



## Guideline for handling the work environment within the presidium and the board

Adopted by the board 23-05-11

Translation approved by the board 23-06-04

### Purpose

The purpose of the guideline for handling the work environment within the presidium and the board is to describe and regulate how the board and the presidium handle the work environment of the presidium and the board, and to describe how the board works with its employer responsibility towards the presidium. The guideline therefore intends to guide the board in its work since they have employer responsibility over those remunerated in the union.

### Objective

The union strives to have a sustainable work environment for the three full-timers within the presidium as well as for the five members of the board. This is carried out through systematic work environment management, which the board is responsible for in cooperation and in consultation with the presidium. Maintaining a sustainable work environment for the presidium is implemented by having strong routines that create opportunities for an open climate for conversations about the presidium's work environment and systems that enable recovery. It is also implemented through clear guidelines for action in the event of a presidium's failure to carry out its duties. The purpose of this guideline is thus to clarify these routines and map the board's and the presidium's internal work with work environment and employer responsibility, thus clarifying the division of responsibilities and mandates of different people in the organization.

### Work environment and employer responsibility

Employer responsibility means, among other things, that the employer is responsible for the work environment for staff. This means that the employer is responsible for ensuring that work can be carried out without the risk of ill health and accidents. The employer must create the conditions for staff to know about risks and how these are avoided<sup>1</sup>. HTS believes that the paid full-timers' working conditions should follow the standard for employees in relation to the work environment, despite the fact that the full-timers in the formal sense should not be equated with employees. It is the board's responsibility to ensure that the student union complies with the Work Environment Act (1977:1160) in relation to the remunerated persons in the business. The union must therefore relate to current legislation, such as the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.av.se/arbetsmiljoarbete-och-inspektioner/arbetsgivarens-ansvar-for-arbetsmiljon/>

Work Environment Act and internal documents that regulate work environment issues. Work environment includes physical, organizational, and social work environment.

### **Systematic work environment management**

Systematic work environment management involves investigating, implementing and following up activities to prevent accidents and ill health. This means continuously working with the work environment in the organization. Since the union aims to be a sustainable workplace for the remunerated persons, systematic work with the work environment must be carried out continuously, and responsibility for this lies with the board. This refers to work with psychosocial, organizational and physical work environment. The aim is that the work carried out by the unions' remunerated persons is efficient, effective and purposeful. Goals for the activities are set by the unions' representative assembly. The conditions under which the full-timers work is described in the remuneration agreements. Remuneration agreements for the following year's presidials and other remuneration are drawn up by the current president. The remuneration agreement must be approved by the remaining sitting presidium before it is signed.

### **Proactive measures**

This paragraph describes the unions' proactive work and actions that will contribute to a healthy work environment at the union. These measures shall be carried out routinely each operational year. The section is divided between the presidium, the board and joint actions to clarify how the work is to be carried out.

#### **Presidium:**

- Must have meetings with their designated contact person in the board.
- Must record their working hours.
- Must submit their hourly report to each board meeting to increase transparency in the presidium's work environment.
- Shall, to the extent possible, participate in crisis training for student unions.
- Should create an internal division of responsibilities for the presidium's joint work on health and safety at work.
- Should have regular joint work environment check-ins.
- Encouraged to have regular contact with our student chaplain for proactive purposes, for example before stressful work periods.
- Encouraged to take compensatory leave to pursue the hourly goals HTS has for the full-timers.
- Are encouraged to use their wellness allowance in accordance with the Swedish Tax Agency's recommendations.

#### **Board:**

- Shall take part of the presidium's calendars and working time records.
- Must be aware of the presidium's work environment.
- Should participate in training with the student chaplains regarding difficult conversations and crisis management.

- Should participate in the consultancy assignments carried out with the psychologist consultations when these focus on the work environment.

**Joint actions of the presidium and the board:**

- The presidium and the board shall have a clear division of responsibilities.
- At the meetings of the board, the presidium and the board shall have an item in the agenda where the presidium updates the board on their work.
- The presidium and the board may carry out semester-by-semester joint consulting assignments with psychology students.

**Reactive measures**

This section describes the actions that the presidium and the board can jointly implement when efforts need to be made to intervene in the presidium's work environment, when the presidium needs to make changes to ensure psychosocial or physical health. These measures do not require official decisions but should be implemented primarily by agreement between the board and the presidium. The board therefore has the right to convene meetings with individual presidials or the entire board to discuss and determine reactive measures to implement as needed. For this to happen, the presidium must be aware of the responsibility and mandate of the board in demanding action from individual presidials or the presidium as a whole to change the work situation.

