

HR.SOP.III.079

Change of Personal Status (Single to Married or Divorced)

HRT/HPJ

HR Standard Operating Procedure
(Target Audience: All staff)

DISCLAIMER

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) provide a step-by-step guide for staff directly involved in the processing of administrative actions to support and facilitate the implementation of WHO policies and procedures. The SOPs are for guidance only; they are neither authoritative nor binding. The SOPs reflect the policies and procedures of WHO at the time of writing; however, policies and procedures change from time-to-time. In the case of a conflict between the SOPs and the WHO eManual provisions, the WHO eManual provisions take precedence.

DOCUMENT SPECIFICATIONS

Version Version	Date of revision	Author (s) / Dept / Unit	Approver	Indicate which section changed compared to previous version
0.1	Jan 2012	K. Mollard, HRD/HPJ		
0.2	3May2012	S. Ragupathi, GHR/GSC		Review
0.3	14ay2012	S. Amaudruz		Review of draft
0.4	15/05/2012	JM		Inserted Visio, removed Steps 12, 13 – as risk mitigation
0.5	29.10.2012			Review
0.6	6.11.2012	A. Ankrah HPJ Pension fund also consulted.		Including HPJ domestic partnership procedures
0.7		Janet Mousley		Extra steps to be included in VISIO
0.8	9.01.2013	S. Amaudruz		Final review before sending for final approval.
1.0	10.01.2013		S. Amaudruz, HPJ/HRD M. Altmaier, Director, HRD N. Jeffreys, Comptroller	Approved for publication in eManual.
1.1	11.08.2020	S. Amaudruz	S. Amaudruz, HPJ/HRT A. Khaidova, Coordinator, GHR	Amended Business Rules, steps 3, 8, 11, and 13 to update new process due to change to WHO eManual III.2.para 50 and deletion of para 70. Process amended to require validation of unions only in countries which have not previously been validated for legality in the country where personal status was established and delegation of authority to approve to Unit Head HRT/HPJ. References to UPKs (outdated) removed.
2.0	20.01.2021	S. Amaudruz/K.Mollard, HRT/HPJ	S. Amaudruz, HPJ/HRT A. Khaidova, Coordinator, GHR	Updated Visio, approved for publication in eManual

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview/Description

This Standard Operating Procedure explains the process related to requesting and implementing a change in personal status of a staff member, i.e. Single to Married or Divorced to Married, Married to Divorced, etc. Each time a staff member changes their legal marital status it is necessary to submit the change through GSM with the required supporting documentation.

A staff member requesting a change in marital status completes first, the mandatory Self-Service process in GSM for Personal details (change of title and/or name, if appropriate and change in marital status).

A submission to change to “married” status through personal details must be followed-up immediately with a request to : i) Register My Family Member(s); and ii) Request for Recognition of My Family Member(s) e.g. spouse and children of new spouse, if appropriate; and once those family members are recognized and approved, iii) apply for benefits, for a spouse – dependency status and/or health insurance only; and, if relevant, dependency status of children, if the children of the new spouse reside with the staff member at the duty station only.

Where the staff member’s change in personal status is Divorced, or Widowed; a request to “Cease spouse benefits” must also be made through GSM. Where the “divorce” results in a change in the custody of the children, a new request for “Benefits for my Recognized Child” should be submitted also, upon the approval of the change in personal status.

A staff member should also update in all cases his/her WHO Beneficiaries form (WHO 90.6), Pension fund forms and Emergency Contacts (GSM) whenever a change in marital status occurs.

Staff members are required to review regularly their personal status and family member details through the view Recognized Family Members- View Benefits Relationships and inform the administration through GSM of any changes whatsoever which may impact the information provided, benefits from other sources received, changes in school or employment status.

1.2. General Guidance / Business Rules

In accordance with Staff Rule 490, staff members are responsible for informing and providing the Organization with information and documentation required for the purpose of determining their personal status under the Staff Rules and, of completing administrative arrangements in connection with their appointment.

