

Paramedic settles High Court action against HSE over suspension

Worker had claimed sanction arose due to his participation in 2018 industrial action

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A settlement has been reached in an action taken against the HSE by a paramedic who was suspended from work more than three years ago. Photograph: The Irish Times

A settlement has been reached in an action taken against the Health Service Executive by a paramedic who was suspended from work more than three years ago, the High Court has heard.

The court was told the sanction arose from his involvement in an industrial dispute, which the HSE allegedly said was not authorised.

When the case first came before the High Court on an ex-parte basis in February, the HSE was ordered to halt a disciplinary hearing that was due to start days later. When the case returned before the court this week, counsel said the matter had been settled and could be struck out, with the advanced paramedic's legal costs to be paid by the HSE.

The worker had claimed his suspension arose from his participation in an October 2018 industrial action authorised by his trade union, the Ambulance Service Representative Association, which is a branch of the Psychiatric Nurses Association.

Responding to calls

The worker claimed he joined the dispute with his fellow union members and “at all material times” worked within the confinements of the industrial action. He claimed he “at no stage” refused to respond to calls and would “never have put anyone’s health or welfare at risk”.

The work-to-rule action involved standing down vehicles that do not comply with the daily inspections or with health and safety legislation and various other safety conditions, he said.

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The employee said he was surprised when a HSE report into the allegations against him allegedly made a finding that there had been no authorised industrial action on the dates concerned. The finding was made without the matter having been put to him by the investigator, he claimed.