


## Volunteer Conditions of Service Changes Frequently Asked Questions<sup>1</sup>

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

How does the new eligibility criteria impact contract extensions under each category of UN Volunteers?	Previous eligibility criteria are in effect for the duration of volunteers' service including contract extensions for all volunteer categories as per requests of Host Entities.
Why were the current age limits changed?	This adjustment responds to the current challenge of age overlap between categories, where in the previous Conditions of Service, Youth Volunteers could be up to 29 years and Specialists above 25 years.
What are the new educational requirements for each category?	Educational requirements are unaffected by the Conditions of Service changes.

### VOLUNTEER LIVING ALLOWANCE (VLA)

How are VLA rates for National UN Volunteers adjusted?	Ad hoc adjustments of the VLA are possible following a recommendation for adjustment and written request from the respective UN Country Team (UNCT) and/or UN Resident Coordinator. After approval by the UNV Regional Manager, the new rates will be implemented within 30 days of notification.
When will the new VLA be applied?	An updated methodology will be implemented in 2022. Pending this time, the current methodology is in place.
Is the base rate for international VLA part of the 18 Conditions of Service changes?	There will be no changes to the international UNV base rate until we go ahead with Quantum-the NextGen ERP- in July 2022. It should be noted that national VLA base rates could be revised based on the cost of living recommendations and reviewed upon requests from UN Country Teams/Host Entities and in cooperation with Regional Offices based on the following  memo.

### POST ADJUSTMENT MULTIPLIER (PAM)

How are exceptions addressed?	It is possible to implement new rule with deviations as per timeline noting that exceptional PAMs for New York City and Istanbul will remain unchanged.
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<sup>1</sup> Updated in November 2021

## ENTRY LUMP SUM

Why is this provision aligned for Youth and Specialist?

This alignment is based on the principle of equity, responding to the fact that all UN Volunteers have the same needs at the beginning of their assignments, independent of their volunteer category.

If a national UN Volunteer is recruited at the duty station, will they get the Entry Lump Sum?

Yes, as this provision replaces the previous pre-departure expenses and covers costs for medical examination.

Is Entry Lump Sum applicable to the international locally recruited candidate?

Yes. Entry Lump Sum is an automated payment at the beginning of assignment to cover costs that one has initially such as medical examinations, initial visa clearances and initial expenses at the designated duty stations.

Are international UN Volunteers with an initial contract of three (3) months paid the Entry Lump Sum?

Yes, the Entry Lump Sum is a standard one-time payment including expenses before traveling, such as medical examinations, initial visa clearances and initial expenses at the designated duty stations.

Will UN Volunteers on telecommuting arrangement forfeit any entitlement to Entry Lump Sum allowance if they have already received US \$600 for pre-departure expenses?

No, the US \$600 are paid to cover medical and visa expenses. In addition, as soon as a travel date is fixed, the Entry Lump Sum allowance will be provided in part to support shipment, any temporary accommodation needs at the duty station, while the UN Volunteer searches for more permanent housing, and basic household items purchase.

Will a portion of the Entry Lump Sum be recovered if the UN Volunteer resigns?

No, the Entry Lump Sum is paid to cover initial expenses and will not be pro-rated and recovered upon any resignations.

Will UN Volunteers on telecommuting arrangements forfeit any entitlement to Entry Lump Sum allowance when travelling?

A relaxation of the strict application of the Transition Plan is permitted and Entry Lump Sum is applied to UN Volunteers who were on telecommuting arrangements before 1 October 2021 but traveled or will travel to the country of assignment on or after 1 October 2021.

## EXIT ALLOWANCE

Why is this provision aligned for Youth and Specialist?

