



Federation of International
Civil Servants' Associations

Classification of Duty Stations according to Conditions of Life and Work

ICSC Questionnaire

Ask FICSA Expert
30 July 2024

BEFORE WE START OFF

- Family duty stations are not family duty stations for all
- Some countries don't grant visas to same-sex spouses
- Some family duty stations are not safe for LGBTI families



Mobility policies should recognize that for LGBTI staff, some “family duty stations” are in fact **HARDSHIP DUTY STATIONS**

Source: UNGLOBE



Source: Images from creative commons licenses

ABBREVIATIONS and TERMS

ICSC

Commission

Independent expert body that is charged with the regulations and coordination of the conditions of service for UN common system staff

TWG

Tripartite Working Group (ICSC, UN entities and **3 staff federations**) that reviews the results of the questionnaire and recommends to the Chair/ICSC the designation of a hardship classification of a duty station



Questionnaire

Survey

Tool used by ICSC to review the level of hardship of a duty station and determine the designation of a classification

Hardship

Circumstances and conditions of living that pose on-going discomfort, deprivation and difficulties in a duty station

WHY ICSC HARDSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE?

- ① assess **hardship situation** in a duty station
- ② assign **hardship classification** of a duty station
- ③ determine **level of annual hardship allowance**
- ④ determine **frequency of home leave and danger pay**

based on the information
from the duty station

based on the
questionnaire and
methodology

CURRENT CLASSIFICATION

- H Headquarters + similar designated locations + EU countries**
[Vienna, Rome] [Kyoto, Sydney, Oslo] [Lyon, Kosice]
- A** *[Baku, Bogota, Douala, San Jose, Cairo, Jakarta, Cape Town]*

No hardship allowance

-
- B** *[Cotonou, Pristina, Addis Ababa, Zanzibar, East Jerusalem]*
- C** *[Benguela, Ashkhabad, Dili, Colombo, Gaziantep, Caracas]*
- D** *[Sao Tome, Lubumbashi, Kyiv, Kisoro, San Cristobal]*
- E** *[Sana'a, Damascus, Juba, Niamey, Pyongyang, Baghdad]*

Hardship allowance paid monthly based on staff grade

BASIC FACTS: CLASSIFICATION IN SUMMARY

- ① Once every 3 years; out-of-cycle and temporary classifications are possible in between
- ② Request to review assigned classification is possible
- ③ TWG: ISCS secretariat + reps of UN entities **+ 3 reps of UN staff federations**
- ④ Annual allowance based on staff grade ([A/78/30](#), p.70)

Revised annual amounts payable under the hardship allowance, effective 1 January 2024

(United States dollars)

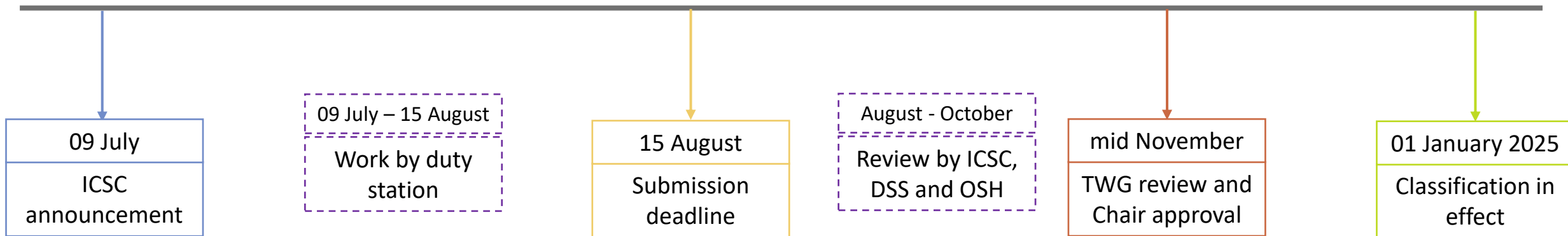
<i>Hardship category</i>	<i>Group 1 (P-1 to P-3)</i>	<i>Group 2 (P-4 and P-5)</i>	<i>Group 3 (D-1 and above)</i>
A	–	–	–
B	6 110	7 330	8 560
C	11 010	13 440	15 890
D	14 670	17 130	19 550
E	18 340	22 000	24 460