**Presidium and board:**

- may, in negotiations, make changes to the work situation of the presidium
- can send the presidial to primary care or student health for a health check
- shall have the right to access any health check statement
- may request the presidium's sick leave in accordance with a medical opinion
- can suspend the presidium if it refuses to undergo a health check
- can temporarily remunerate extra administrative assistance

**Extra remunerated administrative assistance**

In order to facilitate the work situation of the presidium, the union has a reserve fund which can be used for extra administrative assistance. The reserve fund is regulated by the economic policy. The account reserve and temporary administrative assistance should only be used in extraordinary cases, and not to cover up in cases where the objectives of the union have been overly ambitious. Examples are in the event of illness, burnout, that the union needs extra human capital resources to handle one or more resource-intensive student matters or when the union's financial management is at risk.

**Routines for sick leave**

When a remunerated person is absent as a result of illness, this is handled in different ways depending on the time extent of the illness. On days 1-14 (calculated in calendar days), the union pays the ordinary fee to the absentee, since the union's remuneration agreement specifies that the union must also pay the 20% that is usually deducted during sick-leave. HTS does not require a medical certificate from day 8 for payment of fees. From day 15 onwards, HTS must contact the Swedish Social Insurance Agency for sick reporting, and so must the sick individual. The Swedish Social Insurance Agency then makes an

assessment for each individual case regarding the need for sick leave. In order to be able to carry out this and receive compensation, a medical certificate is required. A presidial may be on part-time sick leave, and the compensation paid by the Social Insurance Agency in such cases is based on the authority's assessment. HTS always reimburses any reductions in income in relation to the degree to which a remunerated person is on sick leave. Thus, it is HTS's responsibility to report sick to a remunerated person from day 15 in order to provide the opportunity for sick leave with compensation from the Swedish Social Insurance Agency. In such cases, HTS will only pay for any differences in fees that arise between this remuneration and the ordinary fee.

Since the student union has limited experience and competence in issues relating to sick leave and compensation, we strongly recommend contacting the Swedish Social Insurance Agency as soon as the union is to handle a longer absence as a result of illness. The Swedish Social Insurance Agency's guidelines for handling sick employees are added as footnotes below.<sup>2</sup>

With regard to the novice admiral, which is a remunerated post 3 months per operational year, it is the board's responsibility and mandate to decide on courses of action in the event of longer absences.

### **Measures taken by the organisation in the event of sick leave**

This section is intended to be indicative of what routines and measures the organisation has for sick leave of a presidial. These situations will always involve individual assessments based on the situation and the needs of the organization, but the starting point should always be that other presidials and active members should not be overloaded when a gap arises in the business due to sick leave. If a presidial is overworked, the matter shall be dealt with in accordance with the established order of succession. The presidium is also obliged to establish, at the beginning of its term of office, an order of priority for its respective ordinary tasks that clarifies the presidium's tasks and the importance of each task. The aim of the order of priority is to transfer two-thirds of the duties of the individual on sick leave to the remaining presidials and the board, and to delete one-third of the tasks. The list of priorities should be updated continuously during the year of operation.

If a presidial is on sick leave, the following three steps shall be followed by the board and the presidium.

- 1) Delete tasks for all three presidiums according to a previously written priority list.
- 2) Divide the remaining tasks between the remaining two presidials and the board.
- 3) Make sure that the two who are not on sick leave continue to work 40h/week and no more.
- 4) Ensure that the board continues to work for a maximum of half a working day/week and no more.

Overworked presidials should also be encouraged to visit the health center for a medical opinion. The board has the right to order the presidial to primary care for medical opinion, and if not, they have the right to suspend the presidial from work. Suspension includes the presidial losing access to the office and emails. The presidial shall also be excluded from meetings and not included in the remaining union work.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.forsakringskassan.se/arbetsgivare/sjukdom-och-skada/sjuk-medarbetare-dag-1-90>  
<https://www.forsakringskassan.se/arbetsgivare/sjukdom-och-skada/sjuk-medarbetare-fran-dag-91>

If the situation has not improved significantly after a period of time, a discussion shall take place between the presidium and the board to discuss a solution from the perspective of the presidium and the board, as well as a statement from an appropriate care facility. During periods of sick leave by the Presidial, HTS may bring in a remunerated substitute for administrative assistance for the rest of the presidium, for a maximum period of three months. This fee shall be paid from the reserve fund. If a continuous absence of sick presidial lasts longer than three months, by-elections should take place.

