

**Príomhoifigeach Daoine**

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhísí
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To:

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- Each Regional Executive Officer**
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- Each Assistant National Director HR**
- Each Assistant Chief Finance Officer**
- Each Regional Director of People**
- Each Regional Director of Finance**
- 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**
- Head of HR, PCRS**
- Director National Ambulance Service**

From: **Anne Marie Hoey, Chief People Officer**

Date: **7th July 2025**

Subject: **HR Circular 011/2025 - Special Leave with Nominal Pay:
Clarification regarding Single Public Service Pension Scheme
members**

Dear Colleagues,

I refer to Special Leave with Nominal Pay which provides leave for employees with professional qualifications to work in an underdeveloped country or in a disaster/emergency region. Department of Health Circular 7/92/S500/29 (16 March 1992) provides further information on this Scheme. HSE Guidelines on Terms and Conditions of Employment provides summary information.

The purpose of this Circular is to communicate that the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery & Reform has clarified that the pension arrangements attached to the grant of leave under this Scheme is not applicable to employees who are members of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme.

The method of reckoning a period of special leave with nominal pay under the pre-existing public service pension schemes (e.g. HSE Employee Superannuation Scheme) is incompatible with the structure and operation of the Single Pension Scheme. In line with the rules of the Single Pension Scheme, pension benefits – known as referable amounts – can only be accrued with reference to the pensionable remuneration received by a member in the scheme year. There are no provisions which allow pension benefits to accrue for a period of leave with nominal pay.

As a result, while employees who are members of the Single Pension Scheme can be considered and approved for special leave for the purposes outlined, a nominal pay amount to preserve the reckonability of the period of the leave from a superannuation perspective will not occur. All other elements of the Scheme (e.g. incremental credit arrangements) are applicable to Single Pension Scheme members and other employees. For members of the pre-existing pension schemes, the nominal pay/pension arrangements are unchanged and will continue to apply.

In light of this clarification, the Scheme will now be known as Special Leave for Developing Countries/Disaster Relief.

It should be noted that other arrangements are available to employees who are seeking foreign aid leave. These include Special Leave with Pay to Volunteer in Exceptional Humanitarian Crisis ([HSE HR Circular 020/2015](#)) and Leave for Deployment with the Rapid Response Corps ([HSE HR Circular 17/2008](#)). Career breaks can also be taken for such purposes.

Please ensure that this Circular is brought to the attention of all relevant managers and staff in your area of responsibility.

Queries

Queries from individual employees or managers regarding these arrangements should be referred to local HR Departments/Employee Relations Departments. Please note that the National HR Help Desk is also available to take queries on 1800 444 925 or email: ask.hr@hse.ie

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

Yours sincerely



Anne Marie Hoey
Chief People Officer