

Dear Member,

Following discussion with Trade Unions, including Fórsa, the Government have produced a “Return to Work” protocol for workers & employers aimed at gradually & safely reopening workplaces.

This protocol requires each school/ETB to produce a COVID-19 response plan that includes policies and procedures in areas such as physical distancing, personal protective equipment, cleaning and respiratory and hand hygiene as well as training for all workers on these new procedures.

The protocol also requires that office and non-essential work continues to be carried out at home, where practicable.

On Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup> schools may open in a very limited capacity solely for the organisation of remote learning. **SNAs should continue to work from home** under the direction of their school in providing remote support to students

SNAs can **only** be asked to attend the workplace if necessary to allow them to provide remote support to students. If required, this should only be done on a brief, infrequent basis and should not involve spending an unnecessary amount of time in the workplace.

#### Should I be asked to show up for work on May 18th?

- Whilst schools are open on the 18th, this is for organisation and distribution of remote learning materials. The work must be of the absolute essential nature, this is not a return to business as normal. If you are contacted by management to discuss returning to work in your school please be advised that you should seek guidance from your Union before reaching an agreement with management.

#### The Principal says there is a need for a Covid-19 liaison officer in my school who should this be?

- There has been agreement reached between the government, unions and stakeholders that staff should have at least one representative to liaise with management about the proper procedures around covid-19 health and safety issues. We believe that the Fórsa Rep in your school should be put forward for this role. Remember that Forsa represents not only SNAs but also school secretaries as well as some caretakers and cleaners.
- It is important that your school has a Fórsa rep to ensure the concerns of members are being heard. If your school does not have a Fórsa rep, please contact the Union.

#### I have been working remotely with my students what do I do if I am asked to come in?

- If you are required to attend to complete a task that allows you to support students remotely, schools **MUST** have a social-distancing and infection control plan in place as part of the COVID-19 Business Response plan. This could amount to people coming in for certain periods of time during the day so that they do not overlap for example.
- It should also take into account if a person has been advised that they or a family member living in the same house are in a vulnerable category that remote work should be organised for that person.

## **What hours should I be working?**

- You should not be required to work any longer than normal class room hours. Part-time SNAs should not be required to work more than their pro-rata hours i.e. a .5 post should not be required to work more than 50% of normal classroom hours. You should not be required to work the brief periods before and after school, or the 72 hours.

## **I don't think the plans put forward will keep me safe, what should I do?**

- The government has said that compliance with the roadmap is mandatory. This will be enforced by the Health & Safety Authority & staff are encouraged to make complaints to the HSA if they feel it is necessary.

## **Non-exhaustive list of non-essential or inappropriate work for SNAs:**

- Working at reception/Administration/clerical Work
- Laminating, photocopying and shredding for the whole school
- Painting classroom/ Building maintenance/ Gardening
- Making tea/coffee for other staff during meetings
- Bar coding books in the school/Book Covering/Book rental scheme
- Deep cleaning/Cleaning windows/Mopping/Cleaning out lockers/Cleaning toilets
- Moving of furniture/organising classrooms
- Taking down/putting up posters
- Meeting directly with students and/or parents
- Administrative work that is not related with allocated SEN Students

**If you are unsure if the work you are being asked to complete is appropriate or essential, please contact Fórsa by clicking [HERE](#).**

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