### **Handling of possible return to work for the presidium on sick leave**

The board and the presidium are obliged to have continuous discussions with the person on sick leave regarding possible measures that HTS can implement to enable the return to work gradually for the sick person. A presidial may return to his or her duties upon request with the approval of the board and with regard to any sick leave and compensation decided on by the Swedish Social Insurance Agency.

### **Physical work environment of the presidium**

The physical work environment for the presidium and the board includes the unions premises. The presidium has access to a shared office, the union's meeting room and a room that is also used by the union's active members. The work of the Presidium mainly involves office work, which places demands on the physical work environment. In order for office work to be sustainable, it is required that the union's premises have good ventilation and follow the Swedish Work Environment Authority's recommendations for temperature<sup>3</sup>. If this is not achieved, Akademiska Hus as the landlord of the union's premises has an obligation to handle it. The union has a responsibility to maintain a sustainable physical work environment by providing office furniture that allows for good ergonomics as well as electronic equipment that enables the presidium to carry out high-quality work. This can include ergonomic office chairs, desks with the ability to stand and work as well as laptops as well as external monitors with associated keyboard and a computer mouse. The presidium may also work from places other than the HTS office if this is possible in view of their work tasks and as long as this is communicated to the rest of the presidium. If an activity is financed by the student union, it should be counted as working time for those remunerated. The presidium's duties are regulated by the regulations, as well as by the decisions made by the board and the representative assembly. To help those who work for the union to maintain a healthy life during their involvement, HTS has funds for the maintenance of good health. The compensation for wellness is regulated by the remuneration agreement. What is reimbursed is regulated by the Swedish Tax Agency's regulations.<sup>4</sup>

### **The board's role in the work environment management for the presidium**

The board is the employer of the presidium. The board thus has certain obligations to the presidium, and should be held accountable by the representative assembly if they fail to live up to these obligations. The board, in consultation with the presidium, has a responsibility to control the presidium's workload so that it does not become excessive. Thus, it is obliged of the board to have responsibility for the work

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.av.se/inomhusmiljo/temperatur-och-klimat/> (retrieved 30/03/23)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.skatteverket.se/privat/skatter/arbeteochinkomst/formaner/personalvardmotionochfriskvard.4.7459477810d5bcccdd4800014540.html?q=personalv%C3%A5rd> (revenuegetad 11/03/21)

environment and health for the full-timers within the business. The board and the presidium shall systematically plan, lead and control activities in a way that leads to the work environment fulfilling the aforementioned objective of a good work environment. The board shall investigate occupational injuries, continuously investigate the risks in the organization and take the necessary measures. Measures that cannot be taken immediately shall be scheduled. The board shall, to the extent required by the activities, document the work environment and the work with it. To this end, action plans shall be drawn up.

### **Contact persons for the presidium**

The board and the presidium shall initially appoint a contact person for each presidial for the operational year. This is done by the board proposing a division of contact persons, which the board and the presidium then decide on during a board meeting based on the board's proposal. A training course focusing on handling difficult conversations and dealing with difficult information will be arranged in close connection with when the contact persons are decided on by the board, in cooperation with the student chaplains. The contact person for each presidial shall be a member of the board.

The purpose of the contact person is for the presidial to have a confidential person on the board who can act as a sounding board and support in case of irritations and also keep regular conversations about the work environment. This means that the board member has a special responsibility to implement both the proactive measures listed above in consultation with the presidium. The board member also has a responsibility to ensure that action is taken if they becomes aware that the presidium is experiencing problems with their work environment, or is experiencing other problems that affect their ability to perform their work.

The discussions between the contact person and the presidial take place in confidence between the two, in order to create an opportunity for the presidium to ventilate according to their needs. However, it is also important to have a common forum for the contact persons. The purpose of the forum is both the exchange of experiences of routines, as well as the opportunity to vent tough situations that may arise. It should also be a forum for strengthening the mandate the board feels in taking action in the event of problems in the work environment for the presidial for which the member is the contact person. The inspector may also be invited to this forum if necessary. In order for the entire board to be able to have insight into the work environment of the presidials, the contact persons shall, on demand, report to other board members, as well as to other presidials. This must always be done with regard to personal integrity.