



Administrative instruction

Staff mobility

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Preamble

The Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, taking into consideration the provisions of Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations and pursuant to section 4.2 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2009/4 on procedures for the promulgation of administrative issuances, for the purpose of implementing staff regulation 1.2 (c) , promulgates the following.

Section 1 Definitions

Central human resources: Office of Human Resources of the Department of the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and/or the Human Resources Services of the Department of Operational Support, in accordance with their established roles.

Compendium: The list of announcements of encumbered rotational positions circulated in an annual mobility exercise.

Currently Serving Staff Members: Staff recruited in accordance with Staff Rule 4.15 or 4.16 whose latest appointment date is earlier than 1 May 2021.

Geographical move: Service in two different positions in the Professional and above or Field Service category at two different duty stations for a continuous period of at least one year in each position as recorded in the officially established system (Umoja). Inter-agency loans or secondment to and from other organizations of the United Nations system at the same or higher grade level are recognized as geographical moves but not governed by this ST/AI.

Hardship classification (of duty stations): Classification of duty stations determined by the International Civil Service Commission, inter alia described in the ICSC's guide to the mobility and hardship scheme and related arrangements .

Programme manager: An official within a department or office who is accountable to their heads of department or office for ensuring the delivery of mandated activities by effectively and efficiently managing staff and resources placed under their supervision and for discharging the other functions

Local human resources: Human resources and/or administration functions in entities which perform a number of core functions in the context of mobility. These inter alia include facilitating the establishment of the compendium, matching process, submission of final placement recommendation to Head of Entity and others.

Minimum position occupancy limit: The minimum period of time a staff member is normally required to serve in a rotational position prior to choosing to participate in a mobility exercise. The minimum position occupancy limit shall be one year of continuous service from the start date in a position to the date of opting in to a mobility exercise;

Mobility: Staff members periodic lateral move across the United Nations Secretariat pursuant to Staff Regulation 1.2 (c), the Secretary-General's authority to assign staff members to organizational activities.

Mobility participants: New staff members with mobility clause in their Letter of Appointment with effect from 1 May 2021 encumbering rotational posts. Additionally, all other staff members become part of the mobility exercise who choose to opt-in and get selected to rotational posts. Long-term General Temporary Assistance funded positions for duration of more than five years also participate in mobility.

Non-rotational posts: Posts that require an advanced or specialized level of expertise, knowledge and qualifications in a technical field and for which there is no comparable position at the same level in another organizational unit of the Secretariat as determined by the Head of Entity.

Special constraints: Circumstances based on criteria defined in the administrative instruction that limit staff members' ability to participate in the annual mobility exercise. An organization-wide mechanism of Special Constraints Panel will be deployed to determine the scope and effect of special constraints. The composition, function and way of working of the Special Constraints Panel are described in the administrative instruction.

Standard duration of assignment: The maximum period of time a staff member is normally allowed to serve in a rotational position. The standard duration of assignment shall be five years for duty stations classified as H and A, four years for duty stations classified as B to C, three years for duty stations classified as D and E as family duty station, two years for duty stations classified as D and E as non-family duty station as established by the International Civil Service Commission;

Section 2 Scope

2.1 The present administrative instruction prescribes the applicable procedures of the staff mobility system.

2.2 The system will come into force on the date of promulgation of this AI and will be implemented as announced through the issuance of information circulars by the Assistant Secretary General for Human Resources.

2.3 The present instruction shall apply to the placement of staff members under the staff mobility system, as follows:

(a) The placement against encumbered rotational positions of eligible and suitable staff members in the Professional and higher categories up to and including the D-2 level and in the Field Service category who have been recruited following a competitive process, including review by a senior or central review body under staff rule 4.15 or through a competitive examination under staff rule 4.16, and who hold an appointment other than temporary.