Upon reporting to duty and during the employee life-cycle, staff members are required to enter and/or to update their personal details through the Employee Self-Service page.

Staff members must submit appropriate supporting documentation with their GSM request to justify the change in status i.e. copy of marriage certificate/legally recognized domestic partnership certificate, and birth certificate or, if not available, the passport of spouse or a divorce certificate or legally recognized court order for official separation* (*applies only to GS staff at whose duty station a higher child allowance exists where the staff member is single and provided if he/she retains custody of the children). Supporting documents for a change in marital status must be scanned, saved to pdf files uploaded with the GSM request to the electronic records management system (ECM).

For Determination of Personal Status and related entitlements, see WHO eManual III.3.2. Staff members should consult their Human Resources Business Associate in the Division or Regional Human Resources Officer in the Regional Office for any questions regarding personal status. Staff members should also consult the Headquarters Pension Unit (pension@who.int) for detailed information on the pension fund recognition of spouse's under same sex marriages and domestic partnerships.

All requests for changes in Personal Status are submitted to GHR for validation, and approval. GHR reviews and validates the information, or, as appropriate, rejects or requests additional information as required.

1.3. Reference Material

1.3.1. Staff Rules

- 330 Salaries
- 340 Dependants' allowances
- 490 Notification by staff members and obligation to supply information about themselves
- 495 Staff member's beneficiaries

1.3.2. WHO eManual

- III.3.2 Personal Status
- III.4.4 Appointment procedures

1.3.3. Related SOPs

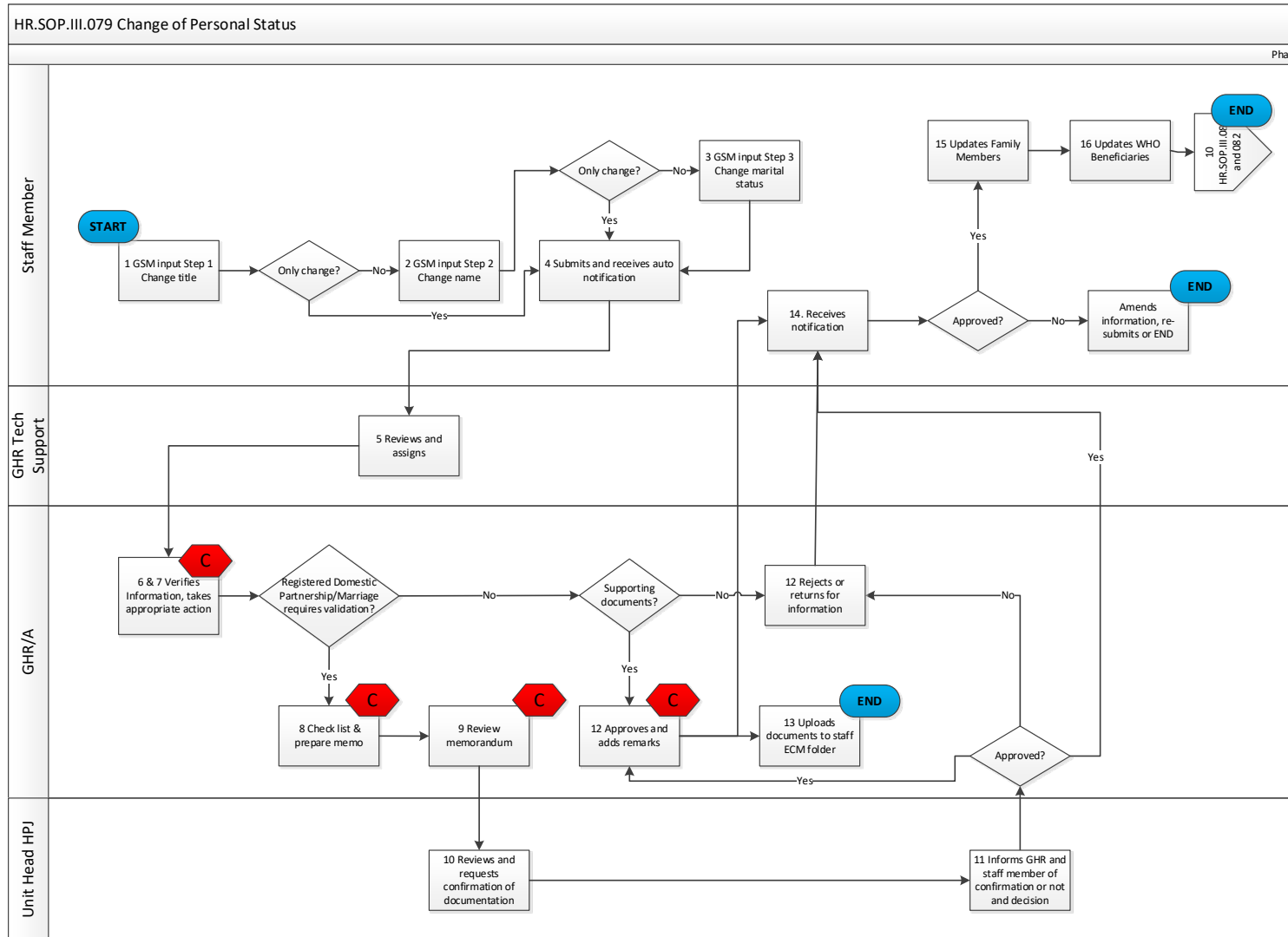
- HR.SOP.III.080 Register, request recognition & apply for benefits for family member
- HR.SOP.III.082 Recognition of a dependant spouse for dependency benefits
- HR.SOP.III.083 Recognition of non-dependent spouse with Health Insurance coverage

