



*executive committee of
the directing council*

PAN AMERICAN
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

*working party of
the regional committee*

WORLD
HEALTH
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Item 10: RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF STAFF

At the 45th Meeting of the Executive Committee in October 1961, the Director was requested to study the conditions of employment for the staff of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau and to report on steps which might be taken to facilitate recruitment and to insure the retention of staff of the Bureau. The Director has the honor to present a report on this matter.

It has been recognized that the most valuable asset of the Organization is that of trained personnel. The Pan American Health Organization is basically engaged in the rendering of advisory and related services to its Member Governments and these activities can only be performed effectively by a staff highly competent in subject field and dedicated to the ideal of giving service to the peoples of the Americas. The Director has been deeply conscious of the need for recruiting the most qualified technical and administrative personnel to provide such assistance and for retaining on the staff of the Organization the willing and the able. He has made this a fundamental element of policy and his position and action in order to realize the goal of a staff of highest competence and dedication has been reflected throughout the past several years in his reports to the Governing Bodies and in his direction of the Bureau.

During the recent past, several steps have been taken to better the conditions of employment in the PASB/WHO. Virtually, all of these efforts have been related to similar proposals in the WHO and have been concerned with salary, pension, health insurance, and other conditions for both professional personnel and locally recruited staff. In addition promotional and training opportunities have been opened, whenever possible and within the limits of the financial capability of the Bureau.

The Director, appreciating the fact that the professional personnel of the Bureau had not received a salary increase for many years, and conscious that a poorly reimbursed staff member will not be a contented and interested employee, supported the inter-agency efforts to obtain an upward adjustment of the salary schedule. All actions taken on these matters followed decision by the United Nations General Assembly and the World Health Organization Executive Board. The Director believes that

these changes will make more attractive the opportunities in PASB/WHO and will help materially recruitment of personnel. In the staff rule changes presented to this Body at this session the result of the campaign to raise salaries of professional staff is reflected in the new salary schedule in paragraph 230.2 of the new staff rules (see Document CE46/3). This increase was effective as of 1 January 1962 and provided for rises in salary for all grades from P.1 through D.2. In addition to this increase, an increase of \$200 for dependent spouse was made effective on the same date.

During the course of the last year the pensionable remuneration of staff members has been increased by the institution of a system of half-gross computation for pension purposes. It is recognized that this action raised pension potential slightly, but it is believed that this represents a meaningful first step in the direction of bringing pensions within the PASB/WHO into slightly better comparison with national and private pension schemes. It is further recognized that this is an area in which continued effort should be made in order to realize even better pensions for staff members and it is the intent of the Director to continue to pursue this objective.

The Directing Council, in Resolution XIX of its 11th Meeting, authorized the Director to establish a staff health insurance program which will provide coverage to all staff members and their dependents. The Director associated himself with the plans of the Director-General of the World Health Organization in the establishment of such a staff health insurance program financed by the Organization and the staff member. This plan went into effect in 1960 and has served to give staff members protection at a reasonable rate.

The Director has been concerned, as well, with aspects of the conditions of employment of locally recruited personnel. He presented to the 43rd Meeting of the Executive Committee a request for the establishment of a dependent's allowance for such staff. In Resolution VII of this meeting, the proposal was adopted in principle and the Director was requested to include in the proposed budget for 1963 the amount necessary to implement this program. The increase was duly noted in Official Document No. 35 when the program and budget for 1963 was presented to the XIII Meeting of the Directing Council.

The salaries of locally recruited staff at established stations have been under continuing examination and every effort is exerted to meet changes in the labor market in each community as soon as possible in order to keep salaries of PASB/WHO local personnel at the best prevailing rate in the community. In all of these surveys, the PASB/WHO participates in the surveys undertaken by the agencies in the United Nations. During 1961, as a result of these surveys, local wage scale of staff in six cities were revised upward in order to keep salary rates at parity with other employers in the locality.

Similar efforts have been made to maintain the post adjustment in balance with the current cost of living at the many stations at which PASB/WHO personnel are located. In 1961, a review of more than 47 stations in AMRO by the PASB/WHO, in association with other UN agencies, resulted in 28 changes upward in the post adjustment.

Studies also have been undertaken periodically on per diem and subsistence rates in order to provide ready adjustment of these rates to the requirements in given communities.

It has also been a matter of basic principle to offer promotional opportunity and to recognize merit by special award within the limits of the budget and the financial capability of the Bureau. Since 1959, promotions have been won by 153 staff members, of whom 95 were locally recruited and 58 in the professional grades. In addition 10 meritorious increases have been granted and 8 letters of commendation have been awarded employees who have served with distinction.

Provision has also been made for training of staff members. The activity is still in a developmental stage, but since 1959, 7 staff members have been granted leave to undertake advanced studies in their fields of specialty and have returned to the Organization upon completion of this training. Currently, there is provision for another staff member to engage in study in the coming academic year. Within the last year, provision was made for short-term refresher courses. Two persons were named for these courses in 1961 and two more have been given awards in 1962.

Staff members seeking to perfect their skill in one of the working languages of the Bureau are assisted to meet the cost of their studies. In 1961 and 1962, 30 were authorized to receive an allowance for language training under arrangements deriving from the staff rules.

This is a summary of the steps taken to improve the conditions of employment and to make possible the recruitment of trained and highly competent personnel and to retain them on the staff of the PASB. It will be necessary to continue these efforts in the future in order to meet the requirements of the developing program requested by the Member Governments of the PAHO. This most important subject will be kept under constant review and the Director will propose to the Governing Bodies, should the need arise, courses of action deemed necessary to facilitate the recruitment of staff and to insure their retention.