



Secretariat

14 February 2020

Administrative instruction

Sick leave

The Secretary-General, for the purpose of implementing staff rule 6.2, hereby promulgates the following:

Section 1 General

1.1 Sick leave may be granted under staff rule 6.2 in accordance with the provisions of the present instruction.

1.2 All sick leave must be supported by a certificate or report from a duly qualified medical practitioner where the certificate or report is issued, except when uncertified sick leave is permitted under conditions set out in staff rule 6.2.

1.3 Sick leave may be taken in increments of full days or half-days. A medical certificate from a duly qualified medical practitioner is required when sick leave continues for more than three consecutive working days and for all sick leave taken in excess of a staff member's entitlement to uncertified sick leave.

Section 2 Certification of sick leave

2.1 Unless uncertified sick leave is allowed under section 1.2 above, a staff member who is unable to perform her or his duties by reason of illness or injury must submit a medical certificate or a medical report, as provided in sections 2.2 and 2.3 below, no later than the twentieth working day following the initial absence from duty.

2.2 A total of up to 20 working days taken cumulatively or consecutively during a 12-month period may be approved as certified sick leave by the Office for Administrative Services upon submission by the staff member of a certificate from a duly qualified medical practitioner indicating the date or dates of absence from duty by reason of illness, injury or incapacitation, without identification of diagnosis, or upon submission to the Medical Services Division at United Nations Headquarters in New York (email: sickleave@un.org) by the staff member of a detailed medical report, completed and signed by a duly qualified medical practitioner.

2.3 After a total of 20 working days of sick leave have been certified in accordance with section 2.2 in an annual cycle starting from 1 April of any year, certification of



further sick leave by the Medical Services Division at United Nations Headquarters shall be required. For that purpose, the staff member shall submit to the Office for Administrative Services, in a sealed envelope, a detailed medical report, completed and signed by a duly qualified medical practitioner.

2.4 However, no medical report needs be submitted under section 2.3 above in the following cases:

(a) The period of absence owing to illness or injury has already been certified by the Medical Services Division at United Nations Headquarters;

(b) The staff member claims sick leave for half a day owing to a visit to a duly qualified medical practitioner, in which case certified sick leave may be approved by the Office for Administrative Services on submission of a medical certificate indicating that the staff member consulted the doctor or dentist.

2.5 If no certificate or report is submitted as required by sections 2.1 to 2.4 above or if the sick leave is not certified by the Medical Services Division at United Nations Headquarters, the absence shall be treated as unauthorized absence in accordance with staff rule 5.3 (d). If the Secretary-General so decides, the absence may be charged to accrued annual leave or a combination of accrued annual leave and special leave without pay. However, if the staff member belatedly submits the required medical certificate or report and establishes to the Secretary-General's satisfaction that the late submission was attributable to circumstances beyond the staff member's control, the absence may be charged to sick leave upon certification by the Medical Services Division at United Nations Headquarters.

Section 3

Relationship of sick leave to other entitlements

Exhaustion of sick leave entitlement

3.1 When the entitlement to sick leave has been exhausted, further certified sick leave shall be charged to annual leave. When the entitlements to sick leave and annual leave have been exhausted, the staff member shall be placed on special leave without pay.

3.2 When a staff member has used all of the entitlement to sick leave with full pay, the Office for Administrative Services shall bring the situation to the attention of the Medical Services Division at United Nations Headquarters in order to determine whether that staff member should be considered for a disability benefit under the relevant provisions of the Regulations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund while the staff member is on sick leave with half pay. When the staff member is being considered for such a benefit and paid leave entitlements have been exhausted because of a delay in the medical determination of the staff member's incapacity for further service or in the decision by the United Nations Staff Pension Committee whether to award a disability benefit, the staff member shall be placed on special leave with half pay until the date of such decision.

Combination of sick leave on half pay with annual leave or half-time duty

3.3 Each day of sick leave at half pay may be combined with one half-day's annual leave, provided the staff member previously agrees to such an arrangement. In such case, both a whole day's sick leave on half pay and a half-day's annual leave shall be charged for each working day involved.

