



FAQs

Temporary Assignments across the Civil and Public Service in response to the challenge of COVID-19

17th MARCH 2020

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Background

Temporary assignments across the Civil and Public Service are a necessary response by Government to the unprecedented national crisis arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

This Frequently Asked Questions (“FAQ”) document has been prepared to assist staff and management in the Civil and Public Service to understand the process, rules and expectations associated with temporary assignments across the public service.

This FAQ document is designed to support the communication ‘*Arrangements for temporary assignments across the Civil and Public Service in response to the challenge of COVID-19*’ issued by Civil Service HR Division on 17th March 2020. This FAQ document should be read in conjunction with the COVID-19 FAQs for Public Service employers in relation to working arrangements and leave associated with COVID-19.

These FAQs will be continually updated in response to queries that are received centrally from HR Divisions, staff and the Public Appointments Service. The most up-to-date version of these FAQs will be available at www.gov.ie/per.

FAQs in relation to temporary assignments

Why are temporary assignments required?

COVID-19 is the most significant crisis faced by our country in living memory. Our primary focus in the civil and public service is to support the health and wellbeing of all our citizens. To achieve this, and to keep delivering the critical services to society, especially for the most vulnerable and at-risk, we need to come together and work as a unified public service.

Will all Civil and Public Service bodies release staff for temporary assignments?

All Civil and Public Service bodies will release staff who are not working in roles that are currently deemed as essential by their organisation.

How will staff be identified for temporary assignment?

In the context of an organisation's Business Continuity Plan, staff will be identified as available for immediate release to temporarily fill essential roles across the civil and public service.

How will staff be informed and what will they be required to do?

Staff will receive a notification from their Local HR which will include a link to an online questionnaire.

Staff will be required to complete the questionnaire and submit to the Public Appointments Service (PAS) portal. This questionnaire can also be completed on mobile phone, tablet or laptop for ease of use.

PAS will then process the temporary assignments in consultation with the relevant Local HRs.

What roles will staff be temporarily assigned to?

Staff will be temporarily assigned to work in a different role and/or organisation in order to meet critical work needs.

What organisation will staff be assigned to?

This is an evolving situation and demands may change. Temporary assignments are currently urgently required to deal with resourcing challenges in certain areas of the civil and public service, including but not limited to:

- Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection;
- Health Service Executive.

What location will staff be temporarily assigned to?

On the questionnaire staff are asked to provide their home and work address, and a preferred location. The actual location will be determined by the particular needs and circumstances of the organisation.

Is there a potential to work remotely while on temporary assignment?

There may be potential for remote working, depending on the requirements of the role in question the availability of technical resources.

When will staff be expected to start their assignment?

Staff will be temporarily assigned as quickly as possible to meet the needs as they arise.

What hours will staff be required to work?

It is anticipated that some offices may operate different working arrangements which may be across an extended working day and week.

These arrangements can support staff to manage caring responsibilities at home (including facilitating shared caring arrangements with partner) and can support segregation of the workforce and social distancing measures.

What training will staff receive?

Training/up-skilling will be provided as necessary in order to ensure that staff are equipped to undertake the roles in question.

Will a temporary assignment affect eligibility on the Mobility scheme?

The temporary assignment will not affect the eligibility or waitlist position.

Moves under the Mobility scheme are currently suspended for the duration of the crisis, however, staff can still make applications.

Will staff transfer to a different employer for the temporary assignment?

Staff on temporary assignment will remain as staff members of their current organisation, for HR and pay purposes. However, for the duration of the temporary assignment direct management and supervision will be provided by the temporary line manager.

How long will the assignment be for?

It is envisaged that the temporary assignments may be for an initial period of up to three months with a possible extension where required.



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