

**Outside Activities and/or Honors, Decorations, Favors, Gifts, Awards, Remuneration from  
Outside Parties**

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**I. Purpose and scope**

1. The present policy clarifies the nature of prohibited non-UNFPA/non-United Nations (“outside”) activities, the conditions under which UNFPA staff members shall seek authorization for outside activities, and identifies those types of outside activities that do not require any authorization. Furthermore, this policy explains the circumstances under which staff members may accept honor, decoration, favor, gift, award or remuneration from outside entities.

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2. This policy relates to Staff Regulations 1.2(h), (j) to (m), (o) and (p), and to Staff Rules 1.2(k) to (o) and (r) to (s). It applies to all staff members serving with UNFPA.
3. The policy aims at drawing the attention of staff to the subject of conflict of interest, the advisory and guidance role of the Ethics Office in assisting staff members to identify/avoid/manage conflicts of interest, and authorization procedures.

**II. Authorization procedures**

4. A staff member wishing to engage in an outside activity or wishing to accept an honor, decoration, favor, gift, award or remuneration for which prior authorization is required in accordance with the provisions contained in this policy should complete the form included in Annex I of this policy and submit it to the UNFPA Ethics Office. The Ethics Office will review the form to vet for conflict of interest between a staff member's official function as an international civil servant and the proposed outside activity and/or honor/decoration/favor/gift/award/remuneration to be received.
5. If the Ethics Office is of the view that there is no conflict of interest then the Ethics Office will forward the form to the Director, Division for Human Resources ("DHR"), for further review and action. The Director, Division for Human Resources, may refer the request to another manager for a decision if the matter falls within that manager's scope of responsibilities or expertise.
6. Any authorization granted by the Director, DHR, is so granted on behalf of the Executive Director. The authorization granted by the Director, DHR, is valid for not more than 12 months at a time, unless otherwise stated in the authorization. If the request is denied, the reason shall be given.
7. A staff member should not engage in any outside activity requiring authorization and/or accept the honor, decoration, favor, gift, award or remuneration until such time as the decision on the request has been communicated to the staff member by the Director, DHR.

**III. Outside activities****(a) Occupation or employment outside of UNFPA or the United Nations**

8. In accordance with Staff Reg. 1.2(o), a UNFPA staff member "shall not engage in any outside occupation or employment, whether remunerated or not, without" prior authorization. For the purposes of the present policy, the following definitions apply:

- (a) “Occupation” includes the exercise of a profession, whether as an employee or an independent contractor;
  - (b) “Employment” includes a legal relationship in which one person provides work or skill at the direction of another.<sup>1</sup>
9. Outside occupation within the meaning of Staff Reg. 1.2(o) that requires prior authorization also includes, but is not limited to, teaching at universities, colleges, schools or similar centers of learning or research on a regular basis.
10. In accordance with Staff Reg. 1.2(p), authorization of an outside occupation or employment is subject to the following requirements:
- (a) The outside occupation or employment does not conflict with the staff member’s official functions or the status of an international civil servant. In determining whether this requirement is met, special attention shall be paid to the need to ensure that the outside occupation or employment would not in any way interfere with the staff member’s ability to perform all of his/her official duties, or call into question the impartiality and independence of the staff member as an international civil servant. With respect to teaching, special attention shall be had that such activities occur only outside working hours and for few hours per week, and provided that such activities do not interfere with the performance of the staff member’s official duties;
  - (b) The outside occupation or employment is not against the interests of UNFPA or of the United Nations. In determining whether this requirement is met, special attention shall be paid to the need to ensure that the occupation or employment does not reflect adversely upon UNFPA or the United Nations, and is compatible with its activities and goals; and
  - (c) The outside occupation or employment is permitted by local law at the duty station or where the occupation or employment occurs. No approval shall be granted when the visa status of the staff member, such as the G-4 visa in the United States, prohibits the holder from accepting employment or earning money from an occupation outside of the United Nations or UNFPA.
11. In addition, when determining whether a remunerated outside occupation or employment should be authorized, UNFPA may consider, *inter alia*, the following issues:
- (a) As a matter of policy, UNFPA considers that it is undesirable that staff members engage in outside occupation or employment that is remunerated, particularly if they are drawing a salary and emoluments from UNFPA. A staff member seeking permission to engage in a remunerated outside occupation or employment is encouraged to consider doing so on a *pro bono* basis instead;

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<sup>1</sup> See United Nations doc. ST/SGB/2002/13, p. 22 (contained in [Standards of Conduct](#), UNFPA PPM, Human Resources, 13<sup>th</sup> Folder on Conduct, Misconduct).

