



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Stiúrthóra Náisiúnta, Acmhainní Daonna  
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Ospidéal Dr. Steevens'  
Baile Átha Cliath 8

Office of the National Director of  
Human Resources  
Health Service Executive  
Dr. Steevens' Hospital  
Dublin 8

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HSE HR Circular 019/2015

14<sup>th</sup> August 2015

**To:** Each Member of the Directorate and Leadership Team HSE  
Each Hospital Group CEO  
Each Chief Officer, CHO  
Each Assistant National Director, HR  
Each Employee Relations Manager  
Each CEO Section 38 Agency

**Re:** New Pregnancy-Related Sick Leave Provisions

Dear Colleagues

I wish to inform you of new provisions governing the treatment of pregnancy-related illness which are being implemented on an administrative basis and will be effective from **31<sup>st</sup> March 2014**.

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has confirmed that two additional provisions will be included in the Public Service Sick Leave Regulations to deal with the treatment of sick leave following pregnancy-related sick leave (PRSL). The Public Service Sick Leave Scheme currently provides that for sickness absences that occur following a woman's maternity leave, PRSL taken at the **half rate of pay only** under the normal sick leave rules will not count towards sick leave limits. The new provisions are more beneficial than the current provision and, in general, will provide for the following:

In general, the amendments provide for the following:

<p><b>Transitional Arrangement:</b> Discount all pregnancy-related sick leave that occurred before the introduction of the new Public Service Sick Leave Scheme for the purpose of calculating access to paid sick leave under the current Scheme.</p>
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**Ongoing Arrangement:** A woman who has exhausted her access to paid sick leave due to pregnancy-related sick leave in the previous 4 years may have access to additional paid sick leave at the half rate of pay for non-pregnancy related sick leave. Under this arrangement all PRSL (regardless of whether paid sick leave was at the full rate or the half rate of pay) may be credited back to employees at the half rate of pay within the normal sick leave limits.

Under this arrangement, the number of additional days allowed:

- (i) will be the equivalent number of days taken due to pregnancy-related sick leave in the 4 years
- (ii) must not exceed normal sick leave limits (183 days or 365 days for cases which are approved under the Critical Illness Protocol) for non-pregnancy-related sick leave when aggregated with other non-pregnancy-related sick leave in the previous 4 years.

It is expected that the amendments to the Regulations will be enacted in September. In the meantime, the new provisions are being introduced on an administrative basis and will be effective from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014.

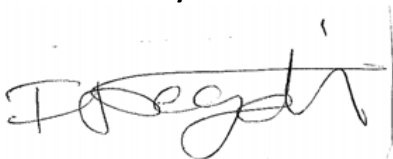
The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has prepared a comprehensive Guidance Document to assist employers on the practical application of these changes to the treatment of pregnancy-related sick leave (copy attached).

You are now required to ensure that the revised arrangements are put in place within your area of responsibility. Please bring this letter and Guidance Note to the attention of appropriate staff in your area so that the amendments can be implemented with immediate effect.

Please note that any queries from individual employees or managers regarding these revised arrangements must be referred to their local HR/Employee Relations Departments.

Queries from HR/ER Departments may be referred to Employee Relations Advisory Services, HR Directorate, HSE, 63/64 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2, tel: 01-6626966, e-mail: [infot@hse.ie](mailto:infot@hse.ie)

**Yours sincerely**



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**Ian Tegerdine**  
**Interim National Director of Human Resources**