2.4 The present instruction shall not apply to the following:

- (a) Vacant positions, which are governed by the staff selection system contained in ST/AI/2010/3 or its amendment;
- (b) Assistant Secretaries General and Under Secretaries General levels;
- (c) General Service and other related categories, including but not limited to National Professional Officers and staff in the Trades and Crafts, Security Service and Language Teacher categories;
- (d) Staff members selected by the Secretary General in line with the procedures for selection to the Executive Office of the Secretary General¹, including:
- (i) Positions in the Office of the Secretary General;
 - (ii) Positions of the Spokesperson, Deputy Spokesperson, Chief and Deputy Chief of the Protocol and Liaison Service.
- (e) Active-duty Military/Police Officers seconded from Member States;
- (f) Junior professional officers;
- (g) Staff members holding appointments with service limited to a department or office;
- (h) Staff members holding temporary appointments;
- (i) The selection and appointment under the young professionals programme governed by administrative instruction ST/AI/2012/2/Rev.1 and the lateral reassignment under the managed reassignment programme governed by administrative instruction ST/AI/2001/7/Rev.1 of staff recruited following a competitive examination pursuant to staff rule 4.16;
- (j) The appointment and reassignment during the first five years of service of staff serving against a P-2 or P-3 language position, following a competitive examination under staff rule 4.16, who are subject to the provisions of the administrative instruction setting out special conditions for recruitment or placement of candidates successful in a competitive examination for positions requiring special language skills²;
- (k) The filling of positions in non-Secretariat organizational units which are administered by the United Nations Secretariat, including but not limited to the International Civil Service Commission, the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, the Joint Inspection Unit, the International Tribunals and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, and the mobility of staff members serving in such organizational units.
- (l) Resident Coordinators.

¹ Paragraph 5 of part II of General Assembly resolution 51/226.

² ST/AI/2020/3.

Section 3 General provisions

3.1 The new system shall be implemented through one global annual mobility exercise in two compendiums encompassing all job families, one for staff members in the Professional and higher categories up to and including the D-2 level, and the other for staff members in the Field Service category. The process will be initiated with the circulation of a compendium and will conclude with the placement of eligible and suitable staff members to another position at another duty station at the same grade level.

3.2 The placement of staff members under mobility will be undertaken on the basis of the continuing needs of the Organization³ against rotational positions that are expected to continue to be funded for one year or longer through the regular budget, the support account and peacekeeping operations budget and other extrabudgetary sources, including voluntary contributions.

3.3 The new mobility approach is enacted gradually via a mobility clause in the Letters of Appointment with effect from 1 May 2021 for new staff recruited and assigned to rotational posts in the Professional and Higher Categories up to the D-2 level and in the Field Service category.

3.4 The participation of currently staff members in a mobility exercise shall be on a voluntary (opt in) basis subject to the provisions of section 2.4 above.

3.5 Staff members who participate in a mobility exercise may also apply and be considered for vacant positions advertised through the regular staffing process through administrative instruction ST/AI/2010/3, as amended or revised. In the event that staff members are notified of their selection to fill a vacant position as a result of staff selection and also of a placement decision under mobility to move to another position, they shall have full discretion as to which of the two positions to accept.

3.6 Currently serving staff members will not be subject to the mandatory mobility requirement unless they opt-in or are selected for a rotational position through the staff selection system.

3.7 Pursuant to staff regulation 4.2, the paramount consideration in the placement of a staff member under staff mobility shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity.

3.8 Notwithstanding the provisions of section 3.2 above, positions directly financed by project funds for the sole purpose of executing a project for a finite period of time may be excluded from the mobility exercise following a review by the entities concerned.

3.9 Positions that are subject to abolition of staff shall not be included in the compendium.

3.10 Only encumbered positions will be included in the compendium. In the event that staff members who participate in a mobility exercise vacate their positions during the conduct of the exercise, they will no longer be considered for placement under mobility. However, their positions

³ General Assembly resolution 65/247.

shall remain available in the compendium for the placement of other staff members participating in the mobility exercise.

3.11 Further to section 3.10 above, any position included in the compendium that will become vacant following a mobility exercise shall be advertised through the regular staffing process.

3.12 Staff members shall not retain a lien on the position they vacate following their placement under mobility to a new position.

Section 4 Designation of Non-rotational Posts

4.1 A position that requires an advanced or specialized level of expertise, knowledge and qualifications in a technical field and for which there is no comparable position at the same level in another organizational unit of the Secretariat may be designated as non-rotational.

4.2 Entities will conduct initial assessment and designate non-rotational posts on the basis of the following criteria:

- (a) The need to ensure sustainability via retaining institutional knowledge and strategic capability within entities;
- (b) The uniqueness of the qualifications and experience required for extraordinary functions, for which specialized and technical expertise is required;
- (c) Operational needs;
- (d) Non-availability of positions in the same job family in multiple duty stations.

