Functional Series 500 – Management Services
ADS 504 – Agency Notices

Table of Contents

ADS 504 – Agency Notices

504.1   OVERVIEW

Official Agency information is disseminated via Agency Notices. This chapter comprises policies and procedures for locating, creating, distributing, posting, and clearing Agency Notices.

504.2   PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

a.   The Bureau for Management, Office of Administrative Services, Office of the Director (M/AS/OD) approves exceptions to the Notice procedures included in this ADS chapter.

b.   The Bureau for Management, Office of Administrative Services, Information and Records Division (M/AS/IRD) distributes and posts Agency Notices. M/AS/IRD also trains Agency employees on the Notice system and serves as the record keeper for Policy Notice information.

c.   The Bureau for Management, Office of Information Resources Management, Consulting and Information Services Division, Internet Data Services (M/IRM/CIS/IDS) provides the technical maintenance for the Notice intranet database.

d.   Authorized Senders review Notices for proper format and send them to M/AS/IRD for posting. Authorized Senders are also the liaison between M/AS/IRD and Notice authors in their Bureau or Office.

e.   Mission Directors and Executive Officers (EXOs) ensure that all Mission employees have access to all Agency General Notices and send Notices to the appropriate Authorized Sender for distribution.

f.   The Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources (DAA/M/HR) reviews all Operating Expense (OE) Funded, internationally recruited U.S. Personal Service Contractor (USPSC) announcements.

g.   The Office of the Executive Secretariat (ES), the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA), and the Bureau for Management, Administrative Management Staff (M/AMS) send **Executive Messages** when appropriate.

504.3   POLICY AND PROCEDURES

504.3.1   What Are USAID Notices?

USAID Notices are the Agency's official method of disseminating official, unclassified information of significant but temporary interest. With the exception of Policy Notices,

Notices must not be used for material that is to be retained for any length of time. **(See 504.3.1.2 and ADS 501 for information on Policy Notices)**

504.3.1.1 Two Notice Audiences – USAID/General and USAID/Washington

There are two types of **Agency Notices**:

- A *USAID/General Notice* is distributed to *everyone* in USAID/Washington (USAID/W) and to special mailboxes designed to receive Agency Notices at Missions.

- A *USAID/W Notice* is distributed to *Washington* employees only.

Notices that are relevant to *ALL* (USAID/W and Mission) USAID employees must be classified as a *USAID/General Notice.* Notices that are only of interest to *USAID/W* employees include Notices such as Metrochek distribution Notices, brown bag lunch Notices, and building maintenance Notices.

504.3.1.2 Seven Notice Categories – Administrator, Executive Message, Information, Personnel, Policy, Policy Reminder, and Training

There are seven different Agency Notice categories. All USAID/W and USAID/General Notices must be identified as one of the following.

a. Administrator - Information to the Agency from the Administrator's Office. Only the Office of the Executive Secretariat (ES) may send this type of Notice to M/AS/IRD for distribution or issue them as Executive Messages.

b. Executive Message - Time sensitive and critical Notices that must be issued as soon as possible. **(See 504.3.6 for more information on Executive Messages)**

c. Information - Internal USAID information that is of general employee-relations interest (e.g., brown bag lunches, film presentations, awards and ceremonies, Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), death of an Agency employee or immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent)).

* Information Notices exclude non-USAID sponsored or endorsed activities. Retirement Notices are limited to those sent from the Administrator. You may distribute other retirement announcements through Bureau and Office Administrative Management Staff (AMS). Death announcements are limited to Agency employees and their spouses, children, and parents. Office designation Notices are limited to those for positions including and higher than Division Chiefs. Union Notices are always marked with the name of the union next to the category, Information.

