



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

Dr. Steevens' Hospital

Dublin 8

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To:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Each National Director
- Each Assistant National Director HR
- Each Assistant Chief Finance Officers
- Each Hospital Group CEO
- Each Hospital Group Director of HR
- Each Chief Officer CHO
- Each CHO Heads of HR
- Each CEO Section 38 Agencies
- Each HR Manager Section 38 Agencies
- Each Employee Relations Manager
- Each Group Director of Nursing & Midwifery
- Each Group Director of Midwifery
- Each Clinical Director

From: Anne Marie Hoey

Date: 6th March 2020

Re: HR Circular 007/2020: COVID-19 FAQs for the Public Health Service;
HSE National Collection of Daily Absence for COVID-19.

Dear Colleagues,

Please see attached a copy of the HSE's **COVID-19 FAQs for the Public Health Service in relation to employee leave associated with COVID-19** (Appendix 1). The FAQ document is based on the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's COVID-19 FAQs which each sector is required to amend. Please note that these FAQs will be updated as required.

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) has conveyed sanction to the Civil and Public Service for the granting of special leave with pay to civil and public servants in relation to leave associated with COVID-19. This special leave with pay is discretionary and the rules governing its application are outlined in the HSE's FAQs for the Public Health Service.

As outlined in the FAQs, special leave with pay should apply to periods of medically/HSE recommended self-isolation where flexible working arrangements are not possible, and also to medical diagnoses of COVID-19 infection. Special leave with pay for employees who are not required to come to work due to

COVID-19 should be based on basic salary and fixed allowances only. This excludes unsocial hours premium payments.

It is important to note that special leave with pay for COVID-19 is separate from normal sick pay and should be recorded by managers/HR departments as **“COVID19-Paid Leave”**. This separate classification is important to ensure that such absences do not impact on employees’ entitlements under the public service sick leave scheme and to comply with national requests for data and costings (see below).

Data/Costings

The direction from DPER/Department of Health is that the HSE and Section 38 employers will need to separate information on, and related to, costs arising from the granting of special leave with pay for COVID-19 to public health service employees who are eligible for payment. This would include the number of employees for whom payment has been approved, the duration of the absence on paid leave and the amount of payment. This information will be required under the following public health service staff categories:

- Medical & Dental
- Nursing & Midwifery
- Health & Social Care Professionals
- Management & Administration
- General Support
- Patient & Client Care

Please refer to the following HSE link for further details on the public health service staff categories: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/our-workforce/workforce-reporting/national-grade-code-list.xlsx>

All managers are required to maintain data in respect of employees within their area of responsibility to ensure that the above information can be provided in relation to the overall number of employees who are granted special leave with pay due to COVID-19. A copy of a template form to collect this data will issue to you early next week. The data captured at local level will inform the National Collection of Daily Absence for COVID-19.

National Collection of Daily Absence for COVID-19

Each HSE National Service, Acute Hospital and CHO Area is required to record and report all absences relating to COVID-19. Please note that each CHO Area is responsible for collecting and reporting on absence data for Section 38 agencies under its remit.

The online link for the National Collection of Daily Absence for COVID-19 is: https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=zNRnX5BcLUCdb6ryOkpcgeFT-DABruhHi4CQoVaA_yxUNUJYTUIKR0tOM1IzWVYxWEJXTVZEWEJTS4u

The absence data required is the overall headcount (i.e. number of employees) in each staff category by relevant location i.e. National Service, Acute Hospital or CHO Area (inclusive of Section 38 agencies in the Intellectual Disability sector). This aggregated and anonymised information should be consolidated at service site, having regard to GDPR requirements, and reported twice weekly on Mondays and Thursdays.

Please ensure that this Circular, Appendix and FAQ document are brought to the attention of all relevant managers in your area of responsibility. Please ensure that appropriate arrangements are put in place for the recording and collation of data which adhere to GDPR requirements.

Please ensure that responsibility is assigned to appropriate managers to ensure compliance with the requirements for collation and provision of data for the **National Collection of Daily Absence for COVID-19**. Please supply the name of a person responsible for reporting for your area together with contact details to workforcedata@hse.ie.

The **normal monthly reporting** of employee absence data will continue in addition to the above. There is currently a new Paid Absence Code '**COVID19-Paid Leave**' in development for use across **SAP sites**, to record employee absence specifically relating to COVID-19. Until this new code is available, **Code 0430 Special Leave with Pay** is to be used to record monthly employee absence relating to COVID-19.

Once the new code is available in SAP a communication confirming same will issue.

For **Non SAP sites**, monthly employee absence relating to COVID-19 should be recorded as **COVID19-Paid Leave**. A new template will issue to report same as part of the monthly process.

Queries

Queries from individual employees or managers regarding these arrangements should be referred to local HR Departments/Employee Relations Departments.

Queries from HR Departments on the contents of this Circular may be referred to Anna Killilea, Corporate Employee Relations, HR Directorate, 63-64 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2. Tel: 01 6626966, Email: anna.killilea@hse.ie.

Please note that the National HR Help Desk is also available to take queries on 1850 444 925 or email: ask.hr@hse.ie.

Yours sincerely,



Anne Marie Hoey
National Director of Human Resources.



www.hse.ie/changeguide

"To view the Health Services People Strategy 2019 - 2024 please click [here](#)."