BASIC FACTS: SCHEDULE OF ANNUAL REVIEWS

Year	Region
2024	Latin America + the Caribbean + CIS/Europe+ the Middle East
2025	Asia and the Pacific
2026	Africa
2027	Latin America + the Caribbean + CIS/Europe+ the Middle East
2028	Asia and the Pacific
2029	Africa

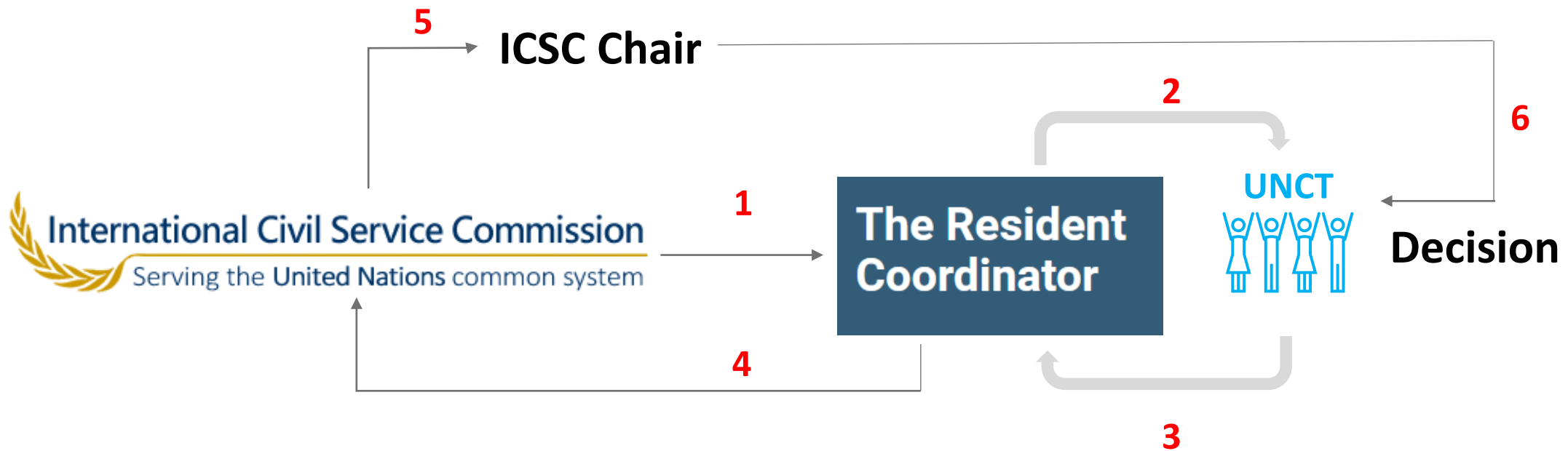
BASIC FACTS: 2024 REVIEW

- ① **Mandatory:** all active-duty stations in LATAM, Caribbean, CIS/Europe and Middle East
- ② **Temporary:** Adre, Hadjer Hadid, Surkhet, Renk
- ③ **Transition/out of cycle:** Kasulu, Kibondo
- ④ **ICSC Security Watch:** Annex IV



BASIC FACTS: CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

! UNRC leads the process, also in duty stations with both UNDPKO and UNDCO presence




BASIC FACTS: QUESTIONNAIRE

- ① One questionnaire per duty station
- ② Consolidated feedback from all resident UN entities
- ③ Applicable for international staff members*
**only those who are on one year or longer assignment*
- ④ Very detailed: 130 questions
- ⑤ 6 areas of assessment

