Administrative instruction

Working hours, overtime, leave and attendance

1. Pursuant to Chapters V and VI of the Staff Rules (ISBA/ST/SGB/2020/1) and for the purpose of establishing working hours and the system of recording attendance and leave, hereby promulgates the following:

A. Working hours

2. The normal 40 hour working week comprises five days, Monday to Friday, of eight hours each, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with a break of one hour for lunch. Staff members may be required to work beyond the normal working hours as the needs of service may require. In order to allow working hours to be adjusted to suit both, the needs of service and the individual needs of staff members without compromising the efficiency of the secretariat, a staggered working hour system applies as set out below.

3. Except for staff members on a shift system (security personnel and drivers), all staff members are expected to be present during a core period between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Their lunch hour must begin no earlier than 12 p.m. and end no later than 3 p.m. The remaining two hours of work may be scheduled before or after those times on a regular basis as follows: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. or 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

4. During the sessions of the Authority, normal working hours are from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. staggered working hours are not applicable during that period and no compensation is paid for the extra hour.

5. Staff members should advise their supervisors of their personal preferences with respect to the scheduling of non-core hours. Supervisors, after taking into consideration the needs of service and the requests received from staff members, shall decide whether and to what extent the personal preferences of each staff member can be accommodated. Once the preferences are approved by the supervisor, the staff member shall maintain the working hours until the supervisor authorizes a change. Heads of offices are requested to provide Office of Administrative Services with the
approved staggered working hours, in writing and copied to staff members, for the purpose of proper attendance recording and placement on the official status file.

B. Overtime

General provision

6. In the interests of the health of the staff and the efficiency of the service, supervisors shall not require a staff member to work more than 40 hours of overtime during any one month, except where unusual exigencies of the service so require and so reported to the Secretary-General.

7. Supervisors are required to plan work, review working methods and carefully monitor overtime work in their area of responsibility. Overtime should not be granted for the completion of routine assignments, instead it should be used only as a device to respond to ad hoc contingencies or to cope with peak demands.

8. Staff members who have not worked a full work day or a full work week are not entitled to be granted overtime pay for that day or for that weekend. Staff members whose absence was scheduled (ie. authorized annual leave or compensatory time off) are not excluded from working overtime. Any exception should be dictated by the exigencies of service.

9. Under the provisions of staff rule 5.3 (c), during a period of exigency, when the Secretary-General requires staff members to work at the duty station on an official holiday, the Secretary-General shall set another working day to be observed as the holiday, and the holiday falling during the period of exigency shall be treated as a normal working day.

Compensation for overtime for staff members in the Professional and National Professional officers categories

10. Should the exigencies of the service permit, and subject to the prior approval of the Head of the Office of Administrative Services, occasional compensatory time off may be granted to staff members in the Professional and National Professional Officers categories who have been required to work substantial or recurrent periods of overtime, including compensatory time off in lieu where official holidays at the duty station cannot be taken because of official travel.

Compensation for overtime for staff members in the General Service Category

11. Staff members in the General Service category who are required to work in excess of the working week shall be given compensatory time off or additional payment or a combination of both in accordance with the following paragraphs 12 to 19.

12. Definitions:

(a) Overtime is defined as time worked in excess of the scheduled work day or in excess of the scheduled work week or time worked on official holidays, provided that such work has been authorized in advance by the proper authority;

(b) The scheduled work day is defined as the duration of the working hours in effect at the time
on any day of the scheduled work week, less one hour for a meal;

(c) The scheduled work week consists of the five working days assigned to the staff member during seven consecutive calendar days.

13. Compensation for overtime shall be reckoned to the nearest half hour; casual overtime of less than one half hour on any day during the scheduled work week shall be disregarded.

14. A staff member who is required to work on the sixth or seventh day of the week or on an official holiday shall, upon final calculation, receive no less than four hours of overtime compensation.

15. Compensation for overtime shall take the form of:

   (a) an equal amount of compensatory time off for overtime in excess of the scheduled work day up to a total of eight hours of work on the same day. Subject to the exigencies of the service, such compensatory time off may be given at any time during the four months following the month in which the overtime takes place. Accrued time off shall be forfeited if the staff member elects not to take it within the prescribed period; and/or

   (b) an additional payment for overtime in excess of a total of eight hours of work of any day of the scheduled work week, or when it takes place on the sixth or seventh day of the scheduled work week.

