**Policy on Career Transitions**

# **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this policy is to contribute to the governance / management of UNDP’s workforce, foster and leverage diversity, and promote career development, specifically by governing the management of UNDP staff who are going through career transitions, including:
2. Staff who are transitioning in or out of UNDPunder the Inter-Organization Agreement concerning the Transfer, Secondment or Loan of Staff among the Organizations applying the UN Common System of Salaries and Allowances (referred to for the purposes of this policy as ‘the Agreement’);
3. Staff on rotational posts who are being reassigned and are waiting to take up the new assignment;
4. Staff who are unassigned as a result of a change process, return from an interagency move, return from secondment to the Development Coordination Office (DCO) , return from special leave with or without pay, or who fail to meet the requirements of the [Mobility policy](https://popp.undp.org/node/721).

# **Applicability**

1. The Policy applies to all International Professional (IP) staff members holding a UNDP Letter of Appointment and hired on Fixed-Term Appointments (FTA) and Permanent Appointments (PA), referred to for the purposes of this policy as ‘staff members’.
2. The Policy does not apply to staff members holding UNDP Letters of Appointment for service limited to another UN entity. It also does not apply to staff hired on Temporary Appointments (TA) or personnel working for UNDP under any other contractual modality.
3. From the date of entry into effect of this policy, all staff members who are the subject of new outgoing interagency moves will be provided with new terms of return in accordance with this policy. For existing interagency moves already in progress, the new terms of return can either be applied at any time with the agreement of all parties, or in the event of an extension to the existing agreement.
4. Staff members going on secondment or loan will be made aware of the provisions of this policy before the start of such secondment or loan.

# **Interagency moves**

1. The [Inter-Organization Agreement concerning the Transfer, Secondment or Loan of Staff among the Organizations applying the UN Common System of Salaries ad Allowances](https://hr.un.org/sites/hr.un.org/files/handbook/Inter-Organization%20Agreement.pdf) is an instrument signed by several organizations of the UN Common system that establishes the rights of a staff member of one organization who is transferred, seconded or loaned to another organization, and the rights and liabilities of the two organizations concerned. The agreement provides the following modalities:
2. **Transfer:** Movement of a staff member from one organization to another under conditions which give the staff member no right to return to the releasing organization.
3. **Secondment:** Movement of a staff member from one organization to another for a fixed period, normally not exceeding two years, during which the staff member will normally be paid by and be subject to the staff regulations and rules of the receiving organization, but will retain his or her rights of employment in the releasing organization. The period of secondment may be extended for a further fixed period by agreement among all the parties concerned. Secondments are generally granted with a general lien to the organization.
4. **Loan:** Movement of a staff member from one organization to another for a limited period, normally not exceeding one year, during which the staff member will be subject to the administrative supervision of the receiving organization but will continue to be subject to the staff regulations and rules of the releasing organization. Depending on the agreement with the receiving organization, the receiving organization will either reimburse UNDP for all costs related to the loan or UNDP may agree to the loan being non-reimbursable, meaning that all costs related to the assignment are borne by UNDP. Loans for six months or will normally be granted with a specific lien to the position of the staff member. For longer periods approval is normally granted on a general lien basis.
5. These modalities do not apply to organizations who are in the United Nations system and have not signed the Agreement.

# **Application of modalities governing inter-agency mobility**

1. Decisions on the modalities listed in paragraph 6 above to be applied in individual cases will be approved by the Director OHR and taken on the basis of the following considerations: the interests of the organization, career aspirations of the staff member, promotion of diversity and inclusion, and agreement of the receiving organization. The mobility of staff members taking up or holding a post of Resident Coordinator will be governed by the provisions of paragraphs 21 and 22 below.

Transfers

1. Staff members who have applied for and intend to accept an offer of employment from a UN organization that is a signatory to the Agreement will normally be transferred to that organization. Transfers have no expectation of return and are initiated by the staff member interested in pursuing their career outside of UNDP. UNDP will seek the approval for a transfer by the receiving agency after receiving the corresponding official request[[1]](#footnote-1). If the receiving organization does not agree to transfer, or UNDP refuses to apply one of the remaining modalities, the staff member will be required to resign from the organization in order to take up their new post at the Organization outside of UNDP which they seek to join. In order to promote reciprocity of staff transfers between organizations, the same provisions will normally apply in reverse to staff members coming from other UN organizations that are signatory to the Agreement who are intending to accept an offer of employment from UNDP and are not requesting a secondment from the releasing organization.

