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Strengthening Public Apparatus Professionalism Through Business Process-Based Job Competency Standards

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Abstract

The professionalism of public apparatus plays an important role in determining the quality of public service delivery. However, apparatus competence has not fully met service standards, partly due to the lack of a clearly formulated job competency framework based on organizational business processes. This study aims to analyze the main problems affecting apparatus competence and determine an appropriate policy alternative to strengthen professionalism in public services. The study employs a policy analysis approach using the Urgency, Seriousness, and Growth (USG) method to identify priority problems and Dunn's policy evaluation criteria, consisting of effectiveness, efficiency, adequacy, equity, responsiveness, and appropriateness, to assess alternative policies. The analysis is strengthened through expert judgment involving three officials with expertise in personnel management, organizational governance, and apparatus competency development. The results indicate that unclear organizational business processes contribute to weak job-based competency formulation, which subsequently causes apparatus competence to fall below expected service standards. Among eight policy alternatives evaluated, the development of job competency standards based on organizational business processes obtained the highest score of 30 and was selected as the priority policy. This policy provides a strategic foundation for aligning job requirements with apparatus competence and can support recruitment, placement, competency development, career advancement, and performance evaluation. The implementation of business process-based job competency standards is therefore expected to strengthen apparatus professionalism and improve the quality, accountability, and responsiveness of public services..

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INTRODUCTION

Human resources in the public sector constitute one of the key elements in ensuring the effectiveness of government administration and public service delivery. Public officials are not merely responsible for performing administrative duties but also serve as implementers of public policies, managers of development programs, and providers of services to the community. Therefore, the quality of government administration is strongly influenced by the professionalism and competence of public officials in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. Competent public officials are expected to perform their functions effectively, demonstrate accountability, and provide services that meet public expectations.

The demand for greater professionalism among public officials continues to increase along with changes in public expectations, technological developments, and the transformation of public governance. Public services are no longer expected to merely comply with administrative procedures but must also be effective, transparent, accountable, responsive, and oriented toward citizens' needs. This condition requires public officials to possess not only technical knowledge and skills but also managerial and socio-cultural competencies that enable them to respond appropriately to increasingly complex public service challenges. Consequently, competency development has become an essential part of bureaucratic reform and the improvement of public sector performance.

In Indonesia, strengthening public officials' competencies has received significant attention within the regulatory framework of public personnel management. Law Number 20 of 2023 concerning the State Civil Apparatus emphasizes the implementation of a merit-based system in managing the State Civil Apparatus, in which qualifications, competence, performance, and discipline serve as important foundations for personnel management. Furthermore, the Regulation of the Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform Number 38 of 2017 concerning Competency Standards for State Civil Apparatus Positions provides a regulatory basis for determining the knowledge, skills, and behavioral characteristics required by public officials to perform their duties professionally. These regulations demonstrate that competency standards are an important instrument for developing a professional and performance-oriented bureaucracy.

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Competency standards play a strategic role in human resource management because they provide a clear basis for assessing the alignment between an individual's capabilities and the requirements of a particular position. Amalia (2011) explains that competency standards are an important initial component in implementing competency-based human resource management. Such standards can serve as a reference for various personnel management processes, including recruitment, placement, promotion, performance assessment, and employee development. Without clearly defined competency standards, public personnel management may lack objective criteria for determining whether an official possesses the capabilities required to perform a particular position effectively.

However, the development of position-based competency standards cannot be separated from the clarity of organizational business processes. A business process map provides a systematic description of organizational activities, the relationships among work units, and the sequence of activities required to achieve organizational outputs. The Regulation of the Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform Number 19 of 2018 concerning the Preparation of Business Process Maps for Government Agencies emphasizes the importance of business process mapping as a basis for establishing effective and efficient working relationships within government institutions. Therefore, a clear business process map can be used to identify organizational activities, clarify responsibilities, and determine the competencies required for each position.

