



THE PROTECTION SURGE CAPACITY PROJECT

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE
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Answers to Frequently Asked Questions For SURGE Roster Applicants and Members

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS DO I NEED TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE SURGE ROSTER?

Doing protection is a function of knowing the framework well, of being trained to work with it sensitively and effectively, and having staff with the requisite skills and level to be authoritative and convincing.

The minimum requirements to be considered for the Protection SURGE Roster are as follows:

- Two-years of hands-on experience in refugee protection or legal work on behalf of refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people or other persons of concern;
- A university degree, preferably in law, international law or human rights;
- Excellent knowledge of the international legal framework governing refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people and/or stateless persons;
- Fluency in English and/or French.

The following qualifications will be considered as assets:

- Previous UNHCR experience in a protection capacity;
- Extensive field experience;
- Excellent interviewing and drafting skills;
- Fluency in other relevant languages and UN official languages other than English and French.

HOW DO I APPLY TO BECOME A SURGE ROSTER MEMBER? IS THERE A DEADLINE TO APPLY?

Recruitment for the Surge Roster is ongoing, so there is no deadline to apply. Applicants may email or post their CV/résumé and cover letter to International Rescue Committee; Geneva@theirc.org; 7 Rue J. A. Gautier; CH-1201, Geneva, Switzerland; Attention: Human Resources Coordinator.

An acknowledgement of receipt will be sent by e-mail. However, after the acknowledgement, applicants will be contacted **ONLY** if selected as a candidate for the Surge Roster, at which time they will be notified by the Surge project team to start the recruitment process. We do not have the resources to follow-up individually with each applicant.

IF I MEET ALL MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS, WILL I AUTOMATICALLY BE CONTACTED?

No. Due to the high degree of interest in the Surge project and the volume of applications submitted, the project is not able to move forward with all applicants meeting the minimum requirements.

IF AM NOT SELECTED AS A CANDIDATE, CAN I REAPPLY FOR THE SURGE ROSTER AT A LATER DATE?

All applications will remain on file and applicants may be contacted at a later date. If applicants gain additional protection experience, we encourage them to reapply so that all of their skills and experience can be considered.

HOW DOES THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS WORK?

All candidates undergo the same recruitment process:

1. **The Protection Competency Written Assessment** – Candidates will be asked to schedule a written assessment to assess their protection knowledge, skills and attitude.
2. **Reference Checks** – Candidates will be asked to forward a signed “Authorization to Check References” form along with the contact details for 35 references, preferably current or former direct supervisors. Candidates will need to provide the following for each reference: reference name, relationship, address, telephone number, and email address.
3. **General and Protection Oral Assessment** – Following the completion of the PCA, candidates may be contacted by a Surge project member to schedule a telephone interview.
4. **Approval by IRC and submission to UNHCR**
5. **Approval by UNHCR’s Department of International Protection (Consultancy Panel)** - If approved by the panel, a candidates would then become a Surge Roster Member.

HOW LONG DOES THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS TAKE?

The Surge recruitment process can take from several weeks to several months to complete.

IF I BECOME A SURGE ROSTER MEMBER, WHAT IS REQUIRED OF ME?

Roster Members should keep the Surge project team informed of their interest in and availability for Surge deployments. It is also valuable for Roster Members to identify any preference in deployment location and the type of protection work they are most interested in. The Surge team requests that Roster Members report any contact details changes, e.g. telephone, email, address, etc.

HOW DOES THE SURGE DEPLOYMENT PROCESS WORK?

Surge Roster Members are not guaranteed a deployment, but they may be considered for deployments for which they qualify for should they be interested in and available for the deployment.

Once a deployment request is made from a UNHCR country office it must be approved by the UNHCR Department of International Protection. Approved requests are forwarded to the IRC and the Surge team begins contacting Roster Members whose skills and experience complement the specific position. A final shortlist of qualified and available Surge Roster Members is submitted by the IRC to UNHCR. Ultimately the requesting UNHCR office is responsible for selecting the Roster

Member they would like to be deployed. The selection process can take from one day to several weeks.

