

STAFF REGULATIONS OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION¹

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The Staff Regulations embody the fundamental conditions of service and the basic rights, duties and obligations of the World Health Organization Secretariat staff. They are the broad principles of personnel policy for the guidance of the Director-General in the staffing and administration of the Secretariat. The Director-General may, as Chief Administrative Officer, provide and enforce such Staff Rules consistent with these principles as he considers necessary.

I. DUTIES, OBLIGATIONS AND PRIVILEGES

1.1 All staff members of the Organization are international civil servants. Their responsibilities are not national but exclusively international. By accepting appointment, they pledge themselves to discharge their functions and to regulate their conduct with the interests of the World Health Organization only in view.

1.2 All staff members are subject to the authority of the Director-General and to assignment by him to any of the activities or offices of the World Health Organization. They are responsible to him in the exercise of their functions. In principle, the whole time of staff members shall be at the disposal of the Director-General.

1.3 In the performance of their duties staff members shall neither seek nor accept instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the Organization.

1.4 No staff member shall accept, hold or engage in any office or occupation which is incompatible with the proper discharge of his duties with the World Health Organization.

1.5 Staff members shall conduct themselves at all times in a manner compatible with their status as international civil servants. They shall avoid any action and in particular any kind of public pronouncement which may adversely reflect on their status. While they are not expected to give up their national sentiments or their political and religious convictions, they

¹ Text adopted by the Fourth World Health Assembly (resolution WHA4.51) and amended by the Twelfth, Fifty-fifth, and Sixty-second World Health Assemblies (resolutions WHA12.33, WHA55.21 and WHA62.7).

shall at all times bear in mind the reserve and tact incumbent upon them by reason of their international status.

1.6 Staff members shall exercise the utmost discretion in regard to all matters of official business. They shall not communicate to any person any information known to them by reason of their official position which has not been made public, except in the course of their duties or by authorization of the Director-General. At no time shall they in any way use to private advantage information known to them by reason of their official position. These obligations do not cease with separation from service.

1.7 No staff member shall accept any honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration from any government, or from any other source external to the Organization, if such acceptance is incompatible with his status as an international civil servant.

1.8 Any staff member who becomes a candidate for a public office of a political character shall resign from the Secretariat.

1.9 The immunities and privileges attaching to the World Health Organization by virtue of Article 67 of the Constitution are conferred in the interests of the Organization. These privileges and immunities furnish no excuse to staff members for non-performance of their private obligations or failure to observe laws and police regulations. The decision whether to waive any privileges or immunities of the staff in any case that arises shall rest with the Director-General.

1.10 All staff members shall subscribe to the following oath or declaration:
I solemnly swear (undertake, affirm, promise) to exercise in all loyalty, discretion, and conscience the functions entrusted to me as an international civil servant of the World Health Organization, to discharge those functions and regulate my conduct with the interests of the World Health Organization only in view, and not to seek or accept instructions in regard to the performance of my duties from any government or other authority external to the Organization.

1.11 The oath or declaration shall be made orally by the Director-General at a public meeting of the World Health Assembly, by the Deputy Director-General, Assistant Directors-General and Regional Directors before the Director-General and in writing by other staff members.

II. CLASSIFICATION OF POSTS AND STAFF

2.1 Appropriate provision shall be made by the Director-General for the classification of posts and staff according to the nature of the duties and responsibilities required.

III. SALARIES AND RELATED ALLOWANCES

3.1 The salaries for the Deputy Director-General, Assistant Directors-General and Regional Directors shall be determined by the World Health Assembly on the recommendation of the Director-General and with the advice of the Executive Board.

3.2 Salary levels for other staff shall be determined by the Director-General on the basis of their duties and responsibilities. The salary and allowance plan shall be determined by the Director-General following basically the scales of salaries and allowances of the United Nations, provided that for staff occupying positions subject to local recruitment the Director-General may establish salaries and allowances in accordance with best prevailing local practices and that for staff occupying positions subject to international recruitment the remuneration shall be varied between duty stations to take into account relative cost of living to the staff members concerned, standards of living and related factors. Any deviations from the United Nations scales of salaries and allowances which may be necessary for the requirements of the World Health Organization shall be subject to the approval of, or may be authorized by, the Executive Board.

IV. APPOINTMENT AND PROMOTION

4.1 The Director-General shall appoint staff members as required.

4.2 The paramount consideration in the appointment, transfer, reassignment or promotion of the staff shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. Due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting and maintaining the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible.

