



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR



PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

What is job evaluation?

Job evaluation is a process for working out the relative worth of posts in an organisation based on what the post-holder is doing or is expected to do. It is carried out so that fair levels of pay for different jobs can be set rather than based on subjective criteria or assumptions.

What is the problem in the Local Government sector?

Fórsa argues that almost 10,000 council jobs were lost following the financial crisis. Services were only maintained because staff had taken on additional responsibilities above their pay grades. In the public sector, Local Authorities suffered the greatest reduction of numbers of employees during the austerity era, which has resulted in significant grade drift in the sector.

What happens elsewhere?

Local Authority workers in the North and right across Britain have had access to job evaluation for decades. It is also commonplace across much of Europe. In Ireland, many Fórsa grades represented in the HSE and higher education have access to job evaluation.

So what's the problem?

The Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) maintains that everyone working in the Local Authority sector is paid the appropriate rate for the job. They reject that people are working above grade. Fórsa believes that the only way to deal with this matter is through an independent job evaluation exercise. Local Authorities were once the employer of choice but that is no longer the case. There is a recruitment and retention crisis in the sector that is getting worse.

What do others say?

IHREC (Irish Human Rights & Equality Commission) have published a Code of Conduct for Employers stating *“a pay review – incorporating, as part of the process, a rational and objective job evaluation model – is the most effective way of achieving pay equality”*.

So what now?

Fórsa referred the matter to the Workplace Relations Commission. That process has now stalled as employers are refusing to negotiate or conciliate any further.

We have informed employers that this matter isn't simply going to go away by ignoring it. The union has long standing policy to secure Job Evaluation in Local Government. Over 85% of workers voted yes in a recent ballot giving their union a mandate for industrial action up to and including strike action.

Fórsa members are fed up in Local Government. We want equity and fair treatment, similar to other large parts of the public sector.

Industrial action will commence with an indefinite ban on all non-statutory political representations (verbal, email and written) from the 11th of September 2023, with further escalation to follow. We apologise in advance for any impact this action may have on your important work as an elected representative. Please see what you can do to support local government workers – our members and your constituents!

What can Public Representatives do to help?

- Contact your Local Authority Chief Executive and demand that the LGMA engage with Fórsa and reach an agreement to resolve the dispute.
- Write to Minister Darragh O'Brien requesting that he intervene.
- Pass a motion at Council.
- Support local authority staff.