We strongly encourage Roster Members to only put their names forward for shortlists if they are sincerely interested and available should they be selected. It is not good for the project, the UNHCR requesting office, or the Roster Members themselves if they are unable to accept an offer if they have been selected.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I AM SELECTED FOR A DEPLOYMENT?

Once informed of the UNHCR selection, the IRC hires the Roster Member and begins coordinating the deployment. An orientation package is sent via DHL, which contains the IRC hire letter, employment and benefits forms, and information about the IRC, the Surge Project and the assignment.

The IRC and UNHCR project team immediately starts planning a 2-3 day orientation in Geneva, then deployment to the field. The turnaround time from submission of the shortlist to bringing the Roster Member to Geneva for orientation and deployment to the field is typically 3 to 5 weeks. However the time frame can vary.

HOW LONG ARE DEPLOYMENTS FOR?

The length of deployments may fluctuate according to needs in the field. Most Surge deployments are initially for six months, but are frequently extended for an additional 4 to 5 months. All deployments are capped at a maximum of eleven months in any given location. Roster Members may be redeployed to other countries after debriefing (see below).

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THE END OF A DEPLOYMENT?

At the end of a deployment, the Surge team will arrange for Roster Member's departure from the field, a 1-2 day debriefing in Geneva, and repatriation to their home of record.

WILL I BE REDEPLOYED?

There is no guarantee that a Roster Member will be redeployed following the completion of a deployment. However, Roster Members who have successfully completed one deployment, and are in good standing with the IRC and UNHCR, have been very successful in being selected for redeployment to other locations. In fact, the percentage of Surge Roster Member's completing multiple deployments is high and growing.

WHAT IS THE STATUS OF SURGE ROSTER MEMBERS DEPLOYED AS UNHCR PROTECTION OFFICERS?

Deployed Surge Roster Members have dual employment status as IRC international employees and UN Consultants (Experts on Mission), with Nil consultancy contacts. As IRC international staff, the IRC administers salary and benefits through IRC Headquarters, the IRC Geneva office, and when necessary, IRC field offices.

WHAT DOES IRC'S EMPLOYMENT-AT-WILL POLICY MEAN?

Employment-at-will means that either a Deployed Roster Member or the IRC may terminate employment at any time, for any reason, with or without cause or notice.

HOW MUCH CAN DEPLOYED ROSTER MEMBERS EXPECT TO EARN?

Deployed Surge Roster Members can expect to earn \$3,000 USD per month. Additionally, Surge staff members receive a comprehensive employment package.

WHAT DOES THE IRC'S SURGE EMPLOYMENT PACKAGE INCLUDE?

The IRC's Surge employment package includes: a housing allowance, comprehensive health, disability and life insurance, transportation to Geneva for orientation, to assignment and return to country of record, baggage up to 60 kilograms (total), 1.25 sick days per month, and 1.5 days vacation leave accrual per month.

ARE DEPLOYED MEMBERS ELIGIBLE FOR LOCATION DIFFERENTIALS?

In some countries, where applicable, Deployed Surge Members receive a location differential (the amount varies and depends on the country). Location differentials are based on UN indexes and are designed to create a monetary balance for persons living and working in locations where the cost of living is high.

WHAT IS UNHCR'S MARS/VARI SCHEME AND ARE DEPLOYED MEMBERS ELIGIBLE?

MARS/VARI is similar to R & R schemes. In accordance with UNHCR policies, MARS (Mandatory Absence for Relief of Stress) and VARI (voluntary Absence for the Relief of Isolation) are intended for staff members working in extremely stressful, insecure, or isolated locations. Therefore not all locations are eligible. If located somewhere that is eligible, at regular intervals Deployed Roster Members are given five working days off, transportation expenses (depending on where the selected location is), and a living allowance. The IRC will reimburse the transportation and living allowance upon submission of an approved MARS/VARI authorization form.