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HANDBOOK 25

CHAPTER 39

EXECUTIVE LEVEL ASSIGNMENTS - AID FOREIGN SERVICE

39A. Purpose

This Chapter provides the policies and procedures which govern the assignment of Foreign Service (FS) and Senior Foreign Service (SFS) members and other personnel to executive level positions in AID.

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39B. Applicability

1. This Chapter applies to the recruitment, selection, appointment, assignment and compensation of executive personnel overseas and in AID/Washington (see Section 39F).

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39C. Authorities and References

1. Sections 101(b)(2), 202, 302 and 303 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (FSA), as amended.

2. Section 631(b) and (c) the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA), as amended. The President is authorized by section 631 (b), FAA to appoint Chiefs or Deputy Chiefs of Aid missions abroad and by Section 631 (c) to appoint the Chairman, DAC. The authority to appoint and terminate such appointments has been redelegated to the Administrator.

3. Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

4. Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended.

5. Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

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### 39D. Policies

1. The Agency seeks the most talented executives available to manage its programs overseas and in AID/W. While most executives are drawn from the ranks of career employees, AID may periodically recruit from outside the Agency.

2. Employees are considered for assignment on the basis of performance, demonstrated leadership and management capabilities, foreign language aptitude and/or proficiency as well as special needs of the position.

3. Acceptance of an executive position does not jeopardize the tenure rights of career employees. AID FS and SFS members are assigned without a change in their appointment status. GS/SES employees may be granted reemployment rights for the duration of their limited FS appointment.

4. Assignment or appointment to an executive position does not any guarantee for future executive assignments.

5. Assignments to executive positions will be made in accordance with the Agency's policy of nondiscrimination.

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### 39E. Responsibilities

1. AID Administrator (A/AID) and Deputy Administrator (DA/AID)

a. Approves or disapproves appointments and assignments to AID FS executive positions;

b. Approves any significant changes in the executive positions or in the levels of these positions; and

c. Chairs the Executive Personnel Assignment Panel (EPAP).

2. Assistant Administrators and Heads of Independent Offices

Manage the personnel resources and the executive positions in their respective bureaus, offices and overseas posts. In consultation with the Director, Office of Personnel Management (M/PM), anticipate vacancies, identify potential executive talent within or, as appropriate, outside AID, and participate in EPAP and related placement processes.

3. Director, Office of Personnel Management  
The Director, M/PM is responsible for the overall management of the Agency's personnel authorities and systems.

4. Executive Personnel Management Staff (M/PM/EPM)

a. Maintains a list of executive positions in AID/W and overseas. In consultation with the concerned bureau or office, revises the list as programmatic needs change;

b. Coordinates and supports the processes to identify, recruit, and assign executive personnel and prepares relevant personnel action documentation;

c. Provides staff support to the EPAP and prepares the assignment decision memoranda for the Administrator's signature; and d. Counsels FS personnel seeking executive assignments and attempts and seeks potential candidates for such assignments.

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39F. Executive Positions

1. Overseas

Positions filled through the EPAP process may include, but are not limited to:

Mission Directors/Deputies/Associate Directors  
Associate Director, USAID/Cairo  
AID Representatives  
AID Affairs Officers  
Regional Directors/Deputies  
Principal Officers in FODAG/Rome  
Chairman, Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Paris,  
France  
U.S. Representative, DAC

2. AID/W

a. AID/W executive positions are filled through the EPAP process for FS and SFS members or other discretionary authorities e.g., Executive Schedule, Administratively Determined. GS, PMRS and SES personnel may be assigned to such positions, as appropriate.

b. Positions included in the EPAP process for FS and SFS assignments may include, but are not limited to:

Counselor to the Agency  
Special Assistants to the Administrator/Deputy  
Administrator/Counselor  
Executive Secretary  
BIFAD Deputy Director

Deputy Assistant Administrators, Bureaus/Independent  
offices  
Office Directors/Deputies within Bureaus and Independent  
Offices  
Director/Deputy Director; Chiefs, Foreign Service  
Personnel,  
Executive Personnel Management, Labor Management Relations  
Divisions, Office of Personnel Management  
Deputy Controllers  
Senior Development Coordination Officers, USUN/New York  
Directors, Management Staffs Bureaus and Independent  
Offices

c. When positions are changed or senior ones established in AID/W, M/PM, in collaboration with the bureau or office involved and in consultation with the DA/AID, determines the executive level status of the position.

