledge to deal with most typical problems arisen during service in the penal enforcement system.
- 2. Publication of a regulatory act establishing the procedure and standard of legal description of the position (passport of the position).

These measures will contribute, on the one hand, to a uniform understanding and realization of personnel policy, and, on the other, implementation of the personnel work of territorial bodies of the penal system.

Measures to improve elements of the personnel management system of the penal enforcement system

The modern personnel management system of the penal enforcement system is undergoing significant changes due to bringing departmental regulations into compliance with the Federal Law No. 197-FZ. Over the past three years, more than 15 regulatory legal acts have been adopted, specifying and clarifying provisions of this law. The analysis of the current situation helps identify a number of areas that have the greatest impact on improving performance of the personnel management system of the penal system and require further improvement:

- 1. Recruitment of employees.
- 2. Professional training.
- 3. Service.
- 4. Organization of work with a talent pool.
- 5. Termination of service.

We will consider these directions in more detail.

1. Recruitment of employees.

Organization of high-quality selection of candidates for training in educational organizations

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of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia is one of the urgent problems, the penal enforcement system has to address [10]. The key factor is to increase the image and social attractiveness of the service in the penal system, which in turn will enhance its prestige and attract social attention, thus boosting financial, informational, human and material resources. In this direction, it seems appropriate to carry out the following measures: consistent and objective personnel policy at all levels, more effective work with mass media, more pronounced support from state authorities, including in terms of improving material and technical provision [4; 12].

Particular attention should be paid to the problem of completing medical and sanitary units of territorial bodies of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia. There is a whole complex of issues to be addressed: impossibility of employment in private and municipal healthcare institutions at one time, which affects the income level of a potential candidate for service; service specifics, such as work with convicts, remoteness of penal institution location, existence of a contract under which medical workers are required to work in healthcare institutions for a certain period of time. Targeted training in the field of medicine is needed in educational organizations. Medical students, signing a big contract, should get a guarantee of employment after graduation, as well as some social support (for example, by analogy with the state program "Zemskii doctor" ("Doctor working in rural areas").

In addition to this, the following measures to improve the recruitment system should be carried out:

- elaborating and implementing methodological recommendations for the selection of candidates for service based on the best practices of territorial authorities:
- conducting lectures and practical classes dedicated to recruiting technologies at the courses of professional retraining and advanced training;
- providing employees with competitive monetary allowances in order to increase attractiveness of the service in the penal system;
- introducing recruitment technologies based on social networks, messengers and other information technologies into practical activities of personnel services.

# 2. Professional training.

Working out specialist training programs related to the scientifically justified definition of options for the planned development of personnel training processes for penal institutions and bodies is one of the tools to meet requirements of scientific management. Undoubtedly, performance of correctional facilities is also influenced by the fact that employees have insufficient theoretical and practical experience [18]. In most cases, this applies to junior officers. To solve the problem of providing them with high-quality training, it is proposed to carry out secondary vocational education programs in educational organizations of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia. It will provide the penal enforcement system with highly qualified specialists with theoretical and practical experience.

In addition, scientifically justified courses (methodological recommendations) in various areas of official activity (regime and supervision, security, operational activities, educational work, etc.) will be helpful for young specialists, first accepted for service in the penal enforcement system or appointed to positions after graduation from state educational organizations [2; 9].

Building up the material base in the institutions of territorial bodies for professional and service training of employees (shooting galleries, gyms, educational equipment, visual aids, etc.), financed by the federal budget on a regular basis, will contribute to the quality of vocational training significantly.

## 3. Service.

The essence of personnel movement management consists in the formation of an integrated system of measures for its regulation in order to meet organization's quantitative and qualitative needs in employees, stabilizing the workforce, and identifying reserves for the effective use of human resources. Hence, a balanced decision-making on the transfer of employees to other positions should involve comprehensive assessment of their competence that goes behind certification results [16; 17].

Enrollment of employees at the disposal of a penal institution is one of the forms of personnel movement [14]. Due to the fact that this process does not depend on an employee, but occurs for objective reasons due to organizational and staff changes, as well as due to the fact that, as a rule, an employee who is at disposal continues to perform duties for a previously filled position, it seems inappropriate to count the time an employee is at the disposal in the length of service in the penal enforcement system in calendar terms (Part 15 of Article 36 of the Federal

Law No. 197-FZ). Consequently, it is necessary to change the specified norm of the law.

