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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Government of Belize Signs First-Ever Grievance Procedure Manual**

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On February 22, 2022, Mr. Rolando Zetina, CEO in the Ministry of the Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform, and Religious Affairs; Mrs. Sharon Frazer, President of the Association of Public Service Senior Managers; and Mr. Dean Flowers, President of the Public Service of Belize, signed the first-ever Grievance Procedure Manual.

The development of the Grievance Procedure Manual began in 2017. The manual was drafted by Ms. Jacqueline Willoughby and completed by the current Grievance Committee, with the guidance and full support of Hon. Henry Charles Usher, Minister of the Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform, and Religious Affairs, who believes that every public officer has a right to seek redress for grievances relating to their employment.

Regulations 77 of the Belize Constitution (Public Service Regulations, 2014) states that the Ministry of the Public Service, in conjunction with public officers or public officers' recognized representatives, shall establish and disseminate written procedures to settle grievances.

The manual states that the Ministry shall set procedures for resolution of disputes which shall –

- (a) be in writing.
- (b) specify the stages of redress.
- (c) state the stage at which an issue may first be raised.
- (d) set time limits for each stage of the process and provide for extension by agreement among the affected parties.
- (e) include a recourse to the ministry with responsibility for labour, conciliation, or arbitration services; and
- f) preclude a strike or lock-out until all stages of the procedure are exhausted without a resolution of the dispute.

The Grievance Procedure Manual will be sent out to all ministries and made accessible on the ministry's website.

**Ends**