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### 39G. Recruitment

#### 1. General Qualifications

Applicants are reviewed against the standards and qualifications contained in AID Handbook 33, Overseas Position Management; the extensiveness of their knowledge and experience, including in-depth understanding of socio-economic-political problems in less developed countries; and specific position requirements. Other skills and abilities may include, but are not limited to: supervisory and management skills, effective oral and written communication, conceptual ability, negotiating skills, cultural and social sensitivity, equal opportunity leadership and sensitivity and foreign language ability.

#### 2. Internal Recruitment

a. Personnel applying for executive assignments usually have already performed successfully in senior level assignments. However, personnel with executive potential also are identified through the following means:

(1) AAs and the heads of AID/W independent offices and overseas posts periodically are asked to identify persons with executive potential;

(2) Employees are encouraged to advise M/PM/EPM of their interest in such assignments through correspondence or personal visits;

(3) FS and SFS members may indicate their interest in, and their supervisors may comment on their potential for, such

assignments on the completion of Assessment Report (form AID 4-253).

b. M/PM/EPM reviews the files of employees who have indicated an interest in executive positions and who have been identified as having executive potential. Employees judged as having executive potential are kept under active consideration; employees judged not ready for such assignments are counseled regarding their potential (see 39G1).

### 3. External Recruitment

a. If there is not a sufficient number of qualified employees, the Agency may seek external candidates.

b. Applications are reviewed and evaluated by M/PM/EPM (see 39G1). When appropriate, applicants are interviewed and assessed by senior personnel in bureaus or offices offering potential assignments.

c. Qualified applicants who have been identified for positions of a continuing nature are processed by M/PM/EPM.

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## 39H. Appointment to Executive Level Positions

### 1. Overseas Positions

#### a. Foreign Service Act (FSA)

Executives from outside the Foreign Service may be appointed as career candidates under the FSA. However, for an SFS career candidate appointment, the Director, M/PM must certify that there is a need for the person's services and that the skills he/she possesses are not available within the career service. (FS career candidates are processed under Handbook 25, Chapter 5; SFS career candidates are processed under Handbook 25, Supplement 8A.) Non-AID personnel also may be given non career time-limited appointments.

#### b. Foreign Assistance Act (FAA)

Most non career appointments are made under the FAA. Appointments are not made on a time-limited basis. Employees appointed under the FAA serve at the Administrator's discretion and may be terminated at any time with minimal notice.

### 2. AID/Washington Positions

a. Internal and external candidates for non-FS executive positions usually are appointed under the authorities covering

EX, SES, GS, AD, or other FAA statutory positions (see Handbook 25, Chapter 13). When appropriate, FS and SFS appointees may be assigned to these positions.

b. FS-designated positions normally are filled by the reassignment of career and career candidate members or reappointment of former career members (see 39H1a). Other categories of employees may be appointed as provided in statutory and/or Agency procedures. The fact that FS and SFS career candidates must serve overseas two years within the five-year limited appointment periods will be considered when initial assignments in AID/W are approved.

c. FS and SFS non career limited appointments normally are not used for AID/W assignments. The FAA appointment authority may not be used for filling AID/W positions.

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### 39I. Assignments

1. General The FS executive assignment process is carried out on an annual cycle. M/PM/EPM should be advised of anticipated vacancies nine to twelve months in advance so that assignments can be decided within six months of incumbents' expected departure dates. EPAP usually meets in the Fall and assignments approved by the end of the year. When unanticipated vacancies occur or assignment changes are required, M/PM and the bureau(s) or office(s) involved make joint recommendations to the Administrator.