1.4. Other

1.4.1. Definitions

- HRT/HPJ Human Resources & Talent Management Department/Policy and Administration of Justice
- ECM Enterprise Content Management
- GHR/A Global Human Resources Assistant
- DFF Descriptive Flexfield in GSM
- UNJSPF United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund

2. PROCESS FLOW



PROCESS STEPS

Step	Control (C)	Type	Process	Role / Responsibility
1		GSM input	<p>Immediately upon marriage/partnership the staff member must update information in GSM Employee Self Service -> My Personal Details.</p> <p>The next 3 steps can be carried out simultaneously to indicate the new personal status.</p> <p>Step 1. Change title (optional) if changing from Ms or Miss to Mrs (supporting document would be marriage certificate). Alternately change from Mrs to Ms or Miss (supporting document would be divorce or death certificate).</p> <p>Follow the process to the summary screen. Review the request summary page.</p> <p>If this is the only change, proceed to Submit and go to Step 3 for change in marital status.</p> <p>Or, go to step 2 for Change of Name and then Step 3 for change in marital status in all cases.</p>	Staff member
2		GSM input	<p>Step 2. If appropriate Change your name (Last Name should be in Upper Case)</p> <p>To initiate your request for a change in name, supporting document(s) must be added to the request to change the name e.g. scan of new passport, identity card, legal document</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure name is written exactly as on official document • Enter effective date of change – date on the official document 	Staff member

			<p>On the summary screen, review the request and add the appropriate supporting document which shows the new name, e.g. passport, family book, etc.</p> <p>Submit and continue to step 3 to Change your Marital status.</p>	
3		GSM input	<p>Step 3. Change your marital status from single (or divorced) to married.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter effective date of Marriage/Domestic Partnership/Divorce/Legal Separation(*)or Widow status; • Select the appropriate marital status – Married, Domestic Partnership, Divorce, Widow or Legally Separated* (*normally only for GS staff who wish to benefit from the Single Parents allocation if applicable at the staff member’s duty station – for the purposes of the UNJSPF the legal separation does not impact the right of the spouse to a pension fund benefit); • Upload supporting documents to the last page of the request <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ marriage certificate, legally recognized domestic partnership certificate as evidence of marriage/domestic partnership; the legal Divorce document, the legal court document for a separation, the death certificate of the spouse for widower status. • Ensure documents are correctly scanned as pdf files and uploaded to the electronic transaction and archiving system using the Managed Attachment button. • Indicate in the “Add Comments” field:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ if the marriage/partnership is to a WHO or UN Staff Member – if UN, add name of the organization; ○ which documents provided, Marriage/Partnership certificate attached and Passport to show change in name (if appropriate); Divorce document; etc. 	Staff member