4.3 The determination shall be made by the Head of Entity subject to review by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources to ensure consistent application of the criteria for designation of non-rotational positions.

4.4 All positions other than those that have not been identified as non-rotational shall be deemed to be rotational. Currently serving staff members encumbering rotational posts will not be required to move unless they opt in, and their current conditions of service will not be affected thereon.

4.5 Once the determination is made, job openings will specify whether the advertised positions are rotational or non-rotational to enable candidates to make an informed choice when deciding whether to apply.

4.6 The determination may be periodically reviewed based on operational need.

Section 5 Special Constraint Process: Review of requests from staff members and programme managers by the Special Constraints Panel

5.1 In accordance with the annex to the present instruction, the Special Constraints Panel shall consider requests for review from staff members who have special constraints that limit their participation in the mobility exercise.

5.2 Prior to the determination of the compendium of posts for an upcoming mobility exercise, staff members who have special constraints may seek review based on one or more of the reasons set forth in paragraph 1 of the Annex. They shall submit their requests for review to the Special Constraints Panel within 14 calendar days from receipt of written notification of the inclusion of the position they encumber in the compendium.

5.3 All requests and supporting documentation submitted by staff members shall be confidential and will only be used for the purposes of determining their ability to participate in mobility.

5.4 The Special Constraints Panel shall inform the Head of Entity of the outcome of their reviews of the requests received from staff members and programme managers.

5.5 The Head of Entity will consider the recommendations of the Special Constraints Panel when finalizing the list of staff that is to be included in the global compendium.

5.6 Staff members will be notified of the outcome of their requests for review to the Special Constraints Panel.

Section 6 Establishment of the global compendium

Calculation of standard duration of assignment for staff members subject to staff mobility

6.1 The standard duration of assignments shall apply to staff members who are subject to mobility. Upon reaching the standard duration of assignment against the position they encumber, staff members shall be required to participate in a mobility exercise.

6.2 Continuous periods of service of one year or longer in the following instances shall not count towards the calculation of the duration of assignment of the staff member. The counting of the duration of assignment in such instances shall be suspended, and shall only resume upon the staff members' return to their prior positions in their releasing entities or upon conclusion of the full-time release:

(a) Special leave with or without pay;

(b) Temporary assignment to another position;

(c) Secondment or loan to a United Nations fund or programme, specialized agency or organization of the United Nations system;

(d) Service for a continuous period of one year or longer for service as staff representatives granted full time release in the staff representative bodies of the Economic Commission for Africa, the Staff Association of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Staff Council of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Staff Council of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the United

Nations Field Staff Union, the United Nations Office in Geneva Staff Coordinating Council, the United Nations Staff Union (New York), the Staff Union of the United Nations Office at Nairobi and the Staff Council of the United Nations Office at Vienna.

6.3 Further to section 6.2 above, continuous periods of less than one year, or cumulative periods totaling one year or longer that are not continuous, shall not interrupt the counting of the duration of assignment and shall therefore be counted toward the standard duration of assignment of the staff member.

6.4 Staff members who fall under subsections 6.2 (a) to (c) above shall not be eligible to participate in a mobility exercise until they have returned to their former position in their releasing entity.

6.5 In the event of a change in the classification of a duty station, the calculation of the duration of assignment will be based on the lower or the higher of the classification categories at any time the staff members encumbered their position at that duty station, subject to staff members' needs, in order to allow staff members either to participate earlier in a mobility exercise or to delay their participation.

Opting-in to staff mobility

6.6 Currently serving staff members may choose to participate in a mobility exercise.

6.7 Staff members who choose to participate in a mobility exercise may only opt out prior to the establishment of the compendium, in accordance with section 6.8 below.

Confirmation of participation in the global compendium

6.8 In order for a staff member to participate in a mobility exercise, local human resources and the Office of Human Resources shall confirm that criteria have been met prior to the circulation of the compendium.

6.9. In cooperation with the Office of Human Resources, local human resources shall identify and inform staff members who are subject to staff mobility of the inclusion of the position they encumber in the compendium and of their participation in a mobility exercise.

Creation of mobility job opening

6.11 In consultation with programme managers, local human resources will prepare and create the mobility job openings with templates provided by the Office of Human Resources.

