

LUMBUAN, Corazon

Re: Grant of Step Increment

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RESOLUTION NO. 991173

Corazon C. Lumbuan of Marikina City, requests the Commission for an opinion regarding the rules and regulations governing the grant of step increment.

The Material representations of Lumbuan are as follows:

"Since July 29, 1992, I have been occupying the permanent position of Legislative Staff Officer IV in our office. Last January 8, 1996 my 1st Step Increment was granted. I went on vacation leave with pay from April 18 - May 16, 1997 and sick leave with pay from May 19 - October 21, 1997. I was on continuous leave of absence with pay for six (6) months. According to our Personnel Division, I cannot be granted my 2nd Step Increment due me last August 2, 1998 because of my leave of absence . Our COA Auditor, on the other hand, informed me that I am entitled to the said benefit because my leave of absence was with pay and was duly approved by our proper office authorities, thus, official."

A cursory reading of the instant query reveals that the focal issue that needs to be clarified is whether or not Lumbuan can be granted a 2nd step increment notwithstanding her continuous leave of absence with pay for a period of six (6) months.

The Commission rules in the affirmative.

Section 7(b), Rule X of the Omnibus Rules Implementing Book V of the Executive Order No. 292 (Administrative Code of 1987) provides as follows

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" (b) Length of Service Incentive which shall be given to an employee who has rendered at least three years of continuous satisfactory

Page 2.

Lumbuan, C.

X ----- X

service in a particular position and which shall consist of step increment in accordance with the provisions of Joint CSC-DBM Circular No. 1 s. 1990" (underscoring supplied)

Corollarily, Section 2 of Joint CSC-DBM Circular No. 1, s. 1990, has provided the criteria for the grant of step increment, viz:

"Section2. Length of Service. A one (1) step increment shall be granted to officials and employees for every three (3) years of continuous satisfactory service in the position. Years of service in the position shall include the following:

"(a) those rendered before the position was reclassified to a position title with a lower or the same salary grade allocation; and

"(b) those rendered before the incumbent was transferred to another position within the same agency or to another agency without a change in position title and salary grade allocation.

"In the initial implementation of step increments in 1990, an incumbent shall be granted step increments equivalent to one (1) step for every three (3) years of continuous satisfactory service in a given position occupied as of January 1, 1990."

As can be gleaned from the aforequoted provisions, the length of service required before an official or employee can be granted one (1) step increment shall be three (3) years of continuous satisfactory service in the same position within the same agency.

To determine whether or not service is continuous, it is relevant to define what an actual service is. "Actual service" refers to the period of continuous service since the appointment of the official or employee concerned, including the period or periods covered by any previously approved leave with pay. (Memorandum Circular No. 41, s. 1998) (Emphasis supplied)

Page 2.

Lumbuan, C.

X ----- X

On the basis of the above definition, leave of absence previously approved with pay is considered as continuous service

In the instant case, there can be no doubt that Lumbuan's continuous service within the contemplation of M.C. 41, s. 1998. Such being the case, her 2nd step increment should now be granted.

WHEREFORE, the Commission resolves the rule that Corazon C. Lumbuan can be granted 2nd step

increment notwithstanding her continuous leave of absence with pay for six (6) months.

Quezon City, **June 09, 1999**

CORAZON ALMA G. DE LEON
Chairman

THELMA P. GAMINDE
Commissioner

JOSE F. ERESTAIN, JR
Commissioner

Attested by:

ARIEL G. RONQUILLO
Director III

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