4.3 Selection of staff members shall be without regard to race, creed or sex. So far as is practicable, selection shall be made on a competitive basis; however, the foregoing shall not apply to the filling of a position by transfer or reassignment of a staff member without promotion in the interest of the Organization.

4.4 Without prejudice to the inflow of fresh talent at the various levels, vacancies shall be filled by promotion of persons already in the service of the Organization in preference to persons from outside. This preference shall also be applied, on a reciprocal basis, to the United Nations and specialized agencies brought into relationship with the United Nations.

4.5 Appointments of the Deputy Director-General, Assistant Directors-General and Regional Directors shall be for a period not to exceed five

years, subject to renewal, and in accordance with conditions determined by the Executive Board concerning eligibility of Regional Directors for reappointment. Other staff members shall be granted appointments of a duration and under such terms and conditions, consistent with these regulations, as the Director-General may prescribe.

4.6 The Director-General shall establish appropriate medical standards which prospective staff members shall normally be required to meet before appointment.

V. ANNUAL AND SPECIAL LEAVE

5.1 Staff members shall be allowed appropriate annual leave. In exceptional cases, special leave may be authorized by the Director-General.

5.2 In order that staff members may take their leave periodically in their home countries, the Organization shall allow necessary travelling time for that purpose, under conditions and definitions prescribed by the Director-General.

VI. SOCIAL SECURITY

6.1 Provision shall be made for the participation of staff members in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund in accordance with the regulations of that fund.

6.2 The Director-General shall establish a scheme of social security for the staff, including provisions for health protection, sick leave and maternity leave, and reasonable compensation in the event of illness, accident or death attributable to the performance of official duties on behalf of the Organization.

VII. TRAVEL AND REMOVAL EXPENSES

7.1 Subject to conditions and definitions prescribed by the Director-General, the Organization shall pay the travel expenses of staff members and, in appropriate cases, their dependants

- upon appointment and on subsequent change of official duty station,
- upon the taking of leave at home when authorized, and
- upon separation from the service.

7.2 Subject to conditions and definitions prescribed by the Director-General, the World Health Organization shall pay removal costs for staff members

- upon appointment and on subsequent change of official duty station and
- upon separation from the service.

VIII. STAFF RELATIONS

8.1 The Director-General shall make provision for staff participation in the discussion of policies relating to staff questions.

IX. SEPARATION FROM SERVICE

9.1 Staff members may resign from the Secretariat upon giving the Director-General the notice required under the terms of their appointment.

9.2 The Director-General may terminate the appointment of a staff member in accordance with the terms of his appointment, or if the necessities of the service require abolition of the post or reduction of the staff, if the services of the individual concerned prove unsatisfactory, or if he is, for reasons of health, incapacitated for further service.

9.3 If the Director-General terminates an appointment the staff member shall be given notice and indemnity payment in accordance with the terms of his appointment.

9.4 The Director-General shall establish a scheme for the payment of repatriation grants.

9.5 Normally, staff members shall not be retained in active service beyond the age specified in the Pension Fund regulations as the age of retirement. The Director-General may, in the interests of the Organization, extend this age limit in exceptional cases.

X. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

10.1 The Director-General may impose disciplinary measures on staff members whose conduct is unsatisfactory. He may summarily dismiss a member of the staff for serious misconduct.

XI. APPEALS

11.1 The Director-General shall establish administrative machinery with staff participation to advise him in case of any appeal by staff members against an administrative decision alleging the non-observance of their terms of appointment, including all pertinent regulations and rules, or against disciplinary action.

11.2 Any dispute which cannot be resolved internally, arising between the Organization and a member of the staff regarding the fulfilment of the contract of the said member, shall be referred for final decision to the United Nations Administrative Tribunal.

XII. GENERAL PROVISIONS

12.1 These regulations may be supplemented or amended by the Health Assembly, without prejudice to the acquired rights of staff members.

12.2 The Director-General shall report annually to the Health Assembly such staff rules and amendments thereto as he may make to implement these regulations, after confirmation by the Executive Board.

12.3 The Director-General, by virtue of the authority vested in him as the chief technical and administrative officer of the Organization, may delegate to other officers of the Organization such of his powers as he considers necessary for the effective implementation of these regulations.

12.4 In case of doubt as to the meaning of any of the foregoing regulations, the Director-General is authorized to rule thereon subject to confirmation of the ruling by the Executive Board at its next meeting.