3.4 When a staff member returns to duty on a half-time basis, the staff member may be paid for the other half working day on the basis of a whole day's sick leave at half

pay, provided the staff member has previously agreed to such an arrangement. In such case, both the half-day worked and the whole day's sick leave at half pay shall be charged for each working day involved.

3.5 Other combinations may be made, if requested by the staff member, provided that the interests of the staff member are duly taken into account and that such arrangements are consistent with the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules.

Accrual of annual leave during sick leave

3.6 In accordance with staff rule 5.3, a staff member shall accrue annual leave:

- (a) While on sick leave with full-pay status;
- (b) While absent from work under an agreed arrangement whereby a half-day of annual leave is combined with a full day of sick leave at half pay;
- (c) While absent from work under an agreed arrangement whereby half-time duty is combined with a full day of sick leave at half pay.

Effect of sick leave on entitlements other than annual leave

3.7 Periods of sick leave, whether on full or half pay, shall not affect the accrual of service credits towards salary increment, home leave, termination indemnity and repatriation grant. Staff members who are on sick leave with half pay after exhausting their sick leave on full pay and who cannot be maintained on full-pay status through a combination of sick leave on half pay with accrued annual leave or half-time duty shall receive:

- (a) Half their base salary and post adjustment, where applicable;
- (b) The full amount of the following allowances and benefits: dependency allowance, language allowance, education grant, mobility incentive, hardship allowance, rental subsidy and health insurance subsidy, as applicable. Individual allowances and benefits linked to the performance of functions under defined circumstances, as is the case for temporary post allowance, shall not be payable.

Sick leave within a period of annual leave

3.8 If sick leave for a period of more than five consecutive working days is requested within a period of annual leave under staff rule 6.2 (e) and the sick leave involves an extension of the period of absence from work, the Office for Administrative Services must be informed before the approved period expires, where practicable, with the submission of a medical certificate or report, as appropriate. The Office for Administrative Services shall inform the Medical Services Division at United Nations Headquarters of the situation. The request for approval of sick leave during annual leave must be submitted together with the requisite medical certificate or report, immediately upon return to duty for certification by the Medical Services Division at United Nations Headquarters.

3.9 If the certification produced is not acceptable to the Medical Services Division at United Nations Headquarters and the sick leave is not certified, the Office for Administrative Services shall advise the staff member that sick leave has been refused and that the absence shall be recorded as annual leave. If the sick leave involves an extension of the period of approved absence from work and it is not certified by the Medical Services Division at United Nations Headquarters, the Office for Administrative Services shall advise the staff member that sick leave has been refused and that the staff member must report for duty immediately. Any unauthorized absence will trigger the administrative process to separate the staff member from service on grounds of abandonment of post.

Extension of fixed-term appointments for utilization of sick leave entitlement

3.10 When a staff member on a fixed-term appointment is on certified sick leave or incapacitated for service by reason of an illness that continues beyond the date of expiration of the appointment, the staff member shall be granted an extension of the appointment, after consultation with the Medical Services Division at United Nations Headquarters, for the continuous period of certified illness up to the maximum entitlement to sick leave at full pay and half pay under staff rule 6.2.

3.11 When a staff member's fixed-term appointment is extended solely to enable the staff member to utilize her or his sick leave entitlement, such extension shall not give rise to any further entitlement to salary increment, annual leave, sick leave, parental leave or home leave, although credit towards repatriation grant may continue to accrue if the staff member has not returned to her or his home country. Sick leave on half pay during the period of extension may not be supplemented by annual leave. In the event of death during the period of extension, the period prior to the death may be taken into account in the determination of the death benefit provided in staff rules 9.12 and 9.13.

Uncertified sick leave by reason of a family emergency

3.12 In cases of family-related emergencies, for which the entitlement to uncertified sick leave under staff rule 6.2 (b) (ii) b. may be used, the staff member shall make every effort to inform her or his supervisor of the proposed leave and of its duration, in advance of such leave, or if this is not possible, on the first day that such leave is taken.

Section 4
Final provisions

4.1 The present administrative instruction shall enter into force on the date of its issuance. [ISBA/ST/AI/2017/2](#) is hereby withdrawn.

(Signed) Michael Lodge
Secretary-General
