

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 September 2021 14:32
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: URGENT, OFFICIAL AND SENSITIVE: HR matters relating to coronavirus within the NICS.

Sensitivity: Confidential

From: DfE Permanent Secretary Support
Sent: 03 March 2020 11:20
To: Minne, Jill <Jill.Minne@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]; Browne, Mark (Deputy Secretary)
[REDACTED]
Stewart, Chris ([REDACTED])
[REDACTED] Baker, Derek [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]; DfE Permanent Secretary Support [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Godfrey, Katrina [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]; Gray, Sue (DoF) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] King, Brenda [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] May, Peter [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] McMahon, Denis [REDACTED]
Meharg, Tracy <T [REDACTED]>; Pengelly, Richard [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Widdis, Hugh [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Sterling, David [REDACTED]; Cooke, Michael (HR) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] McNabb, Chris [REDACTED] NICS HR [REDACTED]
Director [REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) [REDACTED] Rooney, [REDACTED]
Bernie [REDACTED] Morgan, Lisa [REDACTED] DfE Permanent
Secretary Support [REDACTED]
Subject: URGENT, OFFICIAL AND SENSITIVE: HR matters relating to coronavirus within the NICS.
Sensitivity: Confidential

Jill

Thank you for the paper regarding the approach to managing coronavirus.

In relation to section A, "When employees are diagnosed as ill due to the coronavirus". The paper states that "Where an absence is created based on coronavirus symptoms however the test is negative then the absence will revert to normal handling procedures, and not discounted". It is not completely clear what aspect of the absence is/is not discounted and at what point it reverts to normal procedure. I would suggest that the NICS replicates the approach of the Scottish Government, in that where medical advice has confirmed that the symptoms are consistent with the coronavirus, this should be discounted even if the test result is ultimately negative. Amended wording along the lines below would clarify the position for staff/managers:

- To apply normal sickness absence pay entitlements however any coronavirus absences (or absences pending coronavirus test results) will be excluded from any calculation of

contractual sick pay. There will therefore be no impact on absence trigger points or contractual sick pay.

With regard to section B, this refers to occasions when an employee needs to self-isolate having been in contact with someone who is waiting for test results to determine if they have been infected. The guidance advises that managers can give consideration to special leave and “the key to these decisions is management discretion based on the information provided by an employee”. While it is recognised that medical evidence may not always be available for such circumstances, it may be helpful to emphasise that managers should satisfy themselves that the information provided is sufficient to confirm that the employee should self-isolate and refer them to PHA guidance/NHS 111 in this respect.

Regards

Mike

From: Minne, Jill

Sent: 02 March 2020 17:07

To: [redacted] Brennan, Mike [redacted];
Browne, Mark (Deputy Secretary) [redacted]

[redacted]; Stewart, Chris (TEO) [redacted]

[redacted] Baker, Derek [redacted]

[redacted] DfE Permanent Secretary Support [redacted]

[redacted] Godfrey, Katrina (DfI – Perm Sec) [redacted]

[redacted]; Gray, Sue (DoF) [redacted]

King, Brenda [redacted]

[redacted] May, Peter [redacted]

[redacted] McMahon, Denis [redacted]

[redacted] Meharg, Tracy [redacted]

[redacted]; Pengelly, Richard [redacted]

[redacted] Widdis, Hugh [redacted]

[redacted] Sterling, David [redacted]

Cc: Cooke, Michael (HR) [redacted]

[redacted]; McNabb, Chris [redacted]

[redacted] NICS HR Director [redacted]

[redacted] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) [redacted]

[redacted] Rooney, Bernie [redacted]

Subject: URGENT, OFFICIAL AND SENSITIVE: HR matters relating to coronavirus within the NICS.

Importance: High

Sensitivity: Confidential

Dear NICS Board colleagues

As discussed at our meeting on Friday please find attached a paper setting out decisions required from the NICS Board on how absence relating to coronavirus will be managed within the NICS.

Following agreement on these matters NICS HR and communications colleagues will issue detailed guidance to managers and staff (agency staff will be covered in the guidance) and advise TUS.

Given the urgency of this issue I should be very grateful for a response on these particular matters by 2.00 pm tomorrow if possible.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Jill Minne

Strategic HR Director, NI Civil Service

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Contact: [REDACTED]

