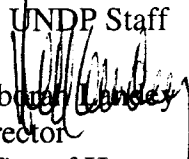




UNDP/ADM/2001/31

7 September 2001

To: All UNDP Staff

From: 
Deborah Lundy
Director
Office of Human Resources
Bureau Of Management

Subject: **Adoption Leave (ADL)**

As described in circular UNDP/ADM/98/68 of 16 October 1998 on the subject of "Aligning our personnel administration services with the needs of UNDP 2001", a series of re-engineering and streamlining measures have been undertaken in the area of administration of staff member entitlements. In addition, the Office of Human Resources (OHR) has been engaging the issues that broadly constitute the Work and Life Agenda. We recognize the breadth of topics contained under this heading is significant. However, greater flexibility and rationalization of our leave policies is central to this reform effort. Furthermore, the United Nations system's history of progressive policies on leave provides an ample platform of precedence for these new initiatives.

1. Within this context, I am pleased to announce a revised policy on Adoption Leave (ADL). Consistent with our objective of creating gender-neutral policies, the proviso, which extends this leave only to female staff unless it is a single parent family, is now eliminated. Also the child's age requirement is hereby increased from less than six years old to less than 18 years old. Consequently, as from now on all male and female eligible staff who legally adopt a child under the age of 18 years will be granted ADL.
2. The attached guidelines contain details of the revised policies and procedures on ADL, which enter into force with immediate effect. A PowerPoint presentation, which your office may wish to use when briefing staff on the subject, is enclosed as well.
3. Should you require further information or clarification on ADL, kindly contact the OHR Service Centre Chief serving your duty station.

ADL

ADOPTION LEAVE

UNDP/ADM/2001/31 of 7 September 2001



United Nations Development Programme

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES



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I. General

Purpose

1. The purpose of adoption leave (ADL) is to allow an eligible staff member a period of time for bonding and taking care of a child following his/her adoption.

Eligibility

2. All male and female staff members governed under the 100 or 200 Series of the UN Staff Rules are eligible for ADL subject to the provisions of this circular.
3. ADL staff members are only eligible to use all or part of their uncertified sick leave (USL) as ADL.

Duration

4. ADL consists of eight weeks of special leave with full pay (SLWFP). An eligible staff member is not required to take ADL. The staff member may opt to take all eight weeks, less than eight weeks, or not to exercise ADL.
5. ADL may normally be granted:
 - a) as one continuous period, starting at any time within the six-month period following the adopted child's arrival in the adoptive parent's home; *or*
 - b) in two periods of equal or different duration, provided the second period begins during the six-month period following the adopted child's arrival in the adoptive parent's home.
6. **Combination of Adoption Leave with Half-Time Work.** Staff members may opt to combine half-time ADL with half-time work.
7. **Example.** Instead of taking eight continuous weeks of full-time ADL, the staff member may request five weeks of full-time ADL and six weeks of half-time ADL combined with half-time work.

Conditions

8. ADL may be granted under the following conditions:
- a) the child meets the eligibility requirements to be recognized as a dependent adopted child of the staff member under the applicable rules;
 - b) the child is less than 18 years old at the time of adoption;
 - c) the child is not a stepchild, brother or sister; *and*
 - d) the child had not been living with the staff member for an extended period of time.

Both Spouses are Staff Members

9. When both adoptive parents are staff members, both parents if they are UNDP staff members may take up to eight weeks of ADL each.

Requests

10. A staff member interested in taking ADL must submit his/her request, through his/her supervisor:
- a) *if stationed outside New York*, to his/her local Administrative Officer; *and*
 - b) *if stationed in New York*, to the OHR Service Centre Chief serving the organizational unit.
11. The request must be submitted normally three months in advance of the date on which the staff member anticipates to take ADL and must be accompanied by the following supporting documentation:
- a) *where there is statutory provision for adoption or prescribed court procedure for official recognition of customary or de facto adoption*, by:
 - the child's birth certificate, or, when it is impossible to obtain a birth certificate, other satisfactory documentary evidence of the birth of the child; *and*
 - official documentary evidence of adoption in accordance with relevant statutory provisions, or formal recognition by prescribed court procedure of customary or de facto adoption of the child; *or*