Form ICSC/HRPD/H/1/2012

TO BE USED FOR ALL DUTY STATIONS



International Civil Service Commission

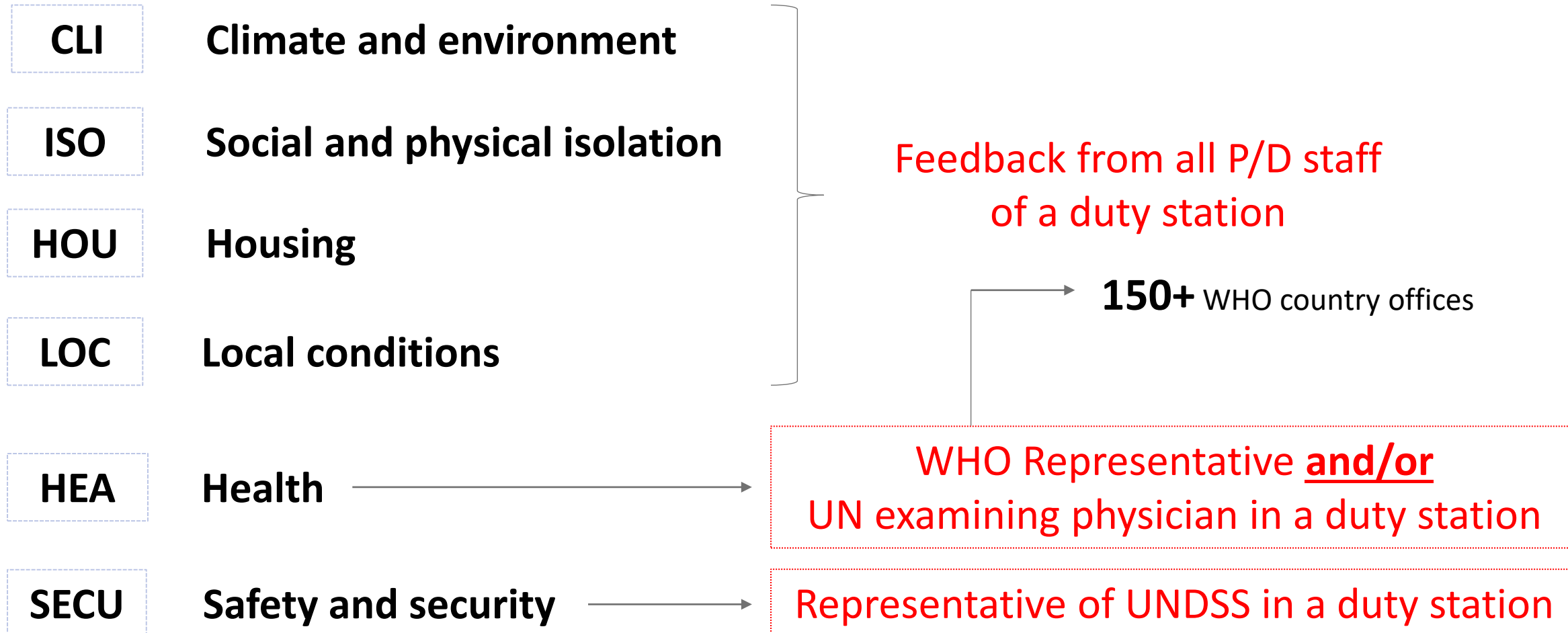
Classification of Duty Stations
According to Conditions of Life and Work

Questionnaire

Country	Duty station	Date(dd/mm/yyyy)
Capital City? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		

2020

QUESTIONNAIRE: SIX FACTORS OF HARDSHIP



QUESTIONNAIRE: FIVE FACTORS OF SUCCESS

① Availability \neq Quality

② No information = All is good

③ Photos and facts are the best evidence

④ Sharing is caring..... and informing

⑤ Become ICSC Chair for one day



Qui tacet consentire videtur, ubi loqui debuit ac potuit (He who is silent, when he ought to have spoken and was able to, is taken to agree)



Source: Images from creative commons licenses

QUESTIONNAIRE: DEEP DIVE Climate and environment

B. Climatic and Environmental Factors

Climatic Factors

10. Please note that information on climatic factors such as average or extreme temperatures, humidity, or precipitation levels for each month of the year over a period of 10 years will be collected by the ICSC Secretariat from official published sources.
11. Additional comments on **mitigation measures**: Please list any mitigation measures (i.e., heating and cooling systems) that are used at the duty station to reduce the impact of extreme climatic conditions (e.g., extreme heat/cold).