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Any other information you consider relevant to the change. <p>Submit request including all 3 changes or only this one if this is the only change. Request is automatically forwarded for approval to GHR.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Ensure step 2 is completed if you also wish to request a change in name.</u> 	
4		GSM notification	Receives Automatic notification indicating that the changes have been submitted for approval.	Staff member
5		Off line	Reviews request and assigns task to GHR Administrator.	GHR Technical Support
6	C	GSM input	<p>Verifies :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting documents are attached and valid (legally acceptable, legible and clear). If not, rejects the request. ● Effective date for : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a change to Married is either marriage date or entry on duty date, whichever is later; ○ a change to Domestic Partnership is the date of the partnership or entry on duty date whichever is later, ○ a Divorce, the date of the divorce; ○ a Legal Separation, the date of the court document, etc., ○ ● Proposed new status has been correctly selected as per document submitted; ● For marriage/domestic partnership – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Spouse is not a WHO staff member by searching the name in staff member database 	GHR Administrator

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If spouse is identified as WHO staff member – updates the DFF in Additional Personal details – “Spouse UN or WHO Employee” YES and enters spouse name under Contacts in Contact Information with the staff number of the spouse if WHO staff. ○ If same sex marriage or domestic partnership go to Step 8 for validation steps 	
7.	C	GSM Input	<p>For Divorce, takes action to end date the Recognized spouse relationship and any benefits (dependency status or health insurance coverage from the date of the divorce).</p> <p>For Widow, takes action to end date of the Recognized spouse relationship) and any benefits.</p>	GHR Administrator
For domestic partnerships and marriages which require validation – Steps 8 to 11 apply. For all other requests go to Step 12.				
8.	C	Offline	<p>Checks list of countries where domestic partnerships or marriages have been validated in the past. If the partnership/marriage document or country is already validated, approves the request. Go to Step 12.</p> <p>If the partnership/marriage document or country in which the personal status was established has not been previously validated, prepares memorandum to Unit Head HRT/HPJ for approval of the domestic partnership or marriage with the supporting documents provided by the staff member in the GSM request.</p>	GHR Administrator
9.	C	Offline	Reviews memorandum for correctness and signs-off.	NPO GHR Certifying Officer
10.		Offline	Receives request and reviews in accordance with the law of the country where the partnership/marriage was established. Writes to the relevant permanent mission	Unit Head HRT/HPJ