d. **Personnel** - Any type of vacancy/internship announcements issued by a Bureau or Office. The Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources (M/HR) also generates Personnel Notices that concern other personnel issues (e.g., assignment review boards, vacancy announcements, Foreign Service assignments, Merit Promotion Information, and donating leave). The DAA/M/HR must review all Operating Expense (OE) Funded, internationally recruited U.S. Personal Service Contractor (USPSC) announcements. A copy of the DAA/M/HR's approval to advertise must be included with the submission of the Notice to M/AS/IRD as evidence of M/HR's prior approval.

e. **Policy** - Official new Agency policy and procedures. *All* Policy Notices *must*

- Receive ADS clearance and go through the ADS issuance process. M/AS/IRD must have a completed USAID Directives Issuance Request Form AID 3-252 before a Policy Notice is issued. **(See ADS 501.3.4 and 501.3.5)**

- State which ADS chapter they will be incorporated into, if applicable.

- Be distributed as USAID/General Notices.

> **Note on Cables and Telegrams**
>
> The office head must ensure that any policy directive issued via telegram (cable) is also issued as a USAID/General Notice and receives ADS clearance before being issued as a Policy Cable.
> **(See ADS 549.5.2)**

- Be codified into the ADS CD if they are not already in ADS chapter or reference format. If you issue a Policy Notice, you must either

    – Convert it to an ADS chapter or reference, or
    – Have it expire on a specified date.

    One of these options must occur by the next annual ADS certification or within 180 days after the Policy Notice is first issued. A continuance must be approved in writing by the Director of M/AS. **(See ADS 501 for instructions on creating and revising ADS chapters and references.)**

f. **Policy Reminder** - Reminders of existing policy and procedures. ADS clearance is not required.

g. **Training** - Information relating to training offered by the Agency or to the Agency (e.g., End-User Forum, training announcements, etc.).

504.3.2 How Do I Access Agency Notices?

You can access Notices through a database on the USAID intranet and from your e-mail. Sections 504.3.2.1 through 504.3.2.4 describe how to access Notices electronically, how employees without e-mail access receive Notices, and how to request a copy of a Notice that you can't find.

504.3.2.1 Web Database on USAID Intranet

If you have access to the USAID intranet, you may access Agency Notices on the Agency's intranet web site. This internal Notice database houses Agency Notices from the current year plus Agency Notices from the previous two years. Each January M/IRM/CIS/IDS will remove the third year's Notices from the database.

USAID/W and Mission employees with access to the intranet can read and download Notices and attachments. Only M/AS/IRD has authority to add, delete, or change Notices that appear on this system. **(See 504.3.3 for information on submitting a Notice for posting)** M/AS/IRD posts new Agency Notices to this database at the end of every business day.

504.3.2.2 Nightly E-Mails From Notice Sender

In addition to loading Notices to the USAID intranet, M/AS/IRD distributes each day's Notices via e-mail from the Notice Sender mailbox. M/AS/IRD sends two types of e-mails each business afternoon:

    a. M/AS/IRD sends one e-mail to everyone in USAID/W. This e-mail includes the day's General Notices and the USAID/W Notices.

    b. M/AS/IRD sends a second e-mail to Missions' generic mailboxes that were established to receive Agency General Notices. At this time, this e-mail includes only the day's General Notices. Each Mission must establish a generic mailbox to receive Notices from Notice Sender.

    The designated points of contact responsible for maintaining these generic mailboxes at each Mission *must* make every Notice available to all USAID employees at that Mission.

Note: The Notice Sender mailbox only distributes e-mail. It does not receive e-mail. Do not send e-mail to this mailbox. Send e-mails about Notices to Notice Mailbox (M.AS.IRD) or nmailbox@usaid.gov.

504.3.2.3 Paper Copies

Only Missions without readily available and reliable e-mail or intranet access may receive a paper copy of General Notices from M/AS/IRD.

504.3.2.4   Contact M/AS/IRD for Notices You Can't Find or for Other Notice Help

If you need a copy of a Notice that is more than three years old, if you cannot find a Notice on the Notice database, or if you have other Notice-related questions (accessing, viewing, or downloading) contact M/AS/IRD. Send and e-mail to nmailbox@usaid.gov or type in *Notice Mailbox (M.AS.IRD)* on the Global Address List in MS Outlook.

