



**Stiúrtóir Náisiúnta
Acmhainní Daonna**

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhísí,
Sláinte Ospidéal Dr. Steevens',
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**National Director
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Holly Cairns T.D.

30th May, 2023

PQ 23050/23 To ask the Minister for Health how his Department and public bodies and agencies that operate under his remit meet their obligations for reasonable accommodation under the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015. - Holly Cairns

Dear Deputy,

I refer to your recent Parliamentary Question which was sent to the HSE for response.

The HSE is fully committed to meeting its statutory obligations in relation to the provision of Reasonable Accommodation under the Employment Equality Acts, 1998 – 2015. The organisation's advertising, recruitment and selection processes are continuously reviewed to ensure that documentation is fully accessible and that applicants and candidates for interview are invited to discuss any Reasonable Accommodation requirements they have in engaging with the application process or attending for interview. All interview panels receive the appropriate training to support such request during the interview process. The above procedures are in line with relevant CPSA licence requirements. Prior to appointment, new appointees are again invited to disclose any additional workplace supports required.

At any stage during their employment journey, HSE employees can contact their line manager for support, or engage with National HR's Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) team for information or support on the team's dedicated email address for staff contact.

Where a requirement for workplace support has been identified, support, information and advice is available from a wide range of HSE divisions and services, including Occupational Health, Information Technology and Estates functions. These supports are also available to employees who may acquire a disability or health condition during the course of their employment, and to their managers who are providing support locally.

The HSE is also committed to providing a forum for employees with disabilities to share their experience, views and opinions and to contribute to HSE policy. In this regard, the HSE's Le Chéile Network for Staff Members with a Disability and their Allies was established in 2022. This Network meets bi monthly and members are located across all HSE geographical areas, and backgrounds. The Network has been instrumental in developing resources to support staff and managers with Reasonable Accommodation issues.

In 2022, the HSE published its first fully comprehensive DEI Strategy, setting out the main priorities and supporting actions for the HSE, to enhance the way in which Ireland's largest public sector employer addresses diversity, equality and inclusion. The priorities include specific measures in relation to training, guidance and support with Reasonable Accommodations for employees with a disability.

The DEI team has initiated a project to equality proof HSE HR policies which are due for renewal. This Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) framework is an internationally recognised methodology for undertaking this work, ensuring that any potential negative impacts related to any of the nine protected diversity characteristics are identified and mitigated. An Expert Panel of employees with disabilities plays a critical role in this work.

The HSE's on-line training platform, HSELand hosts training programmes which are available to all staff, with content relating to disability, diversity, equality, inclusion and discrimination.

The HSE has afforded work experience opportunities to graduates with disability through a structured work experience programme, taking care to put in place any Reasonable Accommodations required.

The HSE has developed formal connections with other public sector organisations where best practice on a range of initiatives including the provision of Reasonable Accommodation and demonstrating legal compliance is shared.

The HSE is committed to creating workplaces where all employees feel welcomed and valued and which are free from discrimination of any kind.



I trust this clarifies and is of some assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Marie O'Sullivan

Marie O'Sullivan
National HR