- (b) UNFPA will consider whether the remuneration is of symbolic, nominal or moderate value rather than constituting a substantial amount of money;
  - (c) UNFPA will consider whether the outside occupation or employment is likely to promote the staff member's education or enhance his professional competence;
  - (d) UNFPA will consider whether the outside occupation or employment is likely to promote understanding of the work or mandate of, or support for, UNFPA and its mandate and mission, and/or for the United Nations;
  - (e) UNFPA will consider whether the outside occupation or employment is otherwise in the interest of UNFPA and/or the United Nations.
12. Staff members engaging in authorized outside occupation or employment shall make clear to the organizers and participants in such activities, including any employers, that they act in their personal capacity and not as representatives of UNFPA or the United Nations.
- (b) Outside activities that relate to the purpose, activities or interests of UNFPA or the United Nations**
13. Unless a UNFPA staff member is acting in the normal course of his/her official duties/functions, in accordance with Staff Rule 1.2(r), prior authorization is required to engage in any of the following acts, if such act relates to the purpose, activities or interests of UNFPA or the United Nations:
- (a) Issuance of statements to the press, radio or other agencies of public information;
  - (b) Acceptance of speaking engagements;
  - (c) Taking part in film, theatre, radio or television productions; or
  - (d) Submitting articles, books or other material for publication.
14. Whether an act relates to "the purpose, activities or interests" of UNFPA or the United Nations within the meaning of the above paragraph should be read in the broadest sense.
15. Publication of material relating to the purpose, activities or interests of UNFPA or the United Nations by a publisher requires the following disclaimer:

"The views expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNFPA or the United Nations".

This does not apply to UNFPA or other United Nations publications.

16. The United Nations Staff Regulations or Rules do not establish an explicit requirement for authorization for staff members to take part in film, theatre or television productions, or to publish books or other printed material, not relating to

the purpose, activities or interests of UNFPA or the United Nations. The determination that a matter does not relate to the purpose, activities or interests of UNFPA or the United Nations must be made by the staff member in a responsible fashion. The staff member is accountable for that determination. Therefore, if a staff member is in doubt whether the matter relates to “the purpose, activities or interests of UNFPA or the United Nations”, the staff member concerned should assume that it does, and seek prior authorization. Moreover, the absence of an authorization requirement does not abrogate the obligation of the concerned staff member to avoid any public statement or action that may adversely reflect on his/her status, or on the integrity, independence and impartiality required by that status.

17. Other outside activities that are of benefit to UNFPA, the United Nations or the achievement of their goals, and/or contribute to the development of the professional skills of staff members, are usually not only permitted but encouraged and, therefore, do not require prior authorization, provided staff members exercise the utmost discretion with regard to all matters of official business and avoid any public statement that may adversely reflect on their status, or on the integrity, independence and impartiality that are required by that status.

**(c) Participation in expert groups, boards, etc.**

18. Participation in boards, panels, committees, expert groups or similar bodies external to UNFPA or the United Nations constitutes an outside activity that requires prior authorization.
19. However, if, even after approval has been granted, it appears that the staff member’s participation would involve the consideration of the granting of an honor, gift or remuneration to another UNFPA or United Nations official, the staff member should withdraw from the body concerned given that his/her participation would create at least the appearance of a conflict of interest.

**(d) Political activities**

20. In accordance with Staff Reg. 1.2(h), staff members may exercise the right to vote.
21. In accordance with Staff Rule 1.2(s), membership in a political party is permitted, provided such membership does not entail action, or an obligation to take action, by the staff member that would not be consistent with or reflect adversely upon the independence and impartiality required by his/her status as an international civil servant (Staff Reg. 1.2(h)).
22. More generally, staff members must always ensure that any participation on their part in any political activity is consistent with, and does not reflect adversely upon,

their independence and impartiality. Therefore, staff members must exercise the utmost discretion with regard to any participation by them in any political activity. However, payment of normal financial contributions to a political party shall not be construed as an activity inconsistent with or adversely reflecting on the staff member's independence and impartiality as required by his/her status as an international civil servant.