The main qualitative characteristic of the staff is its educational level, i.e. a ratio of persons with higher and secondary professional education to the list number of employees [15]. The higher education, the better performance of employees. There is a sufficient network of state educational institutions of higher education in the penal enforcement system, but there is no system of secondary vocational education. In addition, forms of distance learning imply the provision of employees with vacations for passing intermediate certifications, preparing and defending final qualifying works, during which they are absent from service. Taking into account the lack of staff, the remaining employees' workload increases, it becomes problematic to comply with the vacation schedule. This is especially true for junior commanding staff of regime and supervision units and security personnel. In this regard, it is advisable to introduce vocational education methods that allow employees to continue their service into the practice.

Currently, retention of young employees (those under 30 years of age and up to 5 years of service experience) in the penal service is another important problem. The measures of material incentives enshrined in the order of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia No. 250 dated April 9, 2020 are insufficient. In this regard, it is necessary to establish additional incentive measures for personnel, such as an increase in the amount of the monthly allowance for special conditions of service, payment of a percentage allowance for years of service from one year of service, service-provided accommodation, vouchers to departmental sanatoriums.

Finally, it is worth paying attention to the rigid binding of the categories of junior inspectors to the position and their quantitative ratio of one to two. In the interests of the service, it would be more effective to introduce junior inspector positions and their categories by analogy with civil servants' positions, when the required number of basic positions (engineer, accountant, etc.) is introduced, and categories are assigned to employees depending on their qualifications, experience and work experience within the existing number of basic positions in the staffing table [19].

4. Organization of work with a talent pool.

Systematic work with a talent pool is one of the elements of the personnel policy. Based on the results of the survey of employees taking the Higher Academic Courses at the Academy of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia, a number of recommendations for effective use of the talent pool of penal institutions were developed, particularly:

- 1) development of official reports on the number of employees and movement of succession pool members that give the opportunity to trace movement dynamics, make forecasts and plans for its changes;
- 2) creation of an appropriate legislative framework (a local document fixing the possibility of filling a position only by an employee from the talent pool; a local document fixing the need to accept at least two succession pool members for a position), which will avoid problems associated with a grown turnover of the pool:
- 3) introduction of the method for expert evaluation of succession pool members, which will make the selection of applicants more objective and further select the most motivated, suitable employees, getting rid of the need to attract third-party specialists for replacement;
- 4) improving the programs for regular training of succession pool members in order to reduce formalism during their completion and raise the efficiency of their use, which will ensure high productivity of training even for those employees who serve in another division of the penal system in relation to the reserved position:
- 5) appointment of a head of the talent pool; this allows the authorities to monitor the talent pool performance without unnecessary time costs.

So, it will take time to realize the recommendations presented above. Nevertheless, their implementation will solve current problems of the talent tool and prevent emergence of new ones, thereby ensuring high efficiency of the use of the talent pool of senior personnel of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia.

We will analyze these recommendations in more detail. The first one was to create official reports on the talent pool size and movement of its members. This will allow the institution to monitor dynamics of the movement of succession pool members, forecast institution's requirements and satisfy them in a timely manner. Such constant monitoring reduces the likelihood of malfunctioning due to timely identification of problems that may appear.

The creation of an appropriate legislative framework, including a local act, according to which only a pool member can fill a reserved position, contributes to solving the problem of protectionism, which has a demotivating effect. Employing a specialist from the outside leaves a pool member aside, hindering his/her career growth. As it was revealed, their average age is 31–40 years. Given the fact that the retirement age for employees is about 50 years, this recommendation will provide pool members with the opportunity to move up the career ladder faster, thereby increasing their level of motivation and interest in their own development.

This will eliminate unnecessary costs for training employees for the talent pool, since all of them will be able to apply their knowledge and competencies in practice by taking up a reserved position.

A local act stipulating that at least two succession pool members should account for certain positions, such as department heads and their deputies will improve this direction as well. This will reduce risks of long search and training of a new employee in the event of an unforeseen vacancy of a position that requires special competencies and skills. So, a crisis situation will be avoided.

