



## Arrangements for temporary assignments across the Civil and Public Service in response to the challenge of COVID-19

17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

### Circular 07/2020

Dear HR Managers/Personnel Officers

As you are aware, the Government's priority is to ensure the health of the public, whilst at the same time ensuring the continuation of public services, especially essential public services. We all have a part to play in seeing this crisis through, and this will involve finding creative and innovative ways to deliver public services.

COVID-19 has already had an impact on many of our public services. As the situation develops, we must prepare as best we can to ensure the continuity of essential services including, but not limited to, health and social protection.

As part of these preparations, staff who are not working in roles that are currently deemed as essential by their organisations may be temporarily assigned to critical public service roles to deal with the current crisis.

Where possible, organisations are required to facilitate the immediate release of staff, subject to the critical business needs identified in their own organisation's Business Continuity Plan(s).

### Key Principles

All assignments will be temporary in nature and:

- Assigned staff will continue to remain staff members of their parent organisation;
- Assigned staff will continue to be paid by their parent organisation;
- Staff skills and experience may be factored into any temporary assignment;
- Local HR will be responsible for the identification and release of staff;
- Appropriate HSE recommended social distancing will be adhered to in the context of workplace assignments;
- Training and up-skilling will be provided as necessary; and
- On completion of the temporary assignment, staff will return to their parent organisation.

It is envisaged that the temporary assignments may be for an initial period of up to three months with a possible extension if required. Please find attached an [FAQ](#) document which should be read in conjunction with *COVID-19 FAQs For Public Service Employers in relation to working arrangements and leave associated with COVID-19* which issued on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

You will appreciate that the challenges we are currently facing are unprecedented, and your continued cooperation is vital to ensure that critical services are provided.

Civil Service HR Division