#### 2. Executive Personnel Assignment Panel

##### a. Functions and Membership

EPAP assesses candidates and makes recommendations to the Administrator for appointments/assignments to all FS executive positions. EPAP also considers senior-level training courses or programs. EDAP members include: the Administrator or DA/AID (Chair- person); Assistant Administrators for each Bureau; Assistant to the Administrator for Management; Counselor to the Agency; General Counsel; Directors of the Offices of Legislative Affairs, Personnel Management and Equal Opportunity Programs; Executive Secretary; and Executive Secretary; and, Executive Secretary for EDAP.

##### b. Staff Support

(1) M/PM/EPM provides staff support the Chief serving as Executive Secretary. The Administrator may designate a person to serve as his/her liaison with the executive recruitment and placement processes.

(2) For EPAP meetings, M/PM/EPM:

(a) Consults with bureaus and offices to identify future vacancies and executive level personnel available for assignment;

(b) Clarifies bureau/office/employee assignment preferences;

(c) Reviews and assesses employees' performance files;

(d) Prepares agenda for EPAP meetings showing positions to be filled and candidates recommended for consideration.

(e) Maintains and distributes to EPAP members in advance of meetings biographic summaries for all persons under active consideration. M/PM/EPM considers bureau/office and candidate interests and preferences, but independently assesses candidates' qualifications.

c. EDAP Meetings and Follow-up

(1) Attendance is limited to the designated members and/or their deputies. The DA/AID must approve participation by any other person.

(2) The Executive Secretary records the conclusions reached in the meetings and prepares recommendations by the Decision Memoranda for the Administrator The Administrator's or DA/AID's signature constitutes approval of the proposed assignments or other actions.

(3) Following the signing of the decision memoranda, M/PM/EPM prepares cables to seek formal concurrence of the Ambassador or other appropriate officials for overseas assignments are involved.

(4) The bureau or office involved arranges for swearing-in ceremonies and issuance press releases through the Bureau of External Affairs, as appropriate.

(5) M/PM/EPM notifies persons not placed and arranges for them to be considered for placement through the Foreign Service Assignment Board or other appropriate process.

3. Off-Cycle Assignments

a. Off-cycle assignments, M/PM/EPM consult with staff members of the concerned bureau/office and identifies candidates. When agreement is reached, a decision memorandum is prepared by M/PM/EPM, cleared by the bureaus/offices or other appropriate parties, e.g., Counselor to the Agency, and forwarded to the Administrator for approval.

b. When off-cycle assignments involve changes of p personnel in two or more positions, the Deputy Administrator may call an ad hoc EDAP meeting and may be limit attendance to the

members of the affected bureaus/offices. Follow-up actions are the same as for full meetings.

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#### 39J. Performance Evaluation and Promotions

FS personnel serving in executive positions, including career and non career candidates, are reviewed and evaluated by Selection Boards in accordance with Handbook 25, Chapter 40, Performance Evaluation and Rating Program. Employees appointed under the FAA may be reviewed by the Selection Boards as requested by the Administrator.

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#### 39K. Tours of Duty

1. The standard length of an overseas tour of duty is two years. While it is generally expected that personnel will serve two consecutive tours at the same post, home leave and return-to-post for a second tour must be reviewed by EPAP and approved by the Administrator. Requests to shorten or extend tours by more than three months must be approved by the Administrator. The standard length of an AID/W rotation assignment is three years.

2. M/PM/EPM, in consultation with the interested bureau/office, may approve requests to shorten or to extend a tour for more than three months.

3. Extensions which would result in an employee being continuously assigned overseas for more than three years (unbroken by home leave) must be approved by the Administrator, or designee.

4. FS and SFS members serving in executive positions are subject to the regulations governing home leave, including eligibility requirements and repayment liabilities (see Handbook 27, Chapter 5, Home Leave).