The expert assessment of pool members also has its advantages in terms of social efficiency. Selection of applicants to the talent pool will be more objective and unbiased. Since outside employees may be invited to fill a reserved position due to the lack of pool members' competence, such an assessment during the selection of pool members will give the opportunity to select competent employees from internal human resources who will be able to replace a vacant reserved position. This will help motivate and retain talented and promising employees, as staff turnover may go up due to specialists' dissatisfaction with career growth in this institution.

Due to objective expert assessment, skilled employees who have greater possibilities to complete training programs will be accepted in the talent pool. Hence, the time and material costs of reserving a position in the center will be reduced.

As for enhancing programs for regular training of succession pool members, their introduction will drive the process of developing specialists' competencies. The programs need to be upgraded due to the fact that they do not provide for the possibility of training pool members from other units in relation to the reserved position.

By drawing up a program for regular training of pool members in such a way that everyone could receive full-fledged training, the institution will have the possibility to systematically replace necessary positions with qualified employees, who can quickly and independently solve the tasks assigned to them. Less time will be required to complete the work, which is especially important if the position is a key one and plays an important role in the structure of the entire institution. The possibility that a person will be unsuitable for the reserved position is reduced, as his/her training meets the requirements of the position.

Since there is a problem of formalism of a talent pool in the penal institutions, the control over implementation of the training program by the direct supervisor of a pool member will ensure fulfillment of the program tasks [8].

### 5. Termination of service.

Due to the fact that employees' dismissal in the first year of service may be associated with an unfavorable psychological climate in the team of the structural unit and insufficient individual educational work, it is necessary to survey employees and a head of this structural unit, including with the involvement of institution psychologists, about conditions of service, psychological climate, interaction and relationships of the dismissed employee with colleagues and authorities in the first year of service [7; 20]. In case of repeated dismissal of employees of the same structural unit in the first year of service, it is advisable to develop comprehensive plans to eliminate its causes on the basis of a detailed analysis.

In practice there may be such a situation: an employee has passed a medical examination, has been found unfit for service in the penal enforcement system or limitedly fit for service in the position being filled, while the vacations have been already used. To dismiss such an employee, it is required to perform a number of procedures (interview, preparation of necessary documents, etc.). At the same time, an employee cannot serve due to the unsatisfactory state of health; the conclusion of the medical commission may indicate that an employee must be released from the performance of official duties until the moment of dismissal. There is a legal conflict when there are no legal grounds to release an employee from the performance of official duties and at the same time an employee cannot be on duty or is not entitled to (serving with weapons, special equipment). Thus, it is important to regulate this situation at the legislative level.

Taking into account the possibility of carry-

ing out organizational and staff measures related to the reduction of positions, liquidation of institutions, and the impossibility to employ a graduate of a departmental educational organization who has not served a fixed term after graduation, it is advisable to supplement Part 6 of Article 87 of the Federal Law No. 197-FZ with the provision, such as position retrenchment in the penal enforcement system (paragraph 11 of Part 2 of Article 84), except in cases of employee's refusal from the positions offered to him/her.

### Conclusion

The personnel policy of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia is aimed at:

- 1) working out strategy directions in the field of public service development with regard to trends and prospects for the development of the state and society;
- 2) providing civil service with skilled specialists who can perform their work efficiently, thereby boosting service prestige;
- 3) creating all necessary conditions for the implementation of employees' activities, as well as monitoring their performance.

An effectively functioning talent pool of penal institutions will make its structure more stable and manageable. Due to the reduced number of

institutions and restrictive pandemic measures, it becomes even more important, since the existing problems may tend to grow. Besides, an effective talent pool of the institution as a whole increases the level of specialists' competence, since the recommended measures are focused on improving quality of conducted training.

The main component of internal staff movement is replacement of vacant positions in a short time; otherwise, the workload on other employees of the structural unit increases. While waiting for the decision, potential candidates' motivation to conscientiously perform duties for the position they are replacing decreases, which in general may adversely affect the functioning of the institution. Consequently, it is necessary to minimize administrative barriers to employee movement (coordination with higher bodies of the penal enforcement system, whose managers are not authorized in relation to the employee being transferred; exclusion of preparation of additional documentation, such as various certificates, reviews, characteristics not established by the current legislation), delegate within reasonable limits the rights to select and approve candidates to immediate supervisors at the place of service.

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