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3rd November 2020

Deputy Barry
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ Ref 31779 To ask the Minister for Health if he will publish information in relation to the terms and conditions of persons employed as contact tracers including the rates of pay, the length of the contracts, the number of hours work guaranteed per week, pension entitlements, holiday and sick pay arrangements; if the recruitment and on-going HR issues are managed by an outsourced firm; if a copy of a template contract or contracts will be published; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Barry,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Due to the upsurge in COVID 19 and the need for temporarily re-assigned HSE staff to return to their service roles, the HSE is currently tasked with the immediate recruitment of Contact Tracers. In order to fill these roles as soon as possible, the HSE is working in partnership with a 3rd party supplier (CPL Healthcare) to expedite recruitment for Contact Tracers. Using a 3rd party supplier is a key enabler of responsive COVID-19 related recruitment so as to immediately increase recruitment capacity to fill COVID-19 related roles.

Contact Tracers are currently being employed as agency employees and are being offered specified purpose contracts of employment for a projected 11 month period. Candidates are offered full time contracts (37 hours). Some Level 1 Contact Tracers (those who typically have clinical qualifications/experience) are requesting part time contracts. With the agreement of the Contact Tracing Centres, CPL aims to facilitate the candidate's request for part-time working due to the requirement for clinical expertise in these roles.

Contact Tracers employed by CPL are being given the standard annual leave given to HSE employees at Clerical Officer, Grade III (Level 2 Contact Tracers) and Assistant Staff Officer, Grade IV (Level 1 Contact Tracers) grades. As CPL employees they will not pay superannuation contributions. For work acquired COVID 19 sickness, CPL Contact Tracer appointees are entitled to the relevant social welfare payment; in addition they will be paid their contracted salary minus the social welfare benefit, as is the practice for any HSE employees.

Any HR issues will be managed by the employer CPL Healthcare. CPL Healthcare raise any relevant concerns directly with the HSE and the HSE and CPL work in partnership to solve any potential issues.

As CPL employees, the contract of employment is issued by CPL Healthcare. CPL Healthcare does not issue template contracts of employment to the public.

The employment arrangement of agency employed Contact Tracers will be reviewed at a later date by Contact Tracing.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,



Mary-Jo Biggs, General Manager, National Women and Infants Health Programme