			requesting confirmation that the documentation provided is valid under the law of the country.	
11.			<p>Upon receipt of either confirmation from the permanent mission that the partnership/marriage is legally recognized under the laws of the country where the union was established OR that the partnership/marriage is not recognized, Unit Head, HRT/HPJ informs GHR of the decision and copies the staff member.</p> <p>Return to the standard process for approval or rejection - Go to step 12.</p>	Unit Head HRT/HPJ
12.	C	GSM input	<p>Approves the request for change in personal status and indicates in the remarks column a note for staff member to take the relevant action depending on the status change:</p> <p>In case of marriage/partnership advises staff member to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register Spouse as a Family Member; and any Child(ren) of the new spouse who will be residing with the staff member at the duty station (step-children); see HR.SOP.III.081; • Submit a "Request for Recognition of My Family Member", if not already done • Request Benefits for a Recognized Spouse or Child • Update WHO Designation of Beneficiaries form and Pension fund forms. <p>In case of divorce/legal separation/becoming a widow instructs staff member:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The spouse dependency/health insurance status, has been ended by GHR, if relevant; • To Request an end to the recognized relationship through Recognized Family members Self Service Function 	GHR Administrator (as Certifying Officer)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the WHO Designation of Beneficiaries form and Pension fund forms and emergency contacts in GSM <p>If no supporting documents attached or insufficient OR the permanent mission does not recognize the marriage partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rejects the request with reason or returns for correction and follows-up. Raises any cases of irregularity, excessive retroactivity with the GHR HR Officer for review and decision. <p>Change in marital status is automatically updated in People Screen.</p>	
13.		ECM input	Uploads any additional supporting documents or decision to ECM.	GHR Administrator
14.		GSM notification	Receives notification that changes to personal status have been approved or rejected including the relevant comments on the procedures to follow.	Staff member
15.		GSM input	<p>If change in personal status to “married/domestic partnership” is approved, go to HR.SOP.III.080, Register My Family Member, Request Recognition and if dependency status or health insurance required, Request - Apply for Benefits for Family Member.</p> <p>If change in personal status to “divorce or widow” status is approved, go to Employee Self-Service, Request End of Recognized Relationship.</p>	Staff member
16.		Offline	Updates WHO Beneficiaries – see ANNEX I - How to Complete Upload WHO Designation of Beneficiaries WHO90.6	Staff member

3. KEY RISKS & COMPENSATING CONTROLS

Risks	Compensating Controls	Process Step
<p>Over or underpayments, if after declaring a change in civil status to married/domestic partnership, or divorced, the staff member does not follow-up with the request for formal recognition of the spouse and if appropriate apply for benefits or in the case of divorce request cessation of benefits.</p> <p>Overpayments specifically would be D rate of salary, spouse allowance, and could affect rental subsidy, non-removal or mobility allowances.</p>	<p>GHR approves the request and indicates in the Comments/Remarks column of the notification of approval for the staff member to submit a “Request for Recognition of My Family Member” and Request Dependency and health insurance benefits, if relevant or in case of divorce widowship, end the Relationship.</p> <p>GHR will in case of divorce automatically end the spouse dependency allowances/SHI in the professional forms to avoid overpayments and recovery.</p> <p>Annual Verification of Dependency Status (which staff members are required to complete each year) reminds staff members to submit their family members for recognition and allowances and to report any changes.</p> <p>GHR/A staff also go through a review process of the Annual Verification of Dependency Status declaration to verify that the information is correct and/or updated correctly.</p>	<p>6, 8, 9, 12</p> <p>7</p> <p>Annual verification process</p>
<p>Data quality issues related to staff who are married but without recognized spouses. Or staff who are divorces with recognized spouses.</p>	<p>GHR runs comparative data checks every six months to ensure that all staff with marital status Married or Domestic Partner have a “Recognized Spouse” in the system</p>	<p>Standard process by GHR Technical Unit</p>

<p>Non recording of changes in Personal status could result in non-payment or difficulties in receiving pension benefits in the case of death of the staff member.</p>	<p>Annual Verification of Dependency Status (which staff members are required to complete each year) reminds staff members to submit their family members for recognition and allowances and to report any changes.</p>	<p>Annual verification process</p>
<p>Staff members do not declare spouse is a WHO or UN staff member at the time of marriage.</p> <p>If the WHO staff member requests recognition of the spouse and does not add that the spouse is a WHO or UN staff member, it can only be picked up at the stage of requesting Dependency status.</p>	<p>Currently GHR are required to double check through a GSM search that the name of the spouse does not appear as a WHO staff member. This is not without risk.</p> <p>A new GSM declaration has been added to the Marital Status field in Personal Details and to the Request Recognition of My Family member to ensure the staff member replies to the question:- Is your Spouse a WHO or UN Employee – Reply : Yes or No If yes please indicate the Organization : Blank field.</p> <p>A further declaration is required at the time of recognizing the spouse and each time the staff member must declare if the spouse is a UN or WHO staff member.</p>	<p>3 and 6</p> <p>Personal status update and Recognition of family member processes.</p>