Environmental Factors

12. If any extreme environmental conditions occur at the duty station during the past 3 years, please provide the information requested below:

Altitude of 2,440 meters/8,000 feet above sea level or higher	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Drought during the past 3 years	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Sandstorms or Dust storms during the past 3 years	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Volcanic activity during the past 3 years	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	If Yes, specify when: <input type="text"/>
Major flooding during the past 3 years	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	If Yes, specify when: <input type="text"/>
Major earthquakes (over 5 on Richter Scale) during the past 3 years	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	If Yes, specify number of earthquakes and Richter Scale rating(s): <input type="text"/>
Heavy rainfall during the past 3 years	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	If Yes, specify amount (in mm or inches) and duration of rainfall: <input type="text"/>
Heavy snowfall during the past 3 years	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	If Yes, specify amount (in mm or inches) and duration of snowfall: <input type="text"/>
Tornado, cyclone, typhoon, or hurricane during the past 3 years	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	If Yes, specify type and number experienced: <input type="text"/>
Pollution	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	If Yes, specify type of pollution: <input type="text"/>
Other (Please specify): <input type="text"/>		

13. Additional comments: please also identify any climatic conditions (e.g. humidity, dust, sand, salty water, and wind) which result in more rapid than normal deterioration of clothing, leather goods, and electrical/electronic products and equipment.

Real-time information on:

- air pollution (AQI)
- real temperatures
- significant natural disasters
- extreme pollution episodes

Spill over of liquid ammonia; frequent flooding, industrial emissions, erosion of land



QUESTIONNAIRE: DEEP DIVE Social and physical isolation



D. Social and Physical Isolation Factors

PLEASE NOTE: Questions about isolation in this section are regarding what are being used by internationally recruited staff members who are assigned for 1 year or longer, **NOT** facilities and services that may be available to local population.

D.1. Social Isolation

Population Factors

25. Total population of the duty station:

26. What is the size of the expatriate community, including the diplomatic community, at the duty station?

10 households or less 11 to 25 households 26 to 50 households Over 50 households

Cultural and Recreational Facilities

27. Check each cultural and recreational facility listed below that is available for the use of international staff members.

	Availability		Accessibility	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
a) Sport facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Social or recreational clubs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Restaurants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Cinemas or theatres	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Public parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Newspapers (in any UN working language)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Bookstores or libraries with international books and magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

28. Do cultural gender norms at the duty station prohibit female staff members from equally accessing the available facilities in question 27?

	Usually	Sometimes	Never
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

29. Additional comments deemed useful in describing cultural and recreational facilities at the duty station:

Restrictions

(i) Local Contacts and Restrictions

30. What is the local language at the duty station?

31. What language is used to conduct local business, shopping, etc.?

	Usually	Sometimes	Never
32. Do language barriers prohibit interaction with the local community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. Are there formal or informal restrictions on establishing or maintaining contact with the local community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. Are there formal or informal restrictions on women participating in the life of the community at the duty station?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Real-time information on:

- transport and connectivity
- reliability of services
- status of family members
- work-life balance

1. *Is airport well connected to **different** destinations?*
2. *How is connectivity comparing with neighbouring duty stations?*
3. *Are there visa limitations and availability of consular services?*
4. *Can you move freely or are you limited (due to stray dogs, gangs, etc.)?*
5. *Can you disconnect from work and leave duty station easily?*
6. *Are Internet and other services reliable **and** reasonably priced?*
7. *Do socio-cultural norms impact your/your partner/child life?*

QUESTIONNAIRE: DEEP DIVE Housing



C. Housing Factors

PLEASE NOTE: Questions about housing and facilities in this section refer to the **current** accommodation at the duty station for internationally recruited staff members who are assigned for 1 year or longer, **NOT** housing and facilities that may be available to local population.