504.3.3   How Do I Create an Agency Notice?

If you have information that needs to be distributed and you think it would be best suited for an Agency Notice, you must

- Create the Notice in the proper format, **(See 504.3.3.1)**

- Obtain any required clearances, **(See 504.3.3.2)** and

- Send your Notice to the Authorized Sender in your Bureau or Office. **(See 504.3.3.3)**

504.3.3.1   Required Notice Format

You may create an Agency Notice either by using the Agency Notice Macro Form or by creating it yourself in MSWord. *(If your Notice will require special formatting, see the text box that describes cover Notices near the end of this section.)*

- The Agency Notice Macro Form is available on the Agency's intranet forms page. For help with downloading and using the Notice macro form, see the Additional Help document titled *Creating a Notice With the Macro Form*. The Notice macro ensures that you will create the Notice in the proper format. In fact, it does most of the actual formatting for you. However, even if you use the Notice macro, read the required format below so that you format the body of the Notice correctly. In addition to the Notice macro having its own instructions, the step-by-step instructions in the Additional Help document, *Creating a Notice with the Macro Form* will help you use the macro. If you do not complete the macro, M/AS/IRD will return it to you for completion. **(See Additional Help document, Creating a Notice With the Macro Form)**

- If you decide not to use the Notice macro form, you may create a Notice with MS Word in Courier New 10 pt. font. The Notice must be saved as a .txt file and follow the formatting limitations and requirements described below. You may use the Additional Help document, *Creating a Notice Without the Macro Form* to guide you when creating Notices without the macro. **(See Additional Help document, Creating a Notice Without the Macro Form)**

Either way, Notices must adhere to the required format described below. (Attachments do not have to adhere to this format.)

a. Place the *audience* (USAID/W or USAID/General Notice) on the top line, far right corner of the page. **(See 504.3.1.1 for information on audience)**

b. In all capital letters, include one of the seven Notice *categories* on the second line of the paper in the center of the page. **(See 504.3.1.2 for information on categories)**

Notices from either union (American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) or American Foreign Service Association (AFSA)) must be marked with the union name next to the category Information. For example, a Notice from AFSA would be "AFSA-INFORMATION."

c. Every Notice must state which *office* the Notice is originating from, i.e., the office symbol. Insert the Bureau/Office acronym on the second line, in the far right corner of the page below the audience.

d. Place the *date* underneath the office symbol on the third line. The month and day must be displayed with two digits and the year must be displayed with four digits, i.e., 01/15/2001, not 1/15/01.

e. Place the *subject* of the Notice on the fifth line along the left margin. We recommend that the subject not be more than two lines long.

f. Begin the *body* of the Notice two lines after the subject.

   (1) When you complete your Notice, save it as a text document. Doing this will strip the document of most formatting features. As a result, *do not* use the following codes. *All unallowable codes will be stripped from your document. (If your document requires special formatting see the box below to find out how to include a cover Notice and attachment.)*

   - Indents

   - Bold, underlining, and italics

   - Bullets and special characters

   - Tab sets

   - Center, right, or full justification

   - Automatic numbering and lettering

- Tables, columns, charts, and graphics

- Page numbers

- Font changes and special font attributes

- Hard returns at the end of each line within a paragraph

- Footnote and endnotes

- Headers and footers

(2) Do not submit a Notice in all capital letters. If you are sending a cable, you must convert the text so that it is not in all capital letters.

* **(3)** In accordance with Section 508 requirements, do not use a "tab table" to present information. Use MS Word's table format to create a table in an attachment to the Notice. **(See Mandatory References, 36 CFR 1194 and USAID-Federal Regulations for Web Accessibility)**

(4) Do not enclose web addresses or e-mail addresses in "greater than" and "less than" signs (< and >). Do not insert a hyperlink to an Internet or e-mail address. The Notice database will remove these. Intranet web addresses must include the following disclaimer statement: "Only Agency employees with intranet access may view this web site."

