



STAFF UNION INTERNAL CIRCULAR

SU/CIRC/2(Rev.1)
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STAFF UNION ELECTIONS IN FIELD OFFICES INTERNAL RULES

Introduction

The purpose of the present circular is to assist returning officers in field offices to carry out their duties on the basis of the principles guiding the representation and participation of field staff set out in Article 24 of the Staff Union Rules and its Annex III on the *Rules for elections to the Staff Union Committee*.

As can be seen from the Staff Union Rules, there are no concrete rules governing the election of Staff Union representatives in the field (except for regional elections that have adopted the practice followed at headquarters).

Who can be local representatives, and how many can there be?

The Staff Union Rules refer to local representation without mentioning any specific details or number of representatives. Internal Circular No. 6 (SU/CIRC/6(Rev.4) of May 2020) defines the number of representatives and the electoral constituencies.

All paid-up, duly affiliated members are eligible, even if they join the Union just before the deadline for submission of candidatures.

How are local elections organized in the field offices?

The following guidelines are based on the Staff Union Rules and its Annex III on the *Rules for elections to the Staff Union Committee*, taking into account the variety of sizes of field offices.

In order to guarantee the independence of the electoral process, the Union members, meeting in a General Assembly, shall appoint in each constituency an ad hoc Electoral Commission, composed of three returning officers. This Commission, which is totally independent of the elected local Committee, is responsible for drawing up the voters' list (the list is drawn up on the basis of persons who are affiliated and up to date in the payment of their contributions, who are ILO officials and who depend on the local Committee of the office concerned, general service and professional staff, as well as national officers). It is also responsible for counting the votes and publishing the results of the elections.

The Commission will also ensure that any electoral publicity by candidates, or groups of candidates, is consistent with the decisions adopted by the General Meeting, and respects the ethical behaviour that is expected of every staff member. The Electoral Commission shall also deal with any complaints relating to the elections and shall be deemed competent to examine them and take appropriate steps, including the cancellation of the elections.

Candidates standing for election to the Electoral Commission must be nominated by at least one member of the Staff Union who has the right to vote; and shall declare in advance their willingness to serve as members of the Electoral Commission if elected.

Electoral procedure

The local Committee must inform Union members of the end of the current mandate in accordance with the Rules, and call new elections in due course.

Once the decision to hold elections has been taken, the outgoing Committee shall inform the Commission, which must then:

1. establish the electoral roll;
2. send to each member of the Staff Union posted at the duty station in question (including staff assigned to technical cooperation projects under that office) and entitled to vote a notice of the election, with a copy of the form for nomination of candidates; it shall also draw up the electoral timetable;
3. receive nominations, which must be signed by at least three members of the Union and be accompanied by a declaration signed by each candidate certifying that he or she is willing to be nominated and serve if elected;
4. send to each member of the Union entitled to vote and who is in post at the duty station

(or who reports to and is administratively dependent on the duty station):

- (i) a ballot paper showing the names of the candidates who have been duly nominated and who have made the declaration required under the previous paragraph;
 - (ii) a special envelope to contain the completed ballot paper; and
 - (iii) a separate sheet showing the grade and unit to which each candidate belongs, and his or her previous participation, if any, in the work of the Union.
5. receive the ballot papers;
 6. count the votes, make a report indicating the number of duly cast votes for each candidate and declare elected the candidates who have obtained the largest number of votes;
 7. post a certified copy of the said report on the Staff Union's notice board. The original report shall be kept in the archive of the local Staff Union;

A period of ten working days shall be allowed for the submission of nominations and a minimum period of two weeks for the actual voting. A reminder will be distributed three days before the closing date for voting.

A member of the Union, who is assigned to the office in question and has the right to vote, who wishes to stand for election, nominate a candidate or vote, but who is unable to do so because of absence, may send to the Electoral Commission a power of attorney to be represented by another member with voting rights (proxy).

Election of Chairpersons, Treasurers and Secretaries to the Local Committee

Concerning the functions of Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary, their election is not by direct vote of the members of the Union. The election takes place in two stages:

1. The members of the Union first elect the members who make up the local Committee.
2. Then, it is the members of the local Committee, once elected, who, at their first meeting, elect the persons with the specific functions (the Chairperson of the local Committee, the Treasurer and the Secretary) as well as any other function necessary for the smooth running of the local Committee. For local Committees with only three members, the functions of Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary may be decided by consensus among these three members.