23. Candidature for or appointment to political office, including at the local level, is not permitted.

**(e) Social or charitable activities**

24. UNFPA staff members may at their discretion engage in private, non-remunerated activities for social or charitable purposes, which have no relation to the staff member's official functions or to UNFPA and as long as they take place outside working hours or while the staff member is on leave. (UNFPA does not consider such activities to constitute a non-remunerated outside occupation or employment that would otherwise require authorization; see para. 8 above.) Staff members shall in every instance ensure that the activity is and remains compatible with their status as international civil servants and the interests of UNFPA or the United Nations.

**(f) Pursuit of studies**

25. Studies that take place outside working hours or while the staff member is on leave may be engaged in at the staff member's discretion.

**(g) Government service**

26. Government service in a political office, in a diplomatic or other representational post or for the purpose of performing any functions that are incompatible with the staff member's continuing status as an international civil servant is prohibited. Accordingly, Staff Rule 5.3(a)(iv) provides that "[s]pecial leave shall not be authorized" for these purposes.
27. However, in accordance with Staff Rule 5.3(a)(iv), in exceptional circumstances, a staff member who is requested by his or her Government to render temporary services involving functions of a technical nature may be given authorization to do so, and special leave without pay may be granted for that purpose.

**IV. Acceptance of honors, decorations, favors, gifts, awards or remuneration from Governments**

28. Staff members may not accept any honor, decoration, favor, gift, award or remuneration from any Government (Staff Reg. 1.2(j); Rule 1.2(k)). This rule

applies whatever the reason for the award, even if the award is unrelated to the staff member's service with UNFPA. UNFPA attributes great importance to the requirement that staff members are in actual fact, and are perceived to be, independent and impartial.

29. As an exception, the staff member may decide to receive the honor, decoration, favor, gift or award from the government if (i) it is unanticipated and (ii) its refusal would cause embarrassment to UNFPA (Staff Reg. 1.2(k); Rule 1.2(k)). However, such receipt shall be "on behalf of UNFPA" (Staff Reg. 1.2(k); Rule 1.2(k)). Subsequently, a staff member serving at headquarters should immediately entrust the unanticipated honor, decoration, favor, gift or award to the director of the relevant division or head of office at headquarters; a staff member serving at a UNFPA field duty station should immediately entrust the unanticipated honor, decoration, favor, gift or award to the relevant field duty station manager. The director of the relevant division at headquarters or the relevant UNFPA field duty station manager will either retain the unanticipated honor, decoration, favor, gift or award for UNFPA or arrange, in consultation with the Director, Division for Management Services, for its disposal for the benefit of UNFPA or for a charitable purpose. (See Staff Reg. 1.2(k); Rule 1.2(k)).
30. Remuneration from a government must always be refused (see Staff Reg. 1.2(j); Rule 1.2(k), first clause).

**V. Acceptance of honors, decorations, favors, gifts, awards or remuneration from non-governmental entities, including partners, vendors, etc.**

31. For the acceptance by a staff member of any honor, decoration, favor, gift, award or remuneration from a non-governmental entity, prior authorization is required (Staff Reg. 1.2(l); Rule 1.2(l)). Authorization may be granted in accordance with Staff Rule 1.2(l) only in exceptional circumstances and if such acceptance is not incompatible with:
  - (a) The interests of UNFPA or the United Nations; and
  - (b) The staff member's status as an international civil servant.
32. As an exception, the staff member may decide to receive the honor, decoration, favor, gift or award from the non-governmental entity if (i) circumstances did not permit for prior approval or (ii) its refusal would cause embarrassment to UNFPA. A staff serving at headquarters must promptly disclose such gifts to the division director/head of office; staff members serving at UNFPA field duty stations must promptly disclose such gifts to the field duty station manager. Even if the gift is of "essentially nominal value", the division director/head of office or the UNFPA field duty station manager, as applicable, may direct that the gift be entrusted to and retained by UNFPA or returned to the donor. (Staff Rule 1.2(l)).