(5) Always include the area code with phone numbers. Do not use internal shortcuts (2-xxxx) as phone numbers.

(6) It is not recommended that Notices be longer than five pages. If you have more than five pages of information, see the box below for instructions on how to send a cover note and attachment.

If your Notice is longer than five pages or if you need to include special formatting features in your Notice, you must create a *cover Notice* following the rules above and include the long or complex portion of the Notice as an *attachment* to your cover Notice. You do not have to save the long or complex attachment as a text file. However, attachments must be compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998. If your Notice attachment has a graph or chart in it, you must include a text description of the graph or chart. If your attachment is a PowerPoint presentation, you must send the text of your presentation to M/AS/IRD. **(See Mandatory References, 36 CFR 1194 and USAID-Federal Regulations for Web Accessibility)** The attachment may be the following kinds of files:

Word (.doc)	rich text format (.rtf)
Excel (.xls)	text (.txt)
PowerPoint (.ppt)	WordPerfect (.wp6 or .wpd)
Portable Document Format (.pdf)	zipped (.zip)
hypertext mark-up language (.html or .htm)	

---

g. Every Notice must have a *point of contact* – The point of contact must include a name, office symbol, and phone number or e-mail address. Remember to include the area code and phone number. Also, remember, do not enclose e-mail addresses in "greater than" and "less than" signs (< and >). The Notice database will remove the address if you use those signs.

(See Additional Help document, Sample Agency Notice)

504.3.3.2   Obtain Required Clearances

Once you have completed your Notice, you must obtain any required clearances for that Notice before you send your Notice to your Authorized Sender.

- All Policy Notices must be cleared through the ADS clearance process and adhere to the ADS issuance process before being submitted to M/AS/IRD for release. **(See ADS 501.3.4 and 501.3.5 for information on the ADS clearance and issuance processes)**

- All Notices must be approved through whatever internal procedures each Bureau/Office has established. Bureaus/Offices may establish their own internal office policy and procedures for clearing Notices. To learn more about your Bureau/Office's internal Notice procedures, contact your Authorized Sender. **(See Mandatory Reference, Individuals Authorized to Send Agency Notices to Notice Mailbox)**

- All Operating Expense (OE) Funded, internationally recruited U.S. Personal Service Contractor (USPSC) announcements must include a copy of the DAA/M/HR's approval to advertise with their submission of the Notice to M/AS/IRD as evidence of M/HR's prior approval. M/AS/IRD will not distribute the announcements without this evidence. (Program funded USPSC announcements may be distributed by the appropriate geographic Bureau/Office.)

504.3.3.3   Send the Notice to Your Authorized Sender

Once you have completed your Notice, send it to the Authorized Sender for your Bureau or Office. The list of Authorized Senders is included in the Mandatory Reference, *Individuals Authorized to Send Agency Notices to Notice Mailbox*. Notices will be published only if received from an Authorized Sender. **(See Mandatory Reference, Individuals Authorized to Send Agency Notices to Notice Mailbox)**

Authorized Senders must review Notices for clearance and formatting requirements. Once the Notice is in proper form, the Authorized Sender forwards the Notice to Notice Mailbox (M.AS.IRD) for publication.

504.3.4   What Does the Authorized Sender Do?

When Authorized Senders receive Notices from employees in their Bureau/Office, they first must review the Notices for proper format and clearance appropriate content. If M/AS/IRD receives a Notice in improper format, the staff will return the Notice to the Authorized Sender to be corrected.

- **Format** – As an Authorized Sender, you must review the Notice to ensure that it is in the proper format. Ensure that all macros are completed. Do not send macros to Notice Mailbox (M.AS.IRD). **(See 504.3.3.1 for information on required Notice format)**

- **Clearance** - As an Authorized Sender, you must make sure the Notice has received the appropriate clearances. **(See 504.3.3.2 for information on required clearances)**

- **Content** - As an Authorized Sender, you must read the Notice to check for spelling errors, grammatical mistakes, and other errors.