The main issue identified in this study is the suboptimal professionalism of public officials in supporting public services. The policy paper identifies three major problems: public officials' competencies have not met service standards, the personnel management system has not been optimally implemented, and bureaucratic culture remains strongly oriented toward administrative procedures. Based on the Urgency, Seriousness, and Growth (USG) analysis, the problem of public officials' competencies not meeting service standards received the highest score of 15 and was therefore identified as the priority problem.

Further analysis indicates that the competency problem is associated with several underlying factors. These include a weak formulation of position-based competency frameworks, training programs that have not fully improved public officials' performance, and a work environment that has not sufficiently encouraged innovative behavior. Maharani and Andriany (2025) highlight weaknesses in the formulation of position-based competency frameworks, while Parawu (2020) identifies limitations in the effectiveness

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of education and training programs in improving apparatus performance. In addition, Dewi, Yuniasanti, and Prahara (2018) emphasize the importance of a supportive work environment in encouraging innovative behavior. These conditions indicate that strengthening public officials' competencies requires a comprehensive approach rather than relying solely on conventional training programs.

Among the identified causes, the lack of clarity in organizational business process mapping represents an important root problem. An unclear business process map makes it difficult for organizations to systematically translate their functions and activities into specific position requirements. Consequently, the formulation of position-based competency frameworks may not fully reflect actual job demands. This condition creates a gap between the competencies possessed by public officials and those required to provide effective public services. Thus, the problem can be formulated as follows: unclear organizational business processes contribute to weak position-based competency frameworks, which subsequently result in public officials' competencies failing to meet public service standards.

This issue demonstrates that competency development should not be limited to education and training activities. Instead, it should begin with a clear understanding of organizational processes, job responsibilities, and the competencies required to perform each activity effectively. In competency-based human resource management, business processes describe what must be performed, while competency standards determine who should perform the work and what capabilities are required. Dubois and Rothwell (2004) emphasize that competency-based human resource management connects individual competencies with job requirements and organizational processes. Therefore, integrating business process mapping with position competency standards can provide a more systematic foundation for personnel management.

Previous studies have extensively discussed competency development, training, public sector performance, and human resource management. Nevertheless, the relationship between organizational business process mapping and the formulation of position-based competency standards remains particularly important in the context of public sector professionalism. The present study therefore focuses specifically on the use of organizational business processes as the basis for developing position competency standards. This approach is expected to provide a stronger connection between organizational functions, job responsibilities, individual competencies, and public service performance.

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Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the competency problems faced by public officials and determine an appropriate policy alternative for strengthening professionalism oriented toward public service delivery. More specifically, the study focuses on the development of business process-based position competency standards for public officials as an instrument for aligning organizational duties and functions with the knowledge, skills, and behaviors required for each position. The implementation of such competency standards is expected to provide an objective foundation for recruitment, employee placement, competency development, education and training, promotion, transfer, career development, and performance evaluation. Ultimately, this policy is expected to strengthen public officials' professionalism and contribute to more effective, accountable, responsive, and high-quality public services.

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Objectives

This study aims to analyze the strengthening of public apparatus professionalism through the development of job competency standards based on organizational business processes. Specifically, the study intends:

1. To identify the main problems affecting the competence and professionalism of public officials in supporting public service delivery.
2. To analyze the relationship between organizational business processes and the formulation of position-based competency standards.
3. To examine alternative policies for strengthening public apparatus competence using relevant policy analysis criteria.
4. To determine the most appropriate policy alternative for improving the alignment between public officials' competencies and job requirements.
5. To formulate a policy recommendation for developing business process-based job competency standards to support professional, accountable, and service-oriented public administration.

DISCUSSION

The issue of public apparatus professionalism is closely related to the ability of government institutions to ensure that each official possesses competencies that correspond to job requirements and public service standards. The policy paper identifies that the competence of public officials has not fully met service standards. This condition is associated with weak job-based competency frameworks, unclear organizational business processes, limited effectiveness of training programs, and a work environment

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that has not fully supported innovative behavior. Therefore, the problem needs to be examined through competency theory, human resource management theory, organizational theory, performance management theory, public service theory, and the applicable regulatory framework.

