



*directing council*

PAN AMERICAN  
SANITARY  
ORGANIZATION

VIII Meeting

*regional committee*

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

VII Meeting



Washington, D.C.  
September 1955

CD8/36 (Eng.)  
13 September 1955  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Topic 26: CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT OF REGULAR AND  
PROJECT PERSONNEL IN THE PASO/WHO

Background

Prior to 1949 the conditions of employment of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau applied uniformly to all staff members regardless of official station or area of assignment. However, by virtue of the Agreement signed between the Pan American Sanitary Organization and the World Health Organization in 1949, the Executive Committee, at its 7th Meeting (1949), appointed a special committee to prepare a preliminary draft of Staff Rules and Regulations for the Pan American Sanitary Bureau based on the rules then in effect for the staff of the World Health Organization and the other specialized agencies of the United Nations. As a result of this study, the Directing Council at its III Meeting (1949), adopted the Staff Rules and Regulations of the WHO, duly modified, with certain exceptions. Dating from that action, the Executive Committee has confirmed the adoption of additions and amendments to the initial rules in order that the Staff Rules of the PASB may conform as closely as possible to similar changes placed into effect by the WHO. In 1953, major changes were adopted by the WHO, and, accordingly, by the PASB, concerning special conditions of employment for staff members assigned to projects which were based in good measure on certain changes in the UN/TA rules. These changes added additional allowances to those already granted project personnel and generally made their conditions of employment financially more attractive than in the past.

### Conditions of Employment

Essentially, the differences in the conditions of employment of regular and project personnel in the PASB/WHO are founded on the principle that those appointed to the regular staff are in a career service while those assigned to projects are personnel temporarily engaged for a specific period related to the life of the project. The distinction is not, however, an absolute one for there have been a number of cases in which regular staff members have been assigned to a project from a regular post at Headquarters or at a Zone Office. In keeping with the Staff Rules, these employees have been granted the allowances of the project staff, while retaining the allowances of members of the regular staff.

As career personnel, the regular staff are given permanent contracts in PASB or 5-year contracts in WHO and are included in a pension fund wherein provision is made for a retirement benefit or for benefits in case of disability or death. In addition, as career personnel presumably are located for a considerable period of time at a duty station, provision is made for the transport of household goods. Authorization also is given such personnel for a special bonus for service away from home in the form of a repatriation grant. These several allowances are granted regular staff and not project staff.

Project staff are assigned for shorter periods of time and are given contracts of 1 or 2 years duration. They do not participate in the pension fund. They do not receive the special bonus of repatriation grant for service away from home, unless they entered on duty prior to 1952, when the bonus was abolished for project staff. In addition, they are not permitted the transport of household effects to their duty station. However, these project personnel receive certain allowances which more than compensate in total remuneration for the value of the special allowances received by the regular staff. Project staff receive, and regular staff do not, a project service allowance which is presumed to cover the cost of lodging and related incidentals for the staff member and his family. This sum, which is paid in local currency, varies from country to country and is founded on the cost of such accommodations and services in the country of assignment. The sum generally averages to the equivalent in U.S. dollars of \$1,500 per annum. The project staff member also receives

a dependent's allowance of \$200 per annum for a wife or a dependent husband. The regular staff member does not receive this allowance. If the staff member does not have a dependent wife or husband he is eligible for an allowance of \$100 for a dependent parent, brother, sister, or incapacitated child over 21 years of age. Project staff personnel also are permitted a single \$100 allowance for the purchase of field equipment.

Both project and regular staff members receive annual within-grade increases in salary, children's allowance, education grants, installation allowance, participation in the accident and sickness insurance plan, and home leave every two years. The project staff member, if he elects to leave his dependents at home, may have home leave annually.

As indicated above, the distinction is not, however, an absolute one. With the growth of the Organization and development of its programs, there have been cases in which regular staff personnel have been assigned to projects and have been authorized the allowances of both regular and project staff. There are 20 staff members in this category, of whom 6 are paid from PASB funds, none from WHO, 7 from UN/TA, and 7 from OAS/TA funds.

#### Effect of Conditions of Employment

The effect of the existing situation has been to bring about a considerable difference in entitlements and, accordingly, in take-home pay of regular and project staff members who are located at the same duty station. For instance, the gross income for a regular staff member with 3 children located at the Zone Office in Mexico City, having a salary of \$7,300 and children's allowance of \$600, would be \$7,900. This is subject to a deduction of \$545.64 for pension fund and accident insurance, making the staff member's take-home pay \$7,354.36. A staff member on a project with duty station in Mexico City, having the same number of dependents, receives \$1,962.92 more take-home pay per annum than the regular staff member.

Similar comparisons may be drawn of regular and project staff members in Guatemala City where, dependency status being equal, a project staff member at the P.4 grade receives \$2,327 more take-home pay than the regular staff member; in Buenos Aires, where a project staff member of the P.4 grade receives

\$3,231.40 more than the regular staff member; and at every other station where project and regular staff are located together.

These are but a few examples; the problem is a general one throughout the Organization and merits definitive examination and remedial action in the immediate future in order to adjust inequities and to avoid further disturbance to staff morale. The staff members adversely affected are the career personnel of the Bureau. In the past, the ready answer to queries from them as to the disparity between their salaries and those of project staff has been to emphasize career service, pension participation, and the right to transfer of household goods. There is very serious question, however, as to whether these privileges outweigh the additional remuneration to project staff. This argument lacks any merit when reference is made to the 20 persons on projects who receive the allowances of regular and project staff. The significant matter for a regular staff member, and this has been brought up on many occasions in the past, is that project staff, the temporary staff, are receiving more income than the permanent staff.

Conversely, some project staff members, serving on contracts of one to two years, have raised the question of their tenure and have noted their desire to have greater job security. This matter, too, warrants review and determination, as do such other matters as the salary scale of the staff, for we are having difficulty recruiting new personnel of high competence and maintaining the quality and numbers of our staff at the salaries we are now offering.

The multiplicity of allowances and the diversity of rules and procedures of different members of our staff has resulted in a complex and expensive process that is wasteful of the financial resources of the Organization and is an injustice to the regular staff of the Bureau.

Considering that the disparity in the conditions of employment between the regular and the project staff represents a serious problem in the orderly administration of the programs of the PASB, the Director requests the Directing Council to review the factors occasioning this situation and to give him the benefit of its guidance as to remedial action.