Once you, the Authorized Sender, have a well-written, cleared Notice in the proper format, send the Notice and any attachments via e-mail to *Notice Mailbox (M.AS.IRD).* You can send e-mails to Notice Mailbox by typing "Notice Mailbox (M.AS.IRD)" into the Global Address List in MS Outlook. Or, you may type in "nmailbox@usaid.gov". Notices received by 3:30 p.m. will be issued and posted the same business day. If you know that you will be a few minutes late submitting your Notice, please call M/AS/IRD to let them know (202-289-6455).

Authorized Senders must notify staff in their Bureau/Office when they are going to be out of the office. This will prevent Notices from waiting in their inbox until they return. If notified, the Notice author can send his or her Notice to another Authorized Sender in that Bureau or Office and not experience any unnecessary delay.

> Each Bureau or Office must designate at least two people to be Authorized Senders. M/AS/IRD encourages Bureaus and Offices to limit the number of Authorized Senders to five. The Bureau Assistant Administrator or the Office Director or Division Chief must send an e-mail to Notice Mailbox to officially delegate new or additional authorized senders or to remove authorized senders from the list.

504.3.5   Posting and Distributing Nightly Notices

When a Notice is received in Notice Mailbox by 3:30 p.m., M/AS/IRD reviews the Notice for subject content, spelling, format, and correct approvals, if appropriate. If any of these items is amiss, M/AS/IRD will return the Notice to the Authorized Sender for correction.

At the end of each business day, M/AS/IRD distributes the day's Notices from Notice Sender via e-mail and posts them to the Notice database on the intranet.

504.3.6 Executive Messages

Executive Messages are extremely time-sensitive Notices. They contain information that must be received by Notice recipients in less than 24 hours and, therefore, cannot wait for the daily e-mail distribution and posting to the Notice database.

ONLY designated Authorized Senders from ES, LPA, M/AMS, and M/AS/IRD may distribute Executive Messages.

If you have a message that you think should be distributed as an Executive Message, you must create the message in the Agency Notice format. Then, contact Bob Ward, M/AMS or Daryl Daniels, ES to request distribution. If you can't reach either, contact M/AS/IRD. M/AS/IRD (202-289-6455) serves as a backup for ES and M/AMS.

Executive Messages are sent from a mailbox called *Executive Message*. The e-mails are distributed to the same addressees as Agency Notices.

> **Note:** The Executive Message mailbox only distributes e-mail.
> It does not receive e-mail. Do not send e-mail to this mailbox.

M/AS/IRD also posts Executive Messages to the Notice database with a note about their prior distribution.

504.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES

504.4.1 External Mandatory References

a. **36 CFR 1194, Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards**

504.4.2 Internal Mandatory References

a. **ADS 501, The Automated Directives System (ADS)**

b. **Individuals Authorized To Send Agency Notices to Notice Mailbox (Authorized Senders)**

c. **USAID-Federal Regulations for Web Accessibility**

504.5 ADDITIONAL HELP

a. **Creating a Notice With the Macro Form**

b. **Creating a Notice Without the Macro Form**

c. **Sample Agency Notice**

504.6 DEFINITIONS

All ADS chapter terms and definitions are included in the ADS Glossary. Therefore, the terms and definitions listed below have been incorporated into the ADS Glossary. **(See ADS Glossary)**

Agency Notice
The Agency's official method of disseminating official, unclassified information of significant but temporary interest. Agency Notices are not for material that is to be retained for any length of time, with the exception of Policy Notices. (Chapter 504)

Executive Message
An extremely time-sensitive Agency Notice containing information that must be received by Notice recipients in less than 24 hours and, therefore, cannot wait for the daily e-mail distribution and posting to the Notice database. (Chapter 504)

504_101001_w101502