

PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM

TO : Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Department,
Chief Administrator, Tobago House of Assembly
and Heads of Statutory Authorities subject to the
Statutory Authorities Act

FROM : Chief Personnel Officer

DATE : November 8, 2006

SUBJECT : *Arrangements relating to the UNIMED Group Health Plans
(monthly paid and daily-rated):*

As you are aware, a contributory Group Health Plan referred to as the UNIMED Plan was implemented with effect from January 1, 2001 for hourly, daily and weekly rated employees of Central Government, Regional Corporations, the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) and Statutory Authorities in respect of whom the Chief Personnel Officer is deemed to be the Employer. Subsequently, with effect from April 1, 2004, a Group Health Plan was introduced for monthly paid officers in the Civil Service, the Tobago House of Assembly and in Statutory Authorities subject to the Statutory Authorities Act for which the Public Services Association is the appropriate recognized association. This latter Plan, referred to as the UNIMED Plan (monthly paid), was extended to Teachers with effect from January 1, 2005.

2. You were informed that under the terms of the Agreements, the following employees/officers are eligible for membership in the Plans: -

- (i) daily-rated workers who are permanent and regular workers with two (2) years effective service;
- (ii) monthly-paid officers holding permanent appointments to pensionable offices in the Civil/Teaching Service, the THA and in those Statutory Authorities referred in paragraph 1 above;
- (iii) monthly-paid officers in the Services/organizations referred to at (ii) above holding temporary appointments, with two (2) or more years continuous service as at April 1, 2004, and in respect of Teachers, as at January 1, 2005; and

- (iv) monthly-paid officers in the Services/organizations referred to (ii) above holding temporary appointments, upon completion of two (2) years continuous service.

3. It has come to my attention that officers who qualify for membership in the Plan (monthly paid) while employed in the Civil Service and are appointed/transferred to the Teaching Service and vice versa are being advised that on transfer/appointment they do not qualify for membership in that Plan since they have not yet served the required two (2) years in the particular Service. Consequently, no contributions are being deducted from the salaries of the affected officers and deposited to the UNIMED Plan (monthly paid).

4. I am informed also that similar action is being taken in respect of daily-rated workers who are members of the UNIMED Plan (daily-rated) when they are given appointments in monthly paid positions in the Civil/Teaching Service.

5. I wish to clarify that once a monthly paid officer or daily rated worker becomes a member of the UNIMED Group Health Plans (monthly paid or daily rated) by virtue of his/her having met the relevant requirements at paragraph 2 above, he/she shall not be required to serve another qualifying period on temporary transfer/appointment to another Service **provided there is no break in service**. In the case of a permanent appointment, the employee will automatically qualify as stated in paragraph 2 above. Consequently, in the case of a monthly paid officer, monthly deductions should continue to be made from the employee's salary into the UNIMED Plan (monthly paid) to ensure no break in coverage in the Plan, and to enable the employee concerned to submit claims under this Plan. A daily rated worker who is given a temporary appointment in a monthly paid office is required to make contributions to the UNIMED Plan (**monthly paid**), until such time that that appointment comes to an end. Deductions should be made from his/her salary for the month in which he/she assumed duty. Upon reverting to his/her daily rated position, deductions should be made to the UNIMED Plan (daily rated) at the appropriate rate.

6. Medical claims which are "late" as a result of the circumstances described in this Circular Memorandum may be submitted by affected individuals for processing in the normal manner and should be accompanied by a letter to be endorsed by you explaining the reasons for the late submission.

7. Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Department, Chief Administrator, Tobago House of Assembly and Heads of Statutory Authorities are requested to ensure that in respect of any employee involved, deductions of contributions from his/her salary as well as the Employer's contribution commence immediately and that all arrears of contributions of both the employee and the Employer are met.

8. As a reminder, the full rates of contribution are as follows:-

- **Daily Rated**
\$26 per fortnight

- **Monthly Paid**
For the period April 01, 2004 - \$52 per month
to May 31, 2006

- With effect from June 01, 2006 - \$90 per month

The contribution is to be shared equally between the Employer and the employee: the cost to each party being \$13 per fortnight and \$26/45 per month in respect of the periods above.

9. The contents of this Circular Memorandum should also be brought to the attention of all officers in your organization, particularly those assigned the responsibility for the administration of the UNIMED Plans (monthly paid and daily rated).


Narieman Hosein-Ahmad
Chief Personnel Officer.