



**Oifig an Stiúrthóra 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  
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Neasa Hourigan, T.D.

1<sup>st</sup> December, 2020

**PQ36318/20 To ask the Minister for Health his plans to continue HSE human resource grievance, appeal and investigation processes through all levels of Covid-19 restrictions and future lockdowns; the longest period for which a grievance process was suspended during the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Neasa Hourigan**

Dear Deputy,

I refer to your recent parliamentary question above which was sent to the HSE for reply.

In line with the *Roadmap for Re-opening Society and Business* and the *Return to Work Safely* protocols, the normal operation of grievance, disciplinary, Dignity at Work, Trust in Care and other HR processes in the HSE resumed, insofar as is reasonably practicable and subject to compliance with current public health advice and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, with effect from 7 July 2020.

The decision to proceed with or postpone cases under various HR policies and procedures is the responsibility of each employer/relevant management based on the particular circumstances, essential service requirements and the adjustments that may be required to ensure compliance with current COVID-19 restrictions. Each case should be assessed on its merits based on health and safety considerations, balancing COVID-19 work priorities with employment obligations, and meeting the standard of reasonableness.

The factors that should be considered by management in respect of individual cases include:

- the nature of the issues involved;
- potential risks;
- current working arrangements and resources;
- the availability of relevant personnel;
- procedural fairness; and
- the feasibility of progressing elements of the process through teleconferencing/video conferencing/virtual meetings where appropriate.

In accordance with the Grievance Procedures for the health service, grievances are addressed locally and, in most cases, by the employee's line manager so that matters can be addressed promptly and as close as possible to the point of origin. Details of individual grievances are, therefore, held at local level and not recorded or collected centrally. As a result it is not possible to comment on the length of time that individual grievances have taken to progress across the health service.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marie O'Sullivan".

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**Marie O'Sullivan**  
National HR