Secondments

1. Only PA holders, and FTA holders who have served with UNDP for five years or more and whose performance is satisfactory at the time the inter-agency move is requested can be considered for a secondment, unless an exception is granted by the Director of OHR. The maximum duration of a secondment is two years, which may be extended exceptionally with the agreement of all parties, for two additional years. Secondments should only be used for staff who are expected to return to UNDP, following the completion of the agreed term or earlier.
2. There are two categories of secondments, those in the interest of UNDP and those in the interest of the staff member.
3. Secondments in the interest of UNDP:
4. Where UNDP deems that a staff member is moving in the interest and at the request of UNDP to a UN organization that is a signatory to the Agreement for a limited period not expected to exceed two years and who is expected to return to UNDP at the end of this period, they may be seconded to that organization in the interest of UNDP.
5. In case of a secondment in the interests of UNDP, the staff member may be offered a **specific lien** to their post. In this case, the staff member will have to return to UNDP at the end of the period of secondment. Failure to do so will result in the loss of the specific lien. The organization reserves the right to change a specific lien to a general lien on extension should the reasons for secondment change. The release of a staff member with a specific lien will be made in consultation with the releasing unit. The releasing unit can make use of the mechanisms available within UNDP policies to cover the gap, such as detail or short term assignments.
6. Secondments in the interest of the staff member:
7. Where a staff member is moving at their own request (for example, to further their career in line with UNDP’s career framework) to another UN organization that is a signatory to the agreement, UNDP may exceptionally approve a secondment in the interests of the individual.
8. In the case of a secondment in the interest of the staff member, they shall be provided with a **general lien** to UNDP.

Loans

1. **I**n exceptional circumstances, UNDP may conclude a reimbursable or non-reimbursable loan agreement in order to facilitate the mobility of a staff member. This provision would apply to circumstances where, for example, the receiving organization is not able to create a position within their regular structure and therefore cannot undertake the administrative and contractual processes that are required to operationalize a transfer or a secondment. Loans will generally be approved for a period not exceeding one year, and they may be extended for an additional period if such extension is in the interest of the organization. Loans with a duration of six months or less may be provided with a specific lien to the position of the staff member, with only a general lien in the case of loans of longer duration.

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# **Terms of return in cases of general lien to UNDP**

1. A staff member on secondment or loan can only compete as an internal in a restructuring process if they retain a specific lien to their post, not when on a general lien. During the secondment/loan, staff members with a general lien who apply for UNDP positions will be considered internal applicants for those positions in UNDP and will be considered for those positions for which they meet the eligibility criteria.

Permanent Appointment holders:

1. The return of a PA holder (on secondment or loan) with a general lien will be conditional on the staff member having been selected for a position with UNDP prior to the end of the interagency move. Such staff members should begin actively searching for suitable vacancies within UNDP and elsewhere in the UN System at least 9 months prior to the scheduled date of return.
2. If the staff member has not been able to secure a new position prior to the end of the interagency move, which would start immediately after it ends, the staff member will be automatically placed on search[[2]](#footnote-2) for a period of 60 days prior to the end of the interagency move as specified in the [Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Unassigned Permanent Appointment Holders](https://intranet.undp.org/unit/ohr/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/unit/ohr/Shared%20Documents%20OHR/SOP%20Library/Termination/Termination%20of%20PA%20Holder/SOP/OHR%20-%20SOP%20Unassigned%20PA%20Holder%20-%20(CLEAN)%2031%20July%202019.docx&action=default).
3. In case UNDP is not successful in appointing the staff member to a position for which the candidate is eligible and suitable, the organization will proceed with termination as specified in the [Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Unassigned Permanent Appointment Holders](https://intranet.undp.org/unit/ohr/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/unit/ohr/Shared%20Documents%20OHR/SOP%20Library/Termination/Termination%20of%20PA%20Holder/SOP/OHR%20-%20SOP%20Unassigned%20PA%20Holder%20-%20(CLEAN)%2031%20July%202019.docx&action=default).

FTA holders

1. It is the obligation of an FTA holder on secondment or loan with a general lien to obtain a position with UNDP prior to the end of the interagency move if that staff member wishes to remain in service with UNDP. Staff members concerned should begin actively searching for suitable vacancies within UNDP and elsewhere in the UN System at least 9 months prior to the scheduled date of return.
2. Unless the staff member has been able to secure a new position starting immediately after the end of their secondment or loan, the organization will proceed as follows:
	1. If the end of the secondment/loan is aligned with the contract expiration date, the contract will lapse on that specific date.
	2. If the end of the secondment/loan comes before the contract expiration date, the organization will proceed with consideration of termination at the end of the secondment or loan followed by one months’ notice (if served) or as cash in lieu of notice, as decided by the organization, unless an exception is obtained by the Director, OHR. Basic termination indemnity in accordance with Annex III of the Staff Regulations and Rules will be paid, following approval of termination of appointment by the Director, BMS.

