Received a redundancy letter: checklist

What to check, what to ask for and what to collect

For expats, highly skilled migrants and other international employees in the Netherlands. A letter saying that your position will lapse or that you are redundant (boventallig) is not yet a dismissal. Do not resign yourself and do not sign anything under pressure: if you resign, you risk losing your unemployment benefit (WW).

1. The letter and the reason

☐ Does the letter state which positions lapse and why? With an economic reason, positions must necessarily lapse, viewed over a period of at least 26 weeks (article 7:669(3)(a) Dutch Civil Code).

☐ Have you asked for the substantiation, for example the reorganisation plan?

☐ Has your position really lapsed, or does the same work continue under another job title?

☐ Do you know whether your employer asks permission from UWV, or from a committee appointed in the collective agreement (article 7:671a(1) and (2) Dutch Civil Code)?

☐ Are you offered a settlement agreement (*vaststellingsovereenkomst*, VSO)? Then no UWV permission is needed. You can negotiate, and after signing you have a reflection period of 14 days, or 3 weeks if the agreement does not mention this right (article 7:670b Dutch Civil Code).

2. Selection (proportionality principle)

☐ Which positions are interchangeable with yours? The employer chooses who becomes redundant per group of interchangeable positions (article 11 Dismissal Regulations).

☐ Which age group are you in: 15–25, 25–35, 35–45, 45–55 or 55 and older?

☐ Within your age group, does the employee with the shortest length of service become redundant first (article 11 Dismissal Regulations)?

☐ Have you asked for an overview of the interchangeable positions, with the age and start date of each employee?

☐ Does your collective agreement have its own dismissal order, set by a committee under the collective agreement (article 7:669(6) Dutch Civil Code)?

3. Temporary staff first

☐ Do agency workers, on-call workers or people on a fixed-term contract work in the positions that lapse? UWV only gives permission once the employer has ended those relationships first (article 7:671a(5) Dutch Civil Code).

☐ Have you asked whether that has already happened?

4. Redeployment

☐ Has your employer investigated whether you can work in another suitable position within a reasonable period, if necessary with training (article 7:669(1) Dutch Civil Code)?

☐ Have you asked for an overview of the vacancies?

☐ Have you said in writing which positions you are interested in?

☐ Have you been offered another position? Have it assessed for suitability before you respond.

5. Social plan and collective agreement

☐ Is there a social plan or a collective agreement scheme for this reorganisation? Ask for a copy, and for an English explanation if it is in Dutch.

☐ Which payments, support or other arrangements does it contain, and do they apply to you?

☐ Does it contain a deadline within which you must choose or respond?

6. Defence at UWV

☐ Has UWV sent you a letter about the dismissal application? Respond within the period UWV states in that letter. UWV writes in Dutch: have the letter explained to you in time.

☐ Does your defence use the points from this checklist: the reason, the selection, the temporary staff and redeployment?

☐ Have your defence read before you submit it.

7. Prohibition of notice

☐ Are you ill? During the first 2 years of illness a prohibition of notice (*opzegverbod*) applies, and during a prohibition of notice UWV does not give permission (article 7:670 and article 7:671a(11) Dutch Civil Code).

☐ Are you pregnant or on maternity leave, a member of the works council, or does another prohibition of notice apply (article 7:670 Dutch Civil Code)? Note: there is an exception when the business activities end (article 7:670a(2) Dutch Civil Code).

☐ Are you ill and offered a settlement agreement? Being ill when your employment ends can affect your WW and your sickness benefit (*Ziektewet*). Have this checked before you sign.

8. Deadlines

☐ Do you know your notice period? For the employer: less than 5 years of service 1 month, 5 to 10 years 2 months, 10 to 15 years 3 months, 15 years or more 4 months (article 7:672(2) Dutch Civil Code). Notice is given to the end of the month (paragraph 1).

☐ After UWV permission the employer may shorten the notice period by the length of the procedure, but at least 1 month remains (article 7:672(6) Dutch Civil Code). The permission is valid for 4 weeks (article 7:671a(6) Dutch Civil Code).

☐ Does your employment, also with a settlement agreement, not end before the end of the notice period? Otherwise you receive no WW for that period (article 19 Unemployment Insurance Act).

☐ No transition payment (*transitievergoeding*) after a dismissal with UWV permission? A request to the subdistrict court (*kantonrechter*) must be made within 3 months after the end of your employment (article 7:686a(4)(b) Dutch Civil Code).

☐ Is the same work done by someone else within 26 weeks after your dismissal? Then your employer should first have given you the opportunity to return (article 7:681(1)(d) Dutch Civil Code).

9. What to collect

☐ The redundancy letter, and the emails and notes of meetings about it

☐ Your employment contract and any amendments

☐ The collective agreement (*cao*) and the staff regulations

☐ The social plan, if there is one

☐ Your payslips and your most recent annual statement

☐ Your job description and appraisals

☐ The overview of interchangeable positions, the selection and the vacancies

☐ A timeline: when did you hear what, and from whom?

Privacy: do not forward confidential company documents to your private email. Note what exists and ask for it.

10. Points for international employees

☐ Does your residence permit depend on your job? Your search period (*zoekperiode*) starts on the day your employment contract ends: 3 months for a highly skilled migrant; for an EU Blue Card holder 3 months, or 6 months after at least 2 years with the Blue Card in the Netherlands. Ask how the route (UWV, court or settlement agreement) and the end date affect your permit.

☐ Are you an EU/EEA citizen? After at least 1 year of work your right of residence as a worker continues after involuntary unemployment if you register with UWV as a jobseeker (article 8.12(2) Aliens Decree 2000).

☐ Do you know that WW is not on the IND list of benefits from public funds, but that social assistance (*bijstand*) is and can affect your residence?

☐ Do you have the 30% ruling? It can continue if you start with a new employer within 3 months, and the application must be made within 4 months after you start there. Ask a tax adviser about your case.

☐ Does your contract contain a repayment clause for relocation costs or a sign-on bonus? Ask whether the social plan or a settlement agreement waives it.

☐ Does your employer provide or pay for your housing? Find out until when you can stay and what happens to the deposit.

☐ Does the residence of your partner or children depend on yours? Include them in your planning.

Next step

Can you not tick several points, or does the selection not add up? Have the letter assessed before you respond or sign anything. We assess your situation for free and without obligation, and also look at your residence permit and the 30% ruling.

The first consultation is free and without obligation. Your employer often pays the costs of further legal assistance.

Free review of your situation: +31 85 4016 014 · www.vanleeuwenbos.nl/en/settlement-agreement/free-settlement-agreement-check/

Disclaimer

This document is general information under Dutch law, last updated on 28 November 2026. It is not legal advice and no rights can be derived from it. Every situation is different; have your own situation assessed. For the consequences for your residence permit we advise on the points we can and refer you to an immigration lawyer where needed.