



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta, Acmhainní Daonna

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhísí Sláinte

Ospidéal Dr. Steevens'

Baile Átha Cliath 8

Office of the National Director of Human Resources

Health Service Executive

Dr. Steevens' Hospital

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MEMORANDUM

To: Chief Executive Officer
Each National Director
Each Assistant National Director HR
Each Hospital Group CEO
Each Hospital Group Director of HR
Each Chief Officer CHO
Each Head of HR CHO
Each CEO Section 38 Agencies
Each HR Manager Section 38 Agencies
Each Employee Relations Manager
Each Group Director of Nursing & Midwifery
Each Group Director of Midwifery
Each Clinical Director

From: Anne Marie Hoey, National Director Human Resources

Date: 20th October 2020

Re: HR Memo re Attendance in the work premises during COVID-19

Dear Colleagues

Following the Government announcement on moving to [Level 5](#) restrictions at midnight on Wednesday 21 October, I wish to highlight the provisions in [Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19](#) and [HSE HR Circular 60/2020](#) in relation to attendance in the work premises during COVID-19. As previously outlined, within the Resilience and Recovery Plan there is a Framework for Restrictive Measures with five levels and the employer must determine the essential roles which require staff to attend the workplace throughout the levels, taking into account the differing requirements at each level.

The Resilience and Recovery Plan identifies many public services as being essential during COVID-19 and the provision of public health services continues to be a priority

during this time. In this context, public health service employees are required to return to the employer’s work premises when and as necessary and deemed appropriate by their employer, having regard to the Framework for Restrictive Measures (see table below).

The Framework also provides for working from home (WFH) arrangements to continue where possible. Working from home arrangements should continue as and when deemed appropriate by the employer, having regard to the current COVID-19 restrictions and service needs. Home working must be balanced with the requirement to continue to provide the most effective and efficient services to the public.

| Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 | Level 5 |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Work from home if possible. Attend work for specific business requirements and on a staggered attendance basis. | Work from home if possible. Only attend work for essential on-site meetings, inductions and training. | Work from home unless absolutely necessary to attend in person. | Only essential or other designated workers should go to work. | Work from home <u>unless it is for working in health, social care or other essential service and cannot be done from home.</u> |

As outlined in my previous memorandum dated 10 September, health care is an essential service and it is vital that public health service employers determine which roles require physical attendance by staff at the workplace. Employers should also determine which roles are suitable for home working during this time and continue to facilitate WFH arrangements where appropriate.

In the case of employees whose roles require their physical presence in the work premises, employers must ensure that all workplaces have implemented robust return to workplace procedures and that all procedures comply with the Return to Work Safely Protocol. The HSE’s approach to the implementation of this Protocol can be found [here](#). The National Health and Safety Function (NHSF) also has a range of supports and guidance to managers and workers with regarding to working safely during the pandemic which can be found [here](#). The latest HSE Occupational Health guidance documents for COVID-19 are available [here](#).

All employees have a critical role in ensuring that the procedures of the Protocol are followed to suppress COVID-19 in their workplace. It is incumbent on all employees whose physical attendance at the workplace is required to fully comply with their organisation’s COVID-19 response plan. Cooperation between employees, the lead worker representative(s) and the employer are fundamental to ensuring that the measures are adhered to.

It is important to note that any working from home arrangements that are in place due to COVID-19 are temporary and should be kept under review in line with the provisions of the Resilience and Recovery Plan. Please refer to the **HSE Policy on Public Health Service Employees Working from Home during COVID-19** which is available [here](#).

The purpose of this policy is to:

- support the health and wellbeing of health service employees temporarily working from home during COVID-19
- ensure effective performance management and employee engagement
- ensure that all employees are following good practice when working from home
- support the effective delivery of high quality services

Please ensure that this memorandum is brought to the attention of managers within your area of responsibility.

Queries

Queries from individual employees or managers should be referred to local HR/Employee Relations Departments. Please note that the National HR Helpdesk is also available to take queries from employees on 1850 444 925 or ask.hr@hse.ie

Queries on the occupational safety and health implications of the Return to Work Safely Protocol should be referred to the National Health and Safety Function, <http://pndchssdweb02.healthirl.net/Health.WebAccess/ss>, Helpdesk 1850 420 420

Queries on the HSE Workplace Health & Wellbeing Unit's Covid-19 guidance documents may be referred to hr.wellbeing@hse.ie or the HCW helpline t: 1850 420 420

Queries from HR/Employee Relations Departments on other aspects of this memorandum may be referred to Anna Killilea, Corporate Employee Relations, HR Directorate, 63-64 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2. Tel: 01 6626966, Email: anna.killilea@hse.ie

Yours sincerely



Anne Marie Hoey
National Director of Human Resources



Need information and advice on COVID-19 Go to www.hse.ie/coronavirus