1. Competency Theory

Competency theory provides the main theoretical foundation for explaining the importance of job competency standards in public organizations. McClelland (1973), through *Testing for Competence Rather Than for Intelligence*, argues that job success cannot be adequately predicted only through intelligence tests. Instead, competencies that are directly related to job requirements provide a stronger basis for predicting effective performance.

Competence refers to underlying individual characteristics that are causally related to effective or superior performance. These characteristics include motives, traits, self-concept, knowledge, and skills. Therefore, competency requirements for public officials should not be limited to educational qualifications or technical knowledge but should also include behavioral characteristics needed to perform a particular position effectively.

Boyatzis (1982) further explains that competence is closely related to the suitability between individual characteristics, job demands, and the organizational environment. This perspective indicates that job competency standards must be developed according to the actual responsibilities and requirements of each position. If competency standards are not aligned with job demands, the organization may experience a mismatch between employee capabilities and assigned responsibilities.

Spencer and Spencer (1993) strengthen this perspective through the *iceberg model*. Their model distinguishes visible competencies, such as knowledge and skills, from less visible competencies, such as motives, values, self-concept, and personal characteristics. This distinction is particularly relevant to public administration because professional public service requires not only technical competence but also integrity, responsibility, communication ability, and appropriate behavioral characteristics.

Based on this theoretical perspective, the absence of clearly formulated job competency standards may contribute to difficulties in identifying whether public officials possess the competencies required for their positions. Therefore, competency standards become an important foundation for strengthening public apparatus professionalism and improving public service quality.

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2. Human Resource Management Theory

Job competency standards are also closely related to competency-based human resource management. Dubois and Rothwell (2004) explain that competency-based human resource management connects individual competencies with job requirements and organizational business processes. Under this approach, competency becomes a central reference in managing employees throughout the human resource management cycle.

The relationship between organizational business processes and competency standards can be understood from two different but interconnected perspectives. Business process maps describe **what activities are performed by the organization**, while competency standards determine **who should perform those activities and what capabilities are required**. Therefore, competency standards should be developed after the organization clearly understands its work processes, functions, and job responsibilities.

In public sector human resource management, this approach can be applied to workforce planning, recruitment, placement, employee development, performance assessment, promotion, and career development. Wright and McMahan (2011) emphasize that effective human resource management requires alignment between individual competencies and organizational strategy. This means that competency standards should not merely function as administrative documents but should support the strategic objectives of the organization.

Armstrong (2014) similarly argues that competencies should be integrated across the human resource management system, including recruitment, training, performance management, promotion, and career development. Therefore, strengthening public apparatus competence requires a systematic framework that connects job requirements, organizational needs, and individual capabilities.

From this perspective, weak job-based competency frameworks can lead to fragmented public personnel management. Recruitment, placement, training, and promotion may not be fully based on actual job requirements. Consequently, developing job competency standards based on organizational business processes becomes an important strategy for creating more integrated and competency-based human resource management.

3. Organizational Theory

Organizational theory explains the importance of clear business processes in supporting the formulation of job competency standards. A business process map

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systematically describes organizational workflows, starting from inputs and activities to outputs. It also clarifies the relationships between organizational units and identifies responsibilities within each work process.

Dumas et al. (2013) explain that business process mapping is important for understanding and improving organizational performance through more structured management of work processes. Through business process mapping, organizations can identify inefficient activities, overlapping responsibilities, unnecessary work stages, and unclear coordination mechanisms.

The relationship between business processes and competency standards becomes important because every activity contained in a business process requires individuals with specific capabilities. Once organizational activities and responsibilities are clearly identified, the competencies needed to perform each activity can also be determined more accurately.

Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson (2017) emphasize that human resources are strategic organizational resources that must be aligned with organizational vision and strategy. In this context, job competency standards function as an alignment mechanism between organizational strategy and individual behavior.

Robbins and Judge (2017) also emphasize the importance of role clarity. Employees who clearly understand their responsibilities, expected competencies, and performance standards are more likely to perform effectively. Conversely, unclear competency expectations can create role ambiguity and potentially reduce organizational effectiveness.

