

AFSM Areas of Collaboration with PAHO Representatives and Centers: Proposed Activities¹

Background

PAHO has a series of administrative responsibilities with respect to its retirees such as managing health insurance, locating pensioners who did not return their Certificate of Entitlement, informing families of deceased retirees of procedures and forms necessary to ensure the continuity of payments of the corresponding pensions and health insurance. At the country level this responsibility is fulfilled through the PWR Offices and Centers. In the US and Canada, the responsibility lies with SHI and Human Resources (HR) at headquarters. These units assign trained personnel to fulfill these tasks. Before retirement, virtual educational programs are provided by headquarters' Office of Human Resources who supply information and forms to be completed and registered with the appropriate PAHO, WHO and UNJSPF office.

The overall goal for the Association of Former Staff Members PAHO/WHO (AFSM) is to promote fellowship and wellbeing of the membership. We have identified this period between staff and retirement as stressful and we endeavor to support members in this time. Based on AFSM's experience of working with our members in their decisions related to health insurance, pension and on other topics, we share our recommendations to insure a successful transition into retirement and beyond. In addition, AFSM emphasizes the importance of sharing with someone in the family or a trusted individual information relating to the access and account information with PAHO/WHO Health Insurance and the UNJSPF Pension. AFSM is aware of pensioners or beneficiaries who were unable to comply with SHI or UNJSPF requirements who did not share this information. Generally, the family has to resort to time-consuming and costly legal procedures resulting in extensive delays in their reimbursements and a suspension of the monthly pension income until there is a resolution.

Recommendations for Collaborative Activities between AFSM and PAHO Representatives and Centers:

The Association of Former Staff Members of PAHO / WHO (AFSM) proposes for the consideration of PAHO Representatives and Centers a list of activities that could be implemented jointly with the in-country AFSM Focal Point and the PWR liaison for retirees.

1 Draft prepared by the Health and Pension Committee AFSM PAHO/WHO 3/23

1. Ensure that all staff members about to retire are offered the opportunity to participate in orientation meetings which cover important aspects of health, pension and other topics critical to be considered at the time of separation from PAHO.
2. Provide assistance and information on SHI changes to retirees and spouses with online Health Insurance (SHI) procedures, include them in health care agreements with national clinics and hospitals, and keep them informed.
3. Facilitate sending important documents through the *pouch*, especially where postal services are deficient. We suggest the possibility of negotiating with UNDP to use their pouch to send the CEs directly to UN/UNJSPF New York.
4. Assist retiree beneficiaries, fragile retirees, those with cognitive disabilities or IT difficulties with Health Insurance and Pension Fund, UNJSPF matters.
5. Annually update the list of retirees, spouses and dependents in the country and their important contact information.
6. Invite former staff and/or spouses to educational, cultural, social and technical programs offered by the PAHO Office.
7. Collaborate with survivors or designated representatives in navigating the necessary documentation needed when a member or spouse dies.