This alignment is based on the principle of equity, responding to the fact that all UN Volunteers have the same needs at the end of their assignment, independently of

	their volunteer category.
What are the new Exit Allowance amounts?	The Exit Allowance consists of US \$225/month for UN International Volunteers and 1 VLA/12 months for UN National Volunteers effective for all contracts as of 1 October 2021. Time served prior to 1 October 2021 will be calculated on amounts based in the previous Conditions of Service.
What are the variables affecting the Exit Allowance payment in cases of resignation?	They include contract completion status, notice period given at resignation (30 days), non-compliance with submission of the Final Clearance Checklist and all reporting requirements.
Will UN Volunteers, who resign, be required to refund a pro-rated share of the Settling-in-Grant (SIG)?	Per the logic of the Transition Plan there is no longer SIG since 1 October 2021 and under the unified Conditions of Service, no pro-ration of prior SIG is required in the case of resignation.
What is the timeline for transition?	Exit Allowance changes are effective as of 1 October 2021 and not retroactive. Collections in the UNDP/UNV Human Resources module of Atlas and global charges will be configured and amended from the effective date.
Will the new rates apply to the previously accrued amount?	The change to the Exit Allowance is not retroactive. Upon completion of the assignment, the total amount will be based on what was accrued before 1 October 2021, paid at the previous rate, and on completed service after 1 October 2021, paid at the new rate.
<b>TRAVEL</b>	

Will shipment be paid separately? Shipment is integrated into the Exit Allowance and the Entry Lump Sum.

What does monetization of travel for national UN Volunteers mean?	The unified Conditions of Service indicate that a lump sum of US \$200 at beginning and end of assignment will be paid to national UN Volunteers when travelling.
How is the Settling-in-Grant (SIG) calculated after 1 October 2021 for UN Volunteers whose initial assignments were less than 12 months?	SIG, prorated SIG, and additional SIG for dependents were discontinued on 1 October 2021. However, in line with established principle of equalization, for assignments less than 12 months before 1 October 2021, additional SIG will be paid up to the value of the Entry Lump Sum (US \$4000) upon contract extension after 1 October 2021.

How will the travel monetization be calculated for international UN Volunteers?

Current methodology applies. The change affects only national UN Volunteers.

In case of local recruitment (no assignment travel performed), will UN Volunteers be entitled for repatriation travel after serving for a certain period in the Duty Station?

Yes, repatriation will be processed to place of recruitment or domicile.

#### WELL-BEING DIFFERENTIAL (WBD)

How are approved exceptions handled?

For currently serving UN Volunteers, who receive this entitlement as part of an approved exception, entitlements are applied/grandfathered into the unified Conditions of Service. Continuity or discontinuity of this entitlement is delegated to Regional Offices from 1 October 2021.

#### INDIVIDUAL ACCOMMODATION ALLOWANCE SUPPLEMENT

How are approved exceptions handled?

There is no change for existing duty stations wide supplements. The change is discontinuation of the individual accommodation supplement.

What happens to a UN Volunteer, who already receives this payment?

Effective 1 October 2021, those who receive individual accommodation allowance supplements receive this allowance until the end of their current contract.

#### MINIMUM INITIAL CONTRACT DURATION

Does this rule apply to UN Youth and University Volunteers?

For UN Youth the minimum initial contract duration is six (6) months. For UN University Volunteers, the current rule continues three (3) months minimum contract .

#### SICK LEAVE

Will there be uncertified sick leave after 1 October 2021?

Uncertified sick leave remains equivalent to seven (7) days per annual cycle.

How is the sick leave calculation streamlined after 1 October 2021?

Upon beginning of the assignment, one has 30 days certified sick leave, which is globally reset in April every year. For administrative ease, there is no proration of sick leave in the unified Conditions of Service.

## PARENTAL LEAVE

Are UN Youth and University eligible?

Yes, the provision is extended to this category (Maternity: 16 weeks and Paternity: 10 days).

## INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ALLOWANCE

Why is the individual learning allowance replaced?

It is substituted with an expanded offering of global learning programmes. UN Volunteers have access to learning onsite, virtual, and online learning programmes for their onboarding, professional development and for career support.

Are the 10 days of "learning time" also discontinued with the individual learning allowance?

The learning time is not affected.

Is it possible to delay the completion of mandatory courses for UN Volunteers?

It is possible to obtain a waiver for the delay for completion of mandatory courses. However, it is important to, at least verbally, ensure an understanding from UN Volunteers about the provisions of mandatory courses and preventive measures from harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of authority, and sexual exploitation and abuse. The Capacity Development Team can offer support for the induction of UN Volunteers.