5. If a tour of duty is shortened to less than 24 months solely for the employee's convenience after the employee has taken R&R, the employee is liable for all costs associated with the R&R travel, including travel of dependents (see Handbook 25, Chapter 6, and Handbook 29, App. 1I).

6. FS or SFS member voluntarily resign or retire from AID before completing a full tour of duty overseas may be liable for the



repayment of travel and transportation costs to and/or from the post (see Handbook 30, Chapter 1).

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#### 39L. Compensation

1. Except for the Chairman, DAC, AID executive level personnel are compensated on the basis of their personal rank. However, if appropriate, they may be compensated under the Chief of Mission salary schedule.

2. Salary levels for persons entering the FS and SFS are established as provided in Handbook 25, Chapter 35 and 38.

3. Salary levels for Section 631(b) appointees are recommended by M/PM, based on a review of experience and prior earnings and approved by the Administrator.

4. Career, career candidate and limited SFS employees with reemployment rights to the SES, receive salaries as provided in Handbook 25, Chapter 38 and may be eligible for performance pay. Foreign Service officers and employees appointed under the FAA are not eligible for performance pay.

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#### 39M. Titles and Rank

SFS members are appointed at the personal rank of Counselor, Minister- Counselor or Career Minister. However, this rank does not determine the level of the diplomatic titles and rank, if any, assigned while overseas. Diplomatic titles and ranks for AID employees in executive positions overseas are approved by the Department of State based on the Ambassador's and AID's recommendations (see Handbook 25, Chapter 9).

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#### 39N. Leave, Travel, Allowances and Benefits

1. Leave

a. Executives paid at Chief of Mission class rates, are excluded from leave regulations (5 U.S.C. 6301). They do not accumulate annual, sick or home leave, nor are they charged leave for absences from their position for whatever reason. Approval for a "leave of absence" following the completion of a tour of duty is handled in the same manner as home leave and return-to-post approvals (see 39K).

b. Other personnel in executive positions accumulate and use leave in accordance with Handbook 27.

c. Mission Directors and AID principal officers at post may take leave within the country of assignment at their discretion. The AA of the relevant geographic bureau should be informed by cable of the absence and of the name of the officer in charge during the absence. In cases of leave taken outside the country of assignment, advance approval must be obtained from the bureau AA or head of the independent office.

d. Absence of the Deputy is approved by the Mission Director or the AID principal officer at post.

## 2. Travel

Travel of an incumbent (or acting) Mission Director, and AID principal officers at post outside the country or area (for regional officials) of assignment must be approved in advance by the AA or head of an independent office (see Handbook 22, Appendix 9A, Section 121.3-1a). The approving official shall advise the Administrator and DA/AID of such travel. The Mission Director or principal AID officer at post may approve travel by the deputy director, except for travel incident to a personnel action, home leave or while serving as Acting Director.

## 3. Allowances

a. Executive personnel usually are eligible for the same allowances as other FS members. Certain benefits, e.g., official residence expenses and representation allowance, are of particular relevance to executives overseas (see Handbook 26, Chapter 13, Overseas Allowances and Differentials).

b. Executives whether paid at FS and SFS or Chief of Mission salary rates, are eligible for post differential subject to the Standardized Regulations. Officers who are not member of the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System are not eligible for extra service credit by electing to waive post differential.

## 4. Benefits

a. Career FS and SFS members in executive positions continue to be eligible for all benefits for which otherwise eligible.

b. Non career appointees are eligible for certain benefits e.g., life and health insurance (see Handbook 29 eligibility requirements).

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390. Separation

1. Career FS and SFS members appointed to executive positions retain all the rights of tenure afforded to other FS and SFS members.

2. The conditions of employment afforded to Career Candidate appointees are described in Chapters 35 and 38.

3. Executive personnel appointed under the FAA and non career limited appointees serve at the Administrator's discretion and may be terminated if their services are no longer required.

\*\* END OF SECTION \*\*