16. Compensation for overtime as an additional payment may be granted only when the request was authorized by the supervisor and availability of funds confirmed in advance with a copy provided to the Office of Administrative Services.

17. The additional payment referred to in subparagraph 15 (b) shall be made at the rate of one and one half times the aggregate of the staff member’s base salary and language allowance, if any, except that if the overtime takes place on a Sunday or on the seventh day of the scheduled work week, the rate of the additional payment shall be twice the aggregate. In the latter case, overtime which takes place on a Sunday will be subject to payment as compensation at the straight or one and a half time rate, as appropriate.

18. Subject to the exigencies of service, compensatory time off may be granted, as appropriate, at a time and a half rate or at twice the normal rate in lieu of compensation by additional payment at the time and a half rate or at twice the normal rate under subparagraph 15 (b) above if the staff member so requests.

19. Staff members may receive a lump-sum payment, the amount of which is to be determined by the Secretary-General, as compensation for overtime worked and transportation fees incurred in connection with meetings of the organs of the Authority.

C. Annual leave

20. In accordance with staff rule 5.3, staff members who hold an initial appointment of one year
or more shall accrue annual leave while in full pay status at the rate of two and a half days a month, and staff members who hold an initial appointment of less than one year shall accrue at the rate of one and a half days a month.

21. Annual leave may be taken in units of days or half days.

22. Annual leave may be taken only with prior authorization by the staff member’s supervisor. All arrangements relating to leave shall be subject to the exigencies of service. The personal circumstances and preferences of the individual staff member shall, as far as possible, be considered. Authorization must be given in advance, and leave request forms must be completed, signed and submitted to the Office of Administrative Services.

23. If a staff member is absent from work without authorization, payment of salary and allowances shall cease for the period of unauthorized absence. If the staff member is absent owing to an emergency, and the staff member has accrued annual leave, the absence will be charged to that leave. Staff members must inform their supervisor promptly of an absence due to illness or emergency as per prevailing administrative issuances on sick leave.

24. As per staff rule 5.3, annual leave may be accumulated, provided that no more than 60 working days for staff members holding an initial appointment of one year or longer and 18 working days for staff members an initial appointment less than one year are carried forward beyond 31 March of any year.

25. As a general rule, annual leave should be taken in the leave cycle in which it was accrued. Staff members are therefore strongly encouraged to avail themselves of annual leave on a regular basis. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that staff members under their supervision take annual leave, and report to the Secretary-General on the accrued leave balances in excess of 40 days of the staff members.

26. A staff member may, in exceptional circumstances, be granted advance annual leave of up to ten working days, provided that the staff member’s service is expected to continue for a period beyond what is necessary to accrue the requested advanced leave.

D. Sick leave

27. In accordance with staff rule 6.2 and administrative instruction on sick leave (ISBA/ST/AI/2020/5), all sick leave must be approved and sick leave forms must be completed, signed and submitted to the Office of Administrative Service as soon as possible upon return to work. In case of an absence due to illness or injury, a medical certificate or medical report shall be submitted promptly under the conditions specified by the Secretary-General.

E. Attendance

28. Attendance and leave shall be reported weekly by each office and recorded by the Office of Administrative Services. Staff members reporting for work more than two hours after their scheduled time of commencement or leaving work more than two hours before their scheduled
time ends or being absent from work for more than two hours, are required to make up the hours of absence or may be charged a half-day of leave as per prevailing administrative issuances on sick leave.

29. The supervisor in each office shall designate a timekeeper who, under the supervisor’s authority, shall:

   (a) Verify attendance and compliance with working hours and inform the supervisor of unexplained absences;

   (b) Record overtime work;

   (c) Prepare attendance reports, to be endorsed by the supervisor;

   (d) Prepare an annual or sick leave form upon return to duty of a staff member after any period of such leave, and obtain endorsement of the completed form by the staff member and the supervisor;

   (e) Keep all relevant records until transmitted to the Office of Administrative Services for formal record.

F. Final provisions

30. The present administrative instruction shall take effect on the date of its issuance.

31. Information circular ISBA/ST/IC/2017/6 is hereby withdrawn.