33. Furthermore, Staff Rule 1.2(l) provides that notwithstanding the requirement to obtain prior approval, staff members may occasionally accept, without prior authorization, minor gifts of “essentially nominal value” having regard to the duty station concerned. However, staff members must ensure that there is no conflict of interest or *quid pro quo* (or the appearance thereof) even if the gift has only “essentially nominal value”. Staff members serving at headquarters must promptly disclose such gifts to the division director/head of office; staff members serving at UNFPA field duty stations must promptly disclose such gifts to the field duty station manager. Even if the gift is only of “essentially nominal value”, the division director/head of office or the UNFPA field duty station manager, as applicable, may direct that the gift be entrusted to and retained by UNFPA or returned to the donor. (Staff Rule 1.2(l)).
34. The assessment of what is of “essentially nominal value” (Staff Rule 1.2(l)) must be left to the best judgment of the staff member and the division director/head of office at headquarters or UNFPA field duty station manager, as applicable, in the light of the prevailing circumstances at the duty station concerned, given that what is considered a minor gift at one duty station (for example at UNFPA headquarters) may take on a different significance at another duty station (for example in a small UNFPA country office). It will be up to the division director/head of office at headquarters or UNFPA field duty station manager to determine what is acceptable and whether it should be retained or returned.<sup>2</sup>

## VI. Academic awards from universities or non-governmental entities

35. Staff members may, with prior authorization, accept from a university or non-governmental entity or related institution academic awards, distinctions and tokens of a commemorative or honorary character, such as scrolls, certificates, trophies or other items of essentially nominal monetary value (Staff Rule 1.2(m)). For purpose of this rule, universities are not considered government entities.<sup>3</sup> Authorization may be granted only if such acceptance is not incompatible with:
- (a) The interests of UNFPA or the United Nations;
  - (b) The staff member’s status as an international civil servant; and
  - (c) The item is of “essentially nominal monetary value” (Staff Rule 1.2(m)).

## VII. Meals and receptions

36. Staff members, as part of their official functions, may be expected from time to time to attend government or other functions such as meals and diplomatic receptions. Such attendance is not considered receipt of a favor, gift or

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28, 29.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

remuneration within the meaning of the Staff Regulations and Rules and, therefore, does not require authorization (Staff Rule 1.2(n)).<sup>4</sup>

**VIII. Accommodation, travel cost and subsistence allowance**

37. In addition to their United Nations emoluments, staff members authorized to perform an outside activity may only accept from sources external to UNFPA or the United Nations the following: accommodation, travel costs and subsistence allowance generally in line with those payable by the United Nations, in accordance with Staff Rule 1.2(u). A subsistence allowance that may otherwise have been paid by UNFPA or the United Nations shall be reduced accordingly and as envisaged in Staff Rule 7.10(b). UNFPA staff members may not accept any additional fee, remuneration or honorarium, except for royalty or related payments for published material where such payment is allowed under local laws.

**IX. Final provisions**

38. The present policy shall enter into force on 19 January 2010.

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<sup>4</sup> However, prohibitions to accept free meals or similar favors based on specific professional ethics requirements may apply with regard to certain functions, such as the investigation, audit or procurement functions. This policy is not intended to undo those specific professional ethics requirements if they are applicable.

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(Annex I) (click [here](#) for word version of file)

**Request for Authorization of an Outside Activity and/or Honor/Decoration/Favor/Gift/Award/Remuneration from an Outside Party**

Staff members who wish to engage in an outside activity or accept an honor/decoration/favor/gift/award/remuneration from an outside party that requires prior approval as per the policy on outside activities are required to complete this form and forward it to the Ethics Office. The Ethics Office will review the form to vet for conflict of interest between a staff member’s official function as an international civil servant and an outside activity. The Ethics Office can consult with the supervisor of the staff member and/or the Legal Advisor during the review process. If the Ethics Office is of the view that there is no conflict of interest then the request will be forwarded to the Director, DHR, for further action. A staff member should not engage in the proposed outside activity or accept the honor/decoration/favor/gift/award/remuneration from the outside party until such time as the decision on the request has been taken.

Please complete sections related to the nature of your request and return the completed form by e-mail to [ethics.office@unfpa.org](mailto:ethics.office@unfpa.org). This form is also available on the Ethics Office website.