# **Special conditions for Resident Coordinators (RC), Resident Coordinator Office (RCO) and Development Coordination Office (DCO) staff**

1. Resident Coordinators or staff seconded from UNDP to the UN Secretariat on similar positions (DSRSG, SRSG, HC) will be provided the maximum of two consecutive secondments of two years each, with the extension of an exceptional fifth year, in case the RC assignment is of five years. All RCs and staff seconded from UNDP to the UN Secretariat on similar positions (DSRSG, SRSG, HC) are seconded on a **general lien** basis from UNDP.
2. All international and national RCO staff, and all DCO staff, will be transferred to appointments with the UN Secretariat in accordance with paragraph 9 of this policy.

# **Reassignment pool**

1. The Reassignment Pool is a mechanism employed by UNDP to assign staff members who are temporarily unable to take up an appointment to a rotational post following the end of their previous assignment (for example, if the new post is not yet vacant or if there is a delay in obtaining formal accreditation from the host country government).
2. Placement in the Reassignment Pool will be approved by the Director, OHR. Staff members can be in the Reassignment Pool for a maximum of six months. This may exceptionally be extended for periods of up to six months, subject to the approval of the Director OHR.
3. Staff members in the Reassignment Pool must be readily available to perform short term assignments as required by UNDP. Some examples of short term assignments for which capacity may be sought through the Reassignment Pool include: project management for special management or development projects; SURGE/rapid deployment assignments; research assignments; and/or ad-interim roles; filling capacity gaps due to extended sick, maternity, paternity and other leaves, and for posts which are being filled but are still vacant due to delays in recruitment; any other short-time assignments where a temporary boost in capacity is deemed of corporate priority and/or where business continuity is essential.
4. A staff member placed into a short term assignment from the Reassignment Pool will be supervised by the respective manager in the receiving office. They can serve in Headquarters, at the receiving unit's duty station, at the staff member’s home country or last duty station, whichever is most appropriate and economical, as decided by the organization. The staff member will retain their grade during the period of the short term assignment.
5. The time of the short term assignment is included in the calculation of the maximum duration of the placement in the reassignment pool.
6. The staff costs during the time a staff member is placed in the reassignment pool will be covered from a special reassignment reserve.

# **Unassigned staff**

## Reasons

1. Staff members are considered “unassigned” when they fail to secure a position in UNDP, including but not limited to the following reasons:
2. Return from an interagency move: In case the staff member did not secure a position in UNDP and was seconded or loaned with a general lien to UNDP.
3. At the end of Special Leave Without Pay (SLWOP)[[3]](#footnote-3): In case the staff member did not secure a position in UNDP and the SLWOP was undertaken with a general lien to UNDP.
4. Staff on rotational positions at the end of tour of duty: Staff on rotational positions have a tour of duty depending on the duty station where they serve and, as such, may be unassigned if they do not have a new position to move on to before the end of their tour of duty. When undertaking a rotational post, staff members do not have a specific lien on their previous position.
5. Following completion of a non-rotational assignment: In case the staff member has not secured a position by the end of an assignment.
6. Mandatory mobility requirement: In case the staff member needs to move to another post in order to fulfil a mandatory mobility requirement and the staff member has not secured such post at the end of the established period.
7. In case of post abolition: Staff members can also be unassigned as a result of the abolition of their post (due to a change process, end of a project, etc.).

## Separation process

PA holders

1. In case a PA staff member is at risk of being unassigned, as defined above, he/she will be automatically placed on a search[[4]](#footnote-4) period, 60 days before the end of the specific arrangement (as defined in 1. above). The [Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Unassigned Permanent Appointment Holders](https://intranet.undp.org/unit/ohr/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/unit/ohr/Shared%20Documents%20OHR/SOP%20Library/Termination/Termination%20of%20PA%20Holder/SOP/OHR%20-%20SOP%20Unassigned%20PA%20Holder%20-%20(CLEAN)%2031%20July%202019.docx&action=default) establish the process to follow in this case.

FTA holders

1. In case an FTA staff member is at risk of being unassigned, as defined above, he/she will be notified of the date when his/her contract will be terminated, in case the end of the period (as defined in 1. above) comes before the normal end of contract date. In this instance, the staff member will be eligible for termination indemnities.

## Financial considerations

1. The costs of the search period (if not served while on interagency exchange or SLWOP), notice period (paid in cash or served), and termination indemnities will be covered from the separation reserve.
1. An exception is made with regards to the Resident Coordinator positions which can be seconded for a period up to their respective tour of duty as requested by the Development Coordination Office of the United Nations. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Search” is a 60-calendar day period during which the staff member will receive priority consideration on a non-competitive basis for any available vacancy for which they are deemed suitable to enable the Organization to identify a position for the PA holder. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Conditions for SLWOP are defined in the [Special Leave policy](https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/HR_Types%20of%20Leave_Special%20Leave.docx&action=default) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. “Search” is a 60-calendar day period during which the staff member will receive priority consideration on a non-competitive basis for any available vacancy for which they are deemed suitable to enable the Organization to identify a position for the PA holder. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)