What is the timeline for learning activities approved before 1 October 2021?

Learning activities must have been completed by 31 October 2021. Claims for reimbursement will be submitted no later than 180 days from 1 October 2021.

## UN YOUTH VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENT BECOME FAMILY STATUS

Will UN University and Community Volunteers be eligible to have their recognized primary dependents at the duty station integrated into the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS)?

UNSMS coverage for national UN Youth Volunteers and the inclusion of their dependents is aligned to the terms and conditions applicable to locally recruited staff members.

How does this change affect international UN Youth assignments?

Tickets and medical insurance coverage for dependents are extended to all international UN Youth Volunteers. International UN University Volunteers remain single status due to short duration. Family Allowance is extended to all international UN Youth and University volunteers.

Are UN University and Community Volunteers eligible to have their recognized primary dependents integrated at the duty station into the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS) in the same manner as similarly situated UN staff?

No, international UN University Volunteers have contract durations that are limited to 6 months and therefore are not eligible to have their dependents travel to the duty station. UN Community Volunteers are designated single status due to their community recruitment and local presence.

## RECOGNITION OF DEPENDENTS

How does this change affect national UN Youth assignments?

Medical insurance coverage for dependents is extended to all national UN Youth and University Volunteers.

Is a cohabitation certificate recognized?

There are new different forms of unions or partnerships that could generally be indicative of a spousal relationship for UNV:

- Cohabiting partners having maintenance liability to each other
- Cohabiting partners that inherit from each other
- Cohabiting partners who can receive the surviving spouse's pension if their partner dies
- Cohabiting partners who have medical visitation rights

In cases of doubt when the UN Volunteer has provided their claim for spousal relationship, a statement from the UN Volunteer's country authority explaining that the document is equivalent to a marriage under their country law can be submitted. Upon reception of this confirmation, the document received from the UN Volunteer will be considered a spousal relationship for purposes of UNV benefits and entitlements.

## REASSIGNMENT

Are changes in Description of Assignments (DoA) considered as a reassignment?

No. Changes in a DoA and/or an Assignment title are considered an update to the assignment and not a reassignment.

Can the Direct Recruitment policy be used for reassignment between categories?

The Direct Recruitment Policy can be followed provided the candidate is a former UN Volunteer who served and completed the first assignment with a positive performance appraisal. However, this would be considered as a new assignment.

Are UN Community Volunteers entitled to be reassigned?

UN Community Volunteers should not be reassigned since they serve in their own communities.

What provisions exist on financial support for reassignment?

Upon reassignment, UN Volunteers will receive a one-time payment of 50% of the Entry Lump Sum (US \$200) + US \$200 travel lump sum for national UN Volunteers and 50% of the Entry Lump Sum (US \$2000) + travel ticket for international UN Volunteers.

### MAXIMUM PERIOD OF SERVICE

What are the maximum years of service for UN Volunteers?	Effective 1 October 2021, the maximum service period for UN Volunteers is established as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Four (4) years as a national UN Volunteer</li><li>• Four (4) years as an international UN Volunteer</li></ul>
Does the rule affect equally Youth and University?	The rule affects all currently and prior serving UN Volunteers. Distinctions between serving periods as Youth (24 months) and University (6 months) remain and will be included in counting four years of service.

### AGE CRITERIA

Is there a maximum age limit applied to qualify as a UN Volunteer?	Effective 1 October 2021, UN Volunteers can serve up to the age of 80 as per life insurance policy limitations.
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Is the ten years lapse service valid after October 2021? The ten years lapse in service rule is phased out.

Is the current rule for those older than the applicable UN retirement age or former UN staff who have retired from the United Nations system valid after 1 October 2021?	With the unified Conditions of Service, effective 1 October 2021, the exception for retirees is not included and they follow maximum service restrictions.
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### UN PERSONNEL SPOUSES

Why is this change in place?	This is to avoid double payments for Family Allowances and travel allowances for the Home Visit, when the spouse of a UN Volunteer is an internationally recruited UN staff member.
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