



Overview of key legislative changes in state service

Uzbekistan is consistently looking to improve how it prevents and combats corruption, including in public services. With that in mind, a number of changes have been introduced in the regulation of civil servants. In this document we provide a brief overview of the most important of them.

In May 2020, the draft *Law on State Civil Service* was posted for discussion. The draft, among other things, provides for a prohibition for civil servants to engage in entrepreneurial activity personally or through affiliated (trusted) persons, as well as to engage in other paid activities, except for pedagogical, scientific and creative activities. According to the draft, civil servants are not entitled to be a member of the governing body of a commercial organization, with the exception of organizations with a state share. However, at the moment this draft has not been adopted.

The President signed *Decree No. UP-6257 on 6 July 2021 introducing measures to create an environment of intolerance towards corruption, drastically reduce corruption factors in state and public administration, and increase public involvement in the process.*

From 1 January 2022, civil servants, heads and deputy heads of organisations with a state share of over 50%, state enterprises and institutions, their spouses and minor children will be obliged to declare income and property.

Any civil servant who does not submit a declaration or who submits deliberately inaccurate information will be dismissed from public service and prosecuted.

Likewise, from 1 January 2022, civil servants will be prohibited from opening and holding bank accounts and cash, owning real estate and other property outside of Uzbekistan. This restriction will not apply to civil servants working overseas and property acquired prior to joining the civil service.

Legislative acts may no longer be drafted that stipulate the conclusion of direct contracts, investment agreements, public-private partnership agreements, privatisation and other transactions limiting public procurement tender bidding.

The President also signed *Resolution No. PP-5177 on 6 July 2021 to introduce additional measures for the effective organisation of anti-corruption activities.*

For example, from 1 September 2021, an Internet-based recruitment procedure will be introduced for hiring to public authorities and administrations, state

unitary enterprises and institutions, as well as organisations with a state share of over 50%.

The Ministry of Justice was instructed to submit draft legislation to the Cabinet of Ministers by 1 October 2021 stipulating the invalidation of contracts concluded with an admission of corruption, including conflicts of interest, and outlining the legal consequences for civil servants participating in entrepreneurial activities.

In a bid to ensure public procurement transparency and legality, and prevent corruption, tender results will have to be published from 1 August 2021. Anti-corruption conditions will also be developed within two months and introduced into public procurement tender contracts, along with a procedure for checking partners.

By 1 October 2021:

- all construction tenders for state-funded contracts will be held electronically on a special public procurement portal that exchanges data with the "Transparent Construction" National Information System;
- rating indicators for construction and design organisations will be revised along with tender evaluation criteria and methodology to ensure transparency; a mechanism for evaluating construction organisation proposals and prices will also be introduced;
- a mechanism should be introduced to verify and assess construction-related data automatically in the electronic tendering system;

From 1 December 2021, the procurement commission will no longer be authorised to verify data accuracy and withdraw participants from procurement tenders.

All government bodies, including local government and organisations will be obliged to publish ratings to assess anti-corruption activity effectiveness at year-end from 1 December 2021.

Civil servants will be sent on regular anti-corruption training from 1 January 2022, covering conflicts of interest and ethics based on "integrity vaccine" principles. The new system will also create a special e-learning platform for remote learning.

Contact us:

Olessya Kirilovskaya

Director

Tel: + 7 727 258 13 40 (ext. 8717)

Email: okirilovskaya@deloitte.kz

Dariga Tokpayeva

Senior Manager

Tel: + 7 (727) 258 13 40 (ext. 8538)

Email: dtolpayeva@deloitte.uz



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