Schein (2010) adds that organizational culture significantly influences employee behavior. Even well-designed competency standards may not produce optimal results if the organizational culture does not support professionalism and competency development.

From a systems perspective, Bertalanffy (1968) views organizations as open systems. If human resource competencies as organizational inputs do not correspond to environmental demands, including increasingly complex public service demands, the resulting service outputs may also be inadequate. Accordingly, unclear business processes and weak competency standards can be understood as interconnected organizational problems.

4. Performance Management Theory

Competency standards are closely connected to performance management because effective performance evaluation requires clear standards concerning both

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expected results and required capabilities. Aguinis (2013) defines performance management as a continuous process of identifying, measuring, and developing individual and team performance while aligning that performance with organizational objectives.

An effective performance management system should begin with clarity regarding job expectations and the competencies required for each position. Without clearly defined competency standards, employee performance assessment may become subjective and inconsistent because the organization does not have an objective reference for determining whether an individual has performed according to job requirements.

Armstrong (2009) similarly explains that performance management is a systematic process for improving individual and organizational performance through the establishment of standards, evaluation, and competency development. These performance standards should be derived from job analysis and competency requirements.

Kaplan and Norton (1996), through the Balanced Scorecard framework, also emphasize the importance of the learning and growth perspective. Human resource capabilities constitute an important element of organizational performance because employee competencies influence the organization's ability to achieve strategic objectives.

In the context of public administration, performance assessment should therefore be linked to both job competency fulfillment and public service outcomes. Competency standards can provide an objective basis for evaluating whether public officials possess the knowledge, skills, and behavior required to achieve expected performance. Consequently, strengthening competency standards can support more objective performance evaluation and more targeted employee development.

5. Public Service Theory

Public service represents one of the primary functions of government and directly influences the relationship between government institutions and citizens. The quality of public services depends not only on regulations and procedures but also on the capabilities of the officials responsible for delivering those services.

Public officials are required to possess technical, managerial, and socio-cultural competencies. Technical competence enables officials to perform job-specific activities, while managerial competence supports planning, coordination, decision-making, and

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leadership. Socio-cultural competence is particularly important in dealing with diverse social backgrounds and communicating effectively with citizens.

The policy paper emphasizes that low public apparatus competence can contribute to unresponsive services, weak empathy, limited accountability, and declining public trust in government. These problems indicate that apparatus competence is not merely an internal human resource issue but also directly affects the quality of services received by citizens.

Accordingly, job competency standards should be designed to support public service requirements. Officials who possess competencies that correspond to their job responsibilities are expected to perform services more consistently, reduce operational errors, respond more appropriately to public needs, and demonstrate greater professionalism.

Therefore, the development of business process-based job competency standards provides an important connection between internal organizational management and external public service performance. When job responsibilities and competency requirements are clearly aligned, government institutions are in a stronger position to provide effective, responsive, accountable, and professional public services.

6. Regulatory Framework

The development of public apparatus competencies is also supported by Indonesia's regulatory framework. Law Number 20 of 2023 concerning the State Civil Apparatus emphasizes merit-based public personnel management. Under the merit system, State Civil Apparatus management is based on qualifications, competencies, performance, and discipline.

The regulatory framework is further strengthened by Government Regulation Number 11 of 2017 concerning Civil Servant Management. This regulation emphasizes the importance of technical, managerial, and socio-cultural competencies in public personnel management and provides a basis for competency development among civil servants.

More specifically, Regulation of the Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform Number 38 of 2017 concerning Competency Standards for State Civil Apparatus Positions provides an operational framework for job competency standards. The regulation describes job competency standards as requirements concerning the knowledge, skills, and behavior needed by State Civil Apparatus employees to perform their positions professionally.

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The competency standards consist of three major dimensions: technical competence, referring to specific expertise and knowledge required by a particular position; managerial competence, including planning, organizing, decision-making, and leadership capabilities; and socio-cultural competence, including communication, cooperation, and adaptability within diverse social environments.