Types of Accommodation

14. Are international staff members who are assigned for 1 year or longer at the duty station residing in accommodation provided by:
- Private/commercial renters?
 - Government of the host country?
 - UN agency?
 - Other (please specify) _____

15. Please specify what is/are the type(s) of accommodation the majority of international staff members reside in.

a) Separate houses/apartments	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	b) Separate houses/apartments within a UN compound or UN troops compound	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
c) Shared separate houses/apartments with shared facilities (including kitchen, living room, and bathroom)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	d) Shared separate houses (including kitchen/dining and/or bathroom facilities) within a UN compound or UN troops compound	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
e) UN guesthouses	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	f) Hotels/guesthouses	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
g) Containers or equivalent	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	h) Office space	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
i) Tents	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	j) Other: _____	

16. If international staff members reside in more than one type of accommodation (i.e., more than one option from the above are checked Yes), please explain why and provide details, including the number of international staff members residing in each type of accommodation. _____

Neighborhood Characteristics

17. Do the majority of international staff members live:

a) close to public transport?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
b) close to place of work?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
c) close to primary or secondary schools?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
d) close to local markets?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Real-time information on:

- reliability of services
- quality of sanitation
- ease of access
- quality of maintenance

1. *Can staff rent private houses?*
2. *Do power cuts impact reliability of services?*
3. *Are private houses for expats singled out for security?*
4. *Can one, in general, walk between the office and housing?*

QUESTIONNAIRE: DEEP DIVE Health



G. HEALTH FACTORS	
G.1.HEALTH FACTORS: Section 1	
<p>The Resident Coordinator should ensure that this section of the questionnaire (Item 90-118) is completed by either (1) the WHO representative or (2) the UN examining physician. Only medical facilities frequented by international staff should be reported on. Please Note: Psychological stressors that are a consequence of overall conditions at the duty station will be factored into the final health rating.</p>	
Name and address of WHO representative/UN Physician who completed this section:	
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
If physician, please state:	
- type of practice and specialty: <input type="text"/>	
- years of experience practicing (1) at duty station: <input type="text"/> (2) in country: <input type="text"/>	
- United Nations agency affiliation: <input type="text"/>	
I. MEDICAL FACILITIES	
A. Hospitals	
90. Names and addresses of <u>hospitals</u> or <u>private medical facilities</u> located in the duty station. ONLY name hospitals most likely to be used by the international staff and their dependants. Indicate the approximate driving distance.	
facility (a): <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
facility (b): <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
facility (c): <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
facility (d): <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
facility (e): <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
For each facility, provide the following information:	
91. Transportation/ambulances available?	
..... if yes, what kind and how many of each.....	

UN examining physician or WHO representative
Ideally both

40 detailed questions from staff **and** family members

Inform ICSC and UNHMOSH of real conditions

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If physician, please state:	
- type of practice and specialty: _____	
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facility (a): _____	_____
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facility (c): _____	_____
facility (d): _____	_____
facility (e): _____	_____
For each facility, provide the following information:	
91. Transportation/ambulances available?	
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Real-time information on:

- quality of healthcare
- availability of doctors
- quality of products
- MEDEVAC

1. Do hospitals meet IPC requirements?
2. Are there reports of counterfeit medicines?
3. Do healthcare professionals possess skills/knowledge?
4. How many MEDEVAC **and why?**
5. How reliable are tests?

REFERENCES



WHO WE ARE ▾ WHAT WE DO ▾ RESC

Home > What We Do > Mobility & Hardship Allowances



Mobility & Hardship Allowances



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Topics ▾

INFORMATION RESOURCES ON HA CLASSIFICATION OF DUTY STATIO



New! Frequently Asked Questions on ICSC Questionnaire for the Hardship Classification of Duty Stations According to Conditions of Life and Work

Get valuable information on how to complete the ICSC questionnaire here!



Results of the Survey on Classification of Hardship Duty Stations away from HQs



FICSA eLe: Classifica

FICSA eLe: how the IC: works!



CONTACT

FICSA Secretariat (ficsa@un.org)

Oleksandr Martynenko (martynenkoo@who.int)