6.12 The compendium shall be circulated with a specified deadline by which time all expressions of interest for positions listed in the compendium must be received from participating staff members. The deadline to express interest in all mobility job openings shall be 30 calendar days from the date of circulation of the compendium.

Section 7 Submission of expressions of interest

7.1 Expressions of interest for mobility job openings circulated in the compendium must be submitted in accordance with the instructions set out in the compendium.

7.2 Participating staff members shall express interest in a minimum of three and maximum of five positions in a ranking of preferences at their grade level. Staff members must apply to duty stations other than the one in which they currently serve and are required to express interest in at least one position located in a duty station with a different classification from their current official duty station, if such position is available.

Section 8 Suitability determination of staff members

8.1 Preliminary screening of participating staff members against the suitability criteria will be carried out by local human resources in respective entities in Inspira.

8.2 Local human resources shall verify the preliminary screening and complete a reasoned and documented record of the outcome. Subsequently, they will prepare and submit a list of suitable staff members for the position to the programme managers, for their review.

8.3 In consultation with their respective Head of Entity, programme managers shall review the list of suitable staff members submitted by local human resources and indicate their input and preferences, in a ranking order, of the staff members deemed suitable for the position. Programme managers shall consider the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity in providing their written input and preferences, alongside the extent to which the profile of suitable staff members complements the skillsets of the organizational unit where the position is located for maximizing results in the delivery of the entity's mandate.

8.4 In the event that programme managers do not provide their written input and preferences within the established deadline, all suitable staff members shall be deemed to be equally ranked.

Matching: obligations of staff members and hiring managers with respect to placement.

8.5 While preferences of staff members to be assigned to positions, for which they have expressed interest in and for which they are suitable, will be accommodated to the extent possible, the Organization's operational needs and objectives shall take precedence. While preferences of hiring managers will be accommodated to the extent possible, the Organization's operational needs and objectives shall take precedence.

8.6 Local human resources shall review the matching result and develop and submit its placement recommendations to the heads of entities for a placement decision.

8.7 Staff members have the obligation to accept a position when offered.

8.8 Hiring managers have the obligation to accept staff members placed on positions under their purview.

Section 9 Placement Authority and Placement Decision

9.1 Considering the placement recommendations received from local human resources, heads of entities shall make decisions to place suitable staff members who participated in the mobility exercise against the positions in the compendium.

Section 10 Notification and implementation of the placement decision under mobility

10.1 Pursuant to section 9 above, staff members shall be informed, by means of an automated notification, of the mobility placement decision within 14 calendar days after the decision is made.

10.2 In the event that staff members are not matched to a position that they have expressed an interest in, central human resources will provide support. Staff members may receive a placement proposal for another position in the compendium in which they had not expressed interest but for which they are deemed suitable. This shall also apply to staff members who participated in the compendium but did not express interest in any position.

10.3 Staff members who are placed on a new position shall normally assume their new functions within two calendar months from the date of notification of the placement decision under mobility.

10.4 If staff members fail to assume duties within the time frame specified for personal reason or vacate the position following the placement decision, the head of entity may place another candidate from the suitable list. In furtherance, the head of the releasing and receiving entities shall inform the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources. Staff members who fail to comply with the mobility decision without a compelling reason will be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures as provided in Staff Rule 10.2.

Section 11 Final provisions

11.1 The present administrative instruction shall enter into force on the date of its issuance. The managed mobility governed by administrative instruction ST/AI/2016/1, as amended or revised, will no longer apply to the staff mobility system.

ANNEX - Special Constraints Panel

Responsibilities of the Special Constraints Panel

1. The Special Constraints Panel shall review requests of staff members in the Professional and Higher Categories up to and including the D-2 level and in the Field Service Category, who claim that they are unable to accept a proposed placement that involves a geographical move due to:
 - (a) Medical reasons attributable to the staff member or one or more of their immediate family members (spouse and children) that will negatively impact the performing of functions and fulfilment of mandates of the Organization;
 - (b) Exceptional personal circumstances whereby a change of duty station would create undue difficulty (e.g. child custody, family support, concerns about being subject to discrimination on the ground of race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, gender identification, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status);
 - (c) Operational needs such as a staff member is currently involved in a project/initiative impacting the Organization and a change of duty station would affect that project/initiative;
2. For matters in the interest of the Organization, a supervisor must submit a request for deferment of a placement that may or may not entail a geographical move. Such a request must be reasoned and documented and must be endorsed by the head of entity.
3. The Special Constraints Panel shall be accountable to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources.