The relationship between competency standards and organizational business processes is also supported by Regulation of the Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform Number 19 of 2018 concerning the Preparation of Business Process Maps for Government Agencies. This regulation emphasizes the importance of business process mapping as a basis for improving organizational management and working relationships.

Accordingly, business process maps and job competency standards have complementary functions. Business process maps identify organizational activities and workflows, while job competency standards specify the competencies required to perform those activities. Integrating the two provides a stronger foundation for workforce planning, recruitment, placement, competency development, promotion, mutation, and performance assessment.

Overall, the theoretical and regulatory analysis demonstrates that unclear organizational business processes can weaken the formulation of job-based competency standards. In turn, weak competency standards may contribute to competency gaps among public officials and limit their ability to meet expected service standards. Therefore, the development of job competency standards based on organizational business processes represents an important foundation for strengthening public apparatus professionalism and improving public service quality.

7. Policy Alternatives and Policy Evaluation

Based on the identified problem, several policy alternatives were formulated to strengthen public apparatus competence and professionalism in public service delivery. The alternatives were developed from the relationship between competency theory and competency-based human resource management. Spencer and Spencer (1993) emphasize the importance of identifying and developing competencies according to job requirements, while Dubois and Rothwell (2004) explain that individual competencies should be aligned with organizational work processes and job demands.

Eight policy alternatives were identified. The first alternative is to develop job competency standards for public officials based on organizational business processes. The second is to conduct an inventory of existing public officials' competencies in order

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to identify competency gaps. The third alternative is to develop specific training and skill development programs based on job requirements. The fourth is to use competency standards as a basis for recruitment, transfer, and promotion. The fifth alternative is to integrate performance evaluation with job competency fulfillment and public service outcomes. The sixth is to utilize personnel information systems to monitor competency, training needs, and human resource development progress in real time. The seventh alternative is to develop certification programs or external training partnerships. The eighth is organizational restructuring and simplification of work structures.

Although each alternative has a different focus, all of them are directed toward improving the alignment between public officials' competencies, job requirements, and public service needs. The alternatives also require the identification of competency needs and emphasize the development of public apparatus capacity through mapping, training, personnel management, performance evaluation, digital monitoring, or organizational restructuring.

To determine the most appropriate alternative, the study applies Dunn's (1999) policy evaluation criteria, consisting of effectiveness, efficiency, adequacy, equity, responsiveness, and appropriateness. Effectiveness measures the extent to which a policy achieves its intended objectives. Efficiency assesses the relationship between the results achieved and the resources used. Adequacy refers to the extent to which a policy can solve or reduce the main problem. Equity considers the fairness of benefit distribution. Responsiveness assesses the extent to which the policy addresses stakeholder needs and values, while appropriateness measures whether the recommended policy is contextually and normatively suitable.

The evaluation was strengthened through expert judgment involving three officials with expertise in public policy, personnel management, and regional government governance. Each alternative was evaluated using a score ranging from 1 to 5 for each criterion. The final results are presented in Table 1.

No.	Policy Alternative	Final Score
1	Developing job competency standards for public officials based on organizational business processes	**30**
2	Conducting an inventory of existing public officials' competencies to identify competency gaps	28

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3	Developing specific training and skill development programs based on job requirements	28
4	Using competency standards as a basis for recruitment, transfer, and promotion	27
5	Integrating performance evaluation with job competency fulfillment and public service outcomes	28
6	Utilizing personnel information systems to monitor competencies, training needs, and human resource development	27
7	Developing certification programs or external training partnerships	26
8	Organizational restructuring and simplification of work structures	27

The results show that the scores of the eight alternatives range from 26 to 30. The policy of developing job competency standards for public officials based on organizational business processes obtained the highest score of 30. Therefore, this alternative was selected as the main policy for strengthening public apparatus competence and professionalism in public service delivery.

8. Selected Policy: Business Process-Based Job Competency Standards

The selected policy focuses on developing job competency standards based on organizational business processes. This policy is considered the most appropriate because competency standards provide a fundamental reference for other human resource management activities. Without clear competency standards, competency mapping, training, recruitment, placement, performance assessment, promotion, and career development do not have a consistent reference.