<b>1. Staff Member’s Name:</b>	<b>Functional Title:</b>	<b>Duty Station:</b>
<b>2. This is for:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> New request <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal of request <input type="checkbox"/> Revised request	<b>2.a. If this is a renewal of an approved request, please indicate previous period approval was granted:</b>  From: DD/MM/YY To: DD/MM/YY	
<b>3. Describe the type of outside activity to be performed and/or the nature of the gift, award, etc. to be received:</b>		
<b>4. Name and address of the entity concerned:</b>	<b>4.a. Type of entity:</b>	
	Private : <input type="checkbox"/> For Profit/Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit <input type="checkbox"/> Multinational <input type="checkbox"/> NGO	
	Public: <input type="checkbox"/> Govt. <input type="checkbox"/> Political Party/Group <input type="checkbox"/> Charitable/Social <input type="checkbox"/> National Institute	
<input type="checkbox"/> Board/Expert Group etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching <input type="checkbox"/> Consultative Services <input type="checkbox"/> Research <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising <input type="checkbox"/> Advisory <input type="checkbox"/> Campaigning <input type="checkbox"/> Other		
<b>5. When will the outside activity be performed?</b> <i>(Skip this question if your request concerns an honor/decoration/favor/gift/award)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Outside regular work hours <input type="checkbox"/> During regular work hours	<b>5.a. If outside activity will need to be performed during regular work hours I plan on requesting:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Annual leave <input type="checkbox"/> Leave without pay	

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<p><b>6. Will you receive remuneration?</b> <i>(Skip this question if your request concerns an honor/decoration/favor/gift/award)</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p><b>If yes, please state amount.</b></p>
<p><i>(Skip this question if your request concerns an honor/decoration/favor/gift/award)</i></p> <p><b>7. Will participation in this outside activity require you to:</b></p> <p>i) Disclose information that has come to your knowledge by virtue of being a UNFPA staff member? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>ii) Use your position or office as a UNFPA staff member for the benefit of the organization on whose behalf you have undertaken the outside activity? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>iii) Make any decision or do any act that is against the interest of the UNFPA/United Nations? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>iv) Act in a manner that will reflect adversely upon your independence and impartiality as an international civil servant? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If yes, please explain:</p>	
<p><b>8. Is the entity for which the outside activity is to be performed or from which you intend to receive the honor/decoration/favor/gift/award one in which you, your spouse, partner, your children or friends:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Own equity/stock/royalty interest or are a partner?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Hold a management position?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Participate in its ongoing operation?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Have any role in the programme of the entity? (Including advisory committee?)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Conduct research of direct value or interest to the UNFPA?</p> <p>If yes, please explain:</p>	
<p><b>9. Is the entity for which the outside activity is to be performed or from which you intend to receive the honor/decoration/favor/gift/award one which:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Receives funds from UNFPA?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Has a contractual relationship with UNFPA?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Is a vendor for UNFPA?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Has any role in any UNFPA programme, project or activity?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Conduct research of direct value or interest to UNFPA or the United Nations?</p> <p>If yes, please explain:</p>	

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<p><b>10. To be completed by staff member:</b></p>	<p>I hereby certify that the information provided is accurate, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. Further, I understand, and give my undertaking to ensure, that my engaging in a non-UNFPA/non-United Nations outside activity or my receiving an honor/decoration/favor/gift/award/remuneration will not create a conflict of interest or interfere with the full and faithful performance of my responsibilities as an international civil servant or other UNFPA/United Nations obligations.</p> <p>First Name:</p> <p>Last Name:</p> <p>Signature: <span style="float: right;">Date: DD/MM/YY</span></p>
<p><b>11. To be completed by Ethics Advisor:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Conflict of Interest</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No Conflict of Interest</p> <p>Reason:</p>	<p>First Name:</p> <p>Last Name:</p> <p>Signature: <span style="float: right;">Date: DD/MM/YY</span></p>
<p><b>12. To be completed by Director, DHR:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Approved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved</p> <p>Reason:</p>	<p>First Name:</p> <p>Last Name:</p> <p>Signature: <span style="float: right;">Date: DD/MM/YY</span></p>