

Appendix B: Procedure for employees and managers for absences due to COVID-19

Please refer to the current HSE HR Circular and DPER Guidance & FAQs for Public Service Employers in relation to working arrangements and leave associated with COVID-19, which can be accessed [here](#).

1 (a) Procedure for employees

HSE information on self-isolation is available [at this link](#).

1. Telephone your manager¹ as soon as possible prior to your scheduled start time/shift on the first day of self-isolation as would normally be the case for sick leave. You should give as much notice as possible to your manager so that alternative arrangements can be made to cover your absence.
2. You will be required to notify your manager of the commencement date and number of days you have been required to self-isolate.
3. You will be required to complete a self-declaration form and/or provide confirmation/medical certification/satisfactory evidence of a positive PCR test for COVID-19, including date of test. The COVID-19 Self-Declaration Form is for employees who do not have access to medical certification (attach text message confirmation).
4. Your manager may approve the granting of special leave with pay for COVID-19 if you meet the eligibility criteria. The granting of special leave with pay is at the discretion of the employer and is conditional on an employee's compliance with the terms of the current HSE HR Circular/DPER FAQs and directions from his/her manager. If you are well enough to work from home, this may be facilitated.
5. In the event of non-compliance with the provisions of special leave with pay (including the requirement to provide bona fide² confirmation of self-isolation for COVID-19) existing procedures, including disciplinary measures, may be invoked.
6. Please note that public service employees cannot claim COVID-19 illness benefit from the Department of Social Protection (DSP) in cases where they are receiving special leave with pay. Any claim for DSP COVID-19 illness benefit whilst on special leave with pay will be treated as a disciplinary matter and the appropriate amount will be recouped from your salary.
7. Where applicable, the Self-Declaration Form for Special Leave with Pay (accompanied by text message confirmation) will be retained on your personnel file and will be subject to audit.

¹ If your manager is not available, please contact another manager in your area or your local HR/Employee Relations Department. In rare situations where that is not possible, make a note of the date and times of call made and continue to try to contact your managers until contact is made.

² Bona fide in relation to a representation or communication means in good faith and well founded in fact. The employer reserves the right to request further confirmation.

1 (b) Procedure for managers

1. Employees who are advised to self-isolate with symptoms of COVID-19 must inform their manager as per sick leave requirements.

2. Managers should ask the employee to provide dates and confirmation/medical certification/satisfactory proof of COVID-19 PCR test, including date of test. The arrangements for the recording and retention of this information will vary based on each organisation's payroll/HR processes and facilities. Any such arrangements in respect of an employee's data must comply with data protection legislation.³

3. Managers should record if the employee was/was not required to be in the work premises (outside the home) in the 14 calendar days prior to the date of self-isolation. This information will be required if the employee has a confirmed case of COVID-19 and the duration of COVID-19 related illness continues beyond 28 days. Employees who were not required to be in the work premises/on site will move to ordinary sick leave thereafter.

3. Managers should make employees aware of the need to stay in regular contact and advise them of occupational health and/or employee assistance programmes available to them as appropriate.

4. Managers should alert the employee to any follow up actions that are required, including occupational health referrals, the need to provide documentation and actions on their return to work (for example return to work protocols etc.).

5. Managers should ensure that an employee's Self-Declaration Form for Special Leave with Pay, where applicable, is retained on his/her personnel file and subject to audit.

³ <https://dataprotection.ie/en/news-media/blogs/data-protection-and-covid-19>