- if legal adoption proceedings have been initiated but are not completed, official documentary evidence that adoption procedures have been initiated and that pending finalization of the proceedings, the child is being entrusted to the staff member's care. Once adoption formalities have been completed, official proof that adoption has taken place must be provided; *and*
- b) ***where there is no statutory provision for adoption or prescribed court procedure for official recognition of customary or de facto adoption, by:***
- the child's birth certificate, or, when it is impossible to obtain a birth certificate, other satisfactory documentary evidence of the birth of the child;
 - a statement from the appropriate national authorities that legal adoption is not possible because there is no statutory provision for adoption or prescribed court procedure for official recognition of customary or de facto adoption; *and*
 - an affidavit or other appropriate formal statement from the staff member that the child will be residing with him/her, and that he/she will assume the duties and obligations of a parent vis-à-vis the child. Once the child has arrived in the staff member's home, satisfactory evidence that the child resides with the staff member and that a parental relationship has been established.
12. **International Staff stationed outside NY.** In order to prepare the relevant Personal Action, the local Administrative Officer must notify the OHR Service Centre Chief serving the duty station, of the starting date of the SLWFP for ADL purposes.

Attendance Record

13. When a staff member takes ADL, it will be recorded in his/her attendance record as SLWFP with a remark that it is for ADL purposes.
14. When an ALD staff member takes USL (see paragraph 3) as ADL, it will be recorded in his/her attendance record as USL.

Loss of Adoption Leave

15. When an eligible staff member does not take all or part of his/her ADL, he/she does not receive:
- a) *payment in lieu of; nor*

- b) additional annual leave (AL) credit.

II. Relationship with other Entitlements, Benefits and Options

Annual Leave

16. A staff member continues to accrue annual leave (AL) while on ADL.
17. Staff members are not required to exhaust their accrued AL prior to proceeding on ADL.
18. Subject to exigencies of service, requests to take AL following ADL will be given favourable consideration.
19. Any leave granted in respect of an adopted child who is subsequently found not to meet the criteria for dependency will be charged *post facto* to AL.
20. **Combination of Half-Time Work with Annual Leave.** Subject to the needs of the organization, requests to combine half-time work with AL following ADL will be given favourable consideration.
21. **Example.** Instead of taking one week of full-time AL following ADL, the staff member may request half-time AL over a two-week period, combined with half-time work.

Sick Leave

22. Sick Leave (SL) is not granted while a staff member is on ADL.

Service Credit

23. A staff member accrues service credit for all entitlements during ADL, except when an appointment is extended solely to enable a staff member to utilize his/her ADL (see paragraphs 25 and 26).

Extension of a Fixed-Term Appointment

24. A staff member on fixed-term appointment will be considered for extension or conversion of his/her appointment under the same criteria as other staff. The fact that a staff member is or will be on ADL may not be a factor in that consideration.

Expiration of a Fixed-Term Appointment

25. If a decision is made not to extend a staff member's fixed-term appointment and his/her current appointment is due to expire *during* the period of ADL, the appointment will only be extended if he/she has taken less than four weeks of ADL and for the period required to complete the four weeks.
26. When an appointment is extended solely to enable a staff member to utilize at least four weeks of ADL, such extension will not give rise to any further entitlement to salary increment, AL, SL or home leave (HL), but credit towards repatriation grant (RG) may continue to accrue if the staff member has not returned to his/her home country. In the event of death during the period of extension, the period prior to the staff member's death may be taken into account in the determination of the death benefit.

Special Leave Without Pay

27. Subject to exigencies of service, requests from staff members (except ALD staff members) for special leave without pay (SLWOP) to take care of their newly-adopted children will be given favourable consideration.

Duty Travel

28. **Single Parents.** UNDP pays a lump sum to help cover the travel costs for infants, who are under two years of age, and who accompany their single parents on official duty travel (DT) to a family duty station. The lump sum per infant is equivalent to:
 - a) 10 per cent of the cost of the staff member's ticket; *plus*
 - b) 10 per cent of the staff member's DSA.
29. No lump sum is paid for a baby-sitter, or when a single parent travels to a non-family duty station.
30. The lump sum is charged to the same funding source covering the travel costs for the staff member and requested with the travel request.

Flexible Working Arrangements

31. Subject to the needs of the organization, requests for a flexible working arrangement (for example, flexitime, ten in nine days, etc.) following ADL, will be given favourable consideration.