Composition of the Special Constraints Panel

4. The Special Constraints Panel shall be composed of 18 members and an equal number of alternates at any level in the Professional and Higher Categories up to and including the D-2 level and in the Field Service Category, who hold an appointment under the Staff Regulations and Rules, other than a temporary appointment, and who have been recruited following a competitive process, including a review by a review body under staff rule 4.15 or a competitive examination under staff rule 4.16.
5. All members and alternates of the Special Constraints Panel shall be appointed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources following a written request for nominations from the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources to heads of entities. When appointing members to the Special Constraints Panel, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources will make every effort to ensure a balanced representation with respect to diversity, including geography, gender and other diversity characteristics, and a proportionate representation of the entities of the Secretariat.

6. All nominations shall be cleared by the Administrative Law Division of the Office of Human Resources to ensure that staff members are not subject to disciplinary proceedings or have been subject to a disciplinary measure. Nominated staff members who are confirmed to be subject to disciplinary proceedings or to have been the subject of a disciplinary measure shall not be appointed to the Special Constraints Panel.
7. The Panel will include one Chair and an alternate Chair designated by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources.
8. Members of the Special Constraints Panel shall be appointed for a term of two years, with the possibility of an extension for a third year. Members of the Panel shall not be reappointed within one calendar year after their membership ends. The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources may in his or her discretion replace a member of the Special Constraints Panel at any time with a reasoned and documented record.
9. A human resources officer from the Office of Human Resources shall serve in an ex officio capacity as the secretary of the Special Constraints Panel. The Office of Legal Affairs will be available to provide a legal opinion upon request from the Special Constraints Panel.

Staff nominated by the staff representative bodies

10. Four representatives of staff, and an equal number of alternates, shall be nominated by the staff representative bodies, and appointed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources, following a written request from the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources. The representatives of staff shall be invited to participate in the meetings of the Special Constraints Panel in an observer capacity.
11. In the event that no nominations are received from representatives of staff within two calendar months of the written request from the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources or should the members nominated by the staff representative bodies not participate in the meetings of the Special Constraints Panel, the Special Constraints Panel shall nevertheless be constituted and discharge its functions in accordance with the provisions of laid out herewith.

Functions of the Special Constraints Panel

12. The Special Constraints Panel shall review the requests received from staff members in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2 above and shall provide its findings to central human resources and Heads of Entities for their consideration when developing recommendations for placement under staff mobility.
13. The Special Constraints Panel shall review the staff member's request and provide its findings on whether or not the request has merit. When the Panel concludes that the request

does not have merit, the Panel shall recommend that the staff member undertakes the proposed placement. When the request is found to have merit, the Panel shall provide its recommendations on the scope of the restrictions as follows:

- (a) The staff member should remain at the same duty station for a specified period of time;
 - (b) The staff member should be exempt from moving to certain duty stations while remaining available for service in other duty stations for a specified period of time.
14. All special constraints requests for medical reasons, including those related to reasonable accommodation for staff members with disabilities provided in accordance with Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2014/3, shall be submitted directly to the Division of Health-Care Management and Occupational Safety and Health (DHMOSH). DHMOSH will review requests of staff members on a case-by-case basis and provide its findings to the Special Constraints Panel by indicating whether a staff member is:
- (a) Medically cleared for the location and role;
 - (b) Medically cleared for the location and role, subject to medical restrictions or certain accommodations;
 - (c) Not medically cleared for the proposed placement.
15. For special constraints requests related to medical reasons affecting immediate family members (spouse and children), DHMOSH will provide the Special Constraints Panel with advice as to the implications of a move on the medical condition of those family members.
16. Staff members, who are assessed by the Special Constraint Panel as unfit to move or fit to move with limitations, will be exempt from the upcoming mobility exercise only. Such approval is not a waiver of the mobility obligation of the staff member, but rather a postponement of mobility participation, and such postponement should normally not be approved more than once, however determination will be made in accordance with the new mobility policy. If postponement is requested for matters concerning the interest of the Organization, the Special Constraints Panel shall indicate a period not exceeding 18 months.