Based on Dunn's policy evaluation criteria, the selected policy demonstrated strong performance across all six dimensions. In terms of effectiveness, the policy can improve the alignment between job competency requirements and actual work demands, thereby supporting better public apparatus performance. In terms of efficiency, competency standards can reduce irrelevant training expenditures and minimize inappropriate employee placement.

Regarding adequacy, the policy directly addresses the main problem by strengthening the quality of human resource management and job administration. In terms of equity, clear competency standards can support fairer and more objective employee assessment. The policy is also responsive because competency

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requirements can be adjusted to organizational needs and changes in work processes. Finally, in terms of appropriateness, the policy is considered suitable because competency standards are developed directly from organizational business processes.

The selected policy also has strategic value because it functions as the foundation for the other policy alternatives. Competency inventories require clear standards to identify competency gaps. Training programs require competency standards to determine relevant development needs. Recruitment, transfer, and promotion require competency standards as objective selection criteria. Performance evaluation also requires clear competency indicators to assess whether public officials meet the requirements of their positions.

Therefore, developing job competency standards based on organizational business processes is not merely an administrative activity. It represents a strategic policy for aligning organizational functions, job responsibilities, and public apparatus competencies. Through this alignment, public organizations are expected to establish a more systematic, objective, and merit-based human resource management system while strengthening professionalism and improving the quality of public services.

CONCLUSION

Public apparatus professionalism is strongly influenced by the alignment between individual competencies, job requirements, organizational business processes, and public service standards. The analysis shows that the main problem is that public officials' competencies have not fully met expected service standards. This condition is closely related to weak position-based competency frameworks, which are rooted in unclear organizational business processes. When business processes are not clearly mapped, organizational functions and responsibilities cannot be systematically translated into the competencies required for each position.

The theoretical analysis confirms that competency standards are an essential foundation for competency-based human resource management, organizational effectiveness, performance management, and public service improvement. Competency standards provide clear criteria for determining the knowledge, skills, and behavioral characteristics required to perform each position professionally. At the same time, organizational business processes provide the basis for identifying work activities, responsibilities, and expected outputs. Therefore, integrating business process mapping with job competency standards is necessary to ensure greater alignment between organizational needs and public officials' capabilities.

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Based on the evaluation of eight policy alternatives using Dunn's criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, adequacy, equity, responsiveness, and appropriateness, the policy of developing job competency standards for public officials based on organizational business processes obtained the highest score of 30. This policy was therefore selected as the priority alternative because it directly addresses the root problem and serves as a foundation for other human resource management practices, including competency mapping, recruitment, placement, training and development, transfer, promotion, career development, and performance evaluation.

The implementation of this policy requires a systematic process beginning with organizational commitment, followed by the preparation of business process maps, job analysis, workload analysis, competency standard formulation, validation, formal adoption, implementation, and periodic monitoring and evaluation. The policy should also be integrated into the overall State Civil Apparatus management system so that competency standards do not function merely as administrative documents but as strategic instruments for merit-based human resource management.

The primary authority for this policy rests with the Regional Head (Regent/Bupati) as the highest authority responsible for establishing regional policies through a Regent Regulation on Public Apparatus Job Competency Standards. The technical implementation of the policy is subsequently delegated to the Regional Secretary as the coordinating chair, supported by the Organization Division of the Regional Secretariat and the Human Resources Development and Personnel Agency (BKPSDM) as the technical formulation team. These institutions are responsible for coordinating the stages of business process mapping, job and workload analysis, competency standard formulation, validation, harmonization, implementation, and evaluation. This institutional arrangement is essential to ensure that the competency standards are formally established, technically appropriate, and consistently integrated into public personnel management.

In conclusion, the development of business process-based job competency standards represents a strategic approach to strengthening public apparatus professionalism. By establishing a clear relationship between organizational processes, job responsibilities, and competency requirements, government institutions can improve the objectivity of personnel management and ensure that public officials possess the capabilities required to perform their duties effectively. Ultimately, this policy is expected to contribute to more professional, accountable, responsive, and high-quality public service delivery.

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