

**STAFF SELECTION SYSTEM**  
**Guidelines for determining mobility under ST/AI/2006/3:**  
**Lateral moves and maximum post occupancy**

**I. The mobility policy**

1. The mobility policy introduced in 2002 and currently set out in ST/AI/2006/3 has two main components:

- The requirement that staff should not remain in their posts beyond the maximum post occupancy period, which is normally five years for posts up to and including the P-5 level, and six years for posts above that level. This requirement applies to staff appointed for a year or longer under the 100 series of the Staff Rules;
- The requirement that, in order for a staff member in the Professional category to be eligible to be considered for promotion to P-5, he or she should have two – or in certain cases, one – prior lateral moves at any level in the professional category. This requirement applies to staff appointed under the 100 series of the Staff Rules as well as to staff serving under the 200 or 300 series of the Staff Rules who, if selected for a P-5 post, would receive an appointment of one year or longer under the 100 series.

**II. Definition of a “lateral move”**

2. Section 1 of ST/AI/2006/3 defines a lateral move as a move to a different position at the same level for a duration of at least one year. The new position may be in the same or a different department or office, in the same or a different duty station and in the same or a different occupational group. Inter-agency loans or other movements to and from other organizations of the UN common system are recognized as a lateral move.

3. The essential requirement for a move to be recognized as a valid lateral move is that there is a **substantial change in functions**. Within the same department or office, a lateral move will normally involve a change of supervisor. When the supervisor remains the same, there will be a lateral move if the responsibilities are substantially different, for example, if there is a different area of responsibility, or a change in the departments/offices serviced by the staff member.

4. Placement of a staff member to a different post number in IMIS for administrative purposes when there is no change in functions will not be recognized as a lateral move for purposes of determining eligibility for promotion to the P-5 level or for determining the length of post occupancy of a staff member.

5. As also explained in section 1 of ST/AI/2006/3, **mission detail or other temporary assignments of 3 months or longer** will also qualify as a lateral move when the cumulative duration of such assignments reaches one year. These temporary assignments may be:

- to a higher level function, with or without receipt of a Special Post Allowance (SPA);
- to a position outside the staff member's work unit. The new position may be in the same or a different department or office, duty station or occupational group. The new position may also be in another organization of the common system, through inter-agency loan or movement;
- to a new position within a staff member's work unit, provided this involves a change of supervisor or a substantial change in the functions. Temporary moves within the work

unit will need to be confirmed and recorded by the executive or administrative office concerned, after consultation with OHRM.

### III. Determination of the maximum post occupancy

6. Under the mobility policy, staff members should not remain in a post beyond five years for posts up to and including the P-5 level and six years for posts above that level. [ST/AI/2006/3, section 4.2 (d)]. The mobility of staff members who have reached that limit will be assisted through the managed reassignment programme. [ST/AI/2007/2]

7. The following guidelines are provided to assist in the determination whether a staff member has reached the applicable post occupancy limit:

- Counting starts from 1 May 2002, irrespective of how long a staff member had been on his/her position as of that date.
- For staff members who have moved after 1 May 2002, the five or six-year post occupancy period will start as of the date on which the staff member started in his/her new functions. The post occupancy period starts anew each time the staff member moves as a result of selection under the staff selection system, a managed reassignment programme, or a lateral move expected to last for a year or longer to another post with different functions which has been duly recorded as explained in paragraph 3 above.
- Effect of temporary assignments:
  - (i) If the temporary assignment is **for a period of less than one year**, it will not change the staff member's date of completion of the maximum post occupancy period in the original post.
  - (ii) If the temporary assignment is **for a continuous period of one year or more**, the post occupancy expiration date will change. In such cases, the clock counting the post occupancy limit will be suspended (i.e. the post occupancy clock is frozen) upon the date of assumption of the temporary assignment and will resume after the staff member returns to his/her original post. As a result, the post occupancy expiration date will be extended for a period equal to the duration of the temporary assignment.

### IV. Application of the lateral move requirement for purpose of determining eligibility for promotion to the P-5 level

8. In order to be eligible to be considered for promotion to the P-5 level, staff members who apply to P-5 vacancies posted on or after 1 May 2007 must satisfy the conditions specified in section 5.3 of ST/AI/2006/3. The normal requirement is that the staff member has made at least two prior lateral moves, which may take place at any level in that category. The requirement however is subject to adjustment in the following situations:

- Only one lateral move is required when a staff member has served in the Professional category in Nairobi or a regional commission other than the Economic commission for Europe for two years or longer, or when a staff member is applying for a P-5 position at those duty stations from another duty station and had a prior lateral move; [section 5.3 (a)]
- Staff recruited at the P-4 level are eligible for promotion to P-5 after one lateral move at the P-4 level; [section 5.3 (b)]
- Cumulative service for a total period of one year on mission or other temporary assignment is counted as one lateral move; [section 5.3 (c)]

9. Lateral moves made before 1 May 2002 within the professional category are recognized for the purposes of eligibility for promotion to P-5.

10. The following guidelines are provided to assist when counting lateral moves for purposes of eligibility for promotion to the P-5 level:

- Service in the same post/functions for one year or longer after a lateral move counts as one lateral move, regardless of the duration of service;
- Lateral moves of more than three months and less than one year may be combined and recognized as one lateral move when they reach a total duration of one year;
- Lateral moves of less than three months may not be counted;
- A temporary assignment of more than one year counts as one lateral move. Any period in excess of one year in the same functions is not to be banked as credit towards a second lateral move.

#### **V. Tracking movements in IMIS**

11. In order to ensure that all qualifying lateral moves are captured in IMIS – a Personnel Action (PA) should be raised by Executive Offices or local personnel offices for any move to another post to perform different functions for a period of three months or longer when the definition of a “lateral move”, as set out in Section 1 of ST/AI/2006/3” and further explained in Part II above, has been satisfied. This should be done by creating a “Reassignment Within Department” Personnel Action as stated in paragraph 12 below.

12. Personnel Actions should be raised in IMIS as follows:<sup>1</sup>

##### **Assignment of a Permanent Nature**

- Reassignment Within Department;
- Transfer Between Departments.

##### **Assignment of a Temporary Nature (with lien on parent post)**

- Record Assignment: For assignments of a temporary nature (with lien on Parent Post);
- Record Secondment;
- Record Loan.

13. A copy of the Personnel Action must be sent to the staff member concerned.

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<sup>1</sup> “Modify Post Incumbency” Personnel Actions should not be raised for qualifying lateral moves in the context of mobility.