

# **Industrial action by ICT workers in Local Authorities**

## **Wednesday 28 January 2026**

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

*Please note this is a live document and will be updated as further FAQs arise.  
Last updated: 20 January 2026*

#### **Why are ICT staff taking industrial action?**

For over six years, Fórsa has engaged in good faith with the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) through detailed reports, proposals, and a WRC process. Despite this, there has been no meaningful action to establish appropriate professional structures for ICT roles within local authorities. All engagement routes have now been exhausted.

This is about a fair and sustainable future for the ICT workforce in local authorities. We are fighting for proper grading, a clear career path and recognition of the responsibilities they carry.

#### **What was the outcome of the ballot?**

98.4% of members voted in favour of industrial action, providing a clear and overwhelming mandate for action across the sector.

#### **What form will the industrial action take?**

The action consists of:

- Stopping all out-of-hours ICT work
- Non-engagement with external third parties

#### **When does the action start and how long will it last?**

The industrial action will commence from 7am on Wednesday 28th January and will continue until a resolution is reached.

#### **What does “out-of-hours work” mean?**

Any ICT activity outside normal working hours, including:

- System or infrastructure upgrades
- Application deployments or changes
- Reactive support, troubleshooting, or call-outs

All such work will cease for the duration of the action.

## What does “non-engagement with third parties” mean?

During the action, ICT staff will not:

- Communicate with any third parties (email, phone, MS Teams, meetings)
- Attend third-party meetings or workshops
- Process or support third-party requests
- Enable or approve work required for third-party deliverables

## Clarification on indirect third-party instructions

Where a third party provides instructions, guidance, or actions, whether directly to ICT staff or indirectly via a user or business area, those instructions are still considered to originate from a third party. Acting on them would enable a third-party deliverable and is therefore not permitted during the period of industrial action. The route by which the instruction is received does not change its status.

Non-ICT colleagues who are union members are expected to respect the industrial action and avoid actions that would circumvent its intent, including passing on third-party requests to ICT staff. **This means members should not take on work of their colleagues who are taking industrial action.**

## Who are considered “third parties”?

Any organisation or individual not directly employed by the local authority, including:

- LGMA
- ICT contractors and consultants
- Software, hardware, cloud, and telecoms providers
- Agency ICT staff

## What is this action seeking to achieve?

The action seeks the establishment of:

- Clear professional recognition of ICT as a distinct discipline
- Appropriate career, capability, and progression structures
- A sustainable ICT function, underpinned by nationally agreed professional frameworks for how ICT services are delivered and supported, capable of supporting both local and national digital services

## What about derogations?

The onus to request derogations is the responsibility of the employer and any such requests will be considered by the national Disputes Committee, provided that it is limited in nature and requested in a timely fashion. Branches will also establish local Disputes Committees to work collaboratively with the national committee.

### **What about further escalation?**

The Disputes Committee in consultation with ICT members will scope out further escalation of the dispute.

### **I'm not a member of Fórsa, what should I do during the dispute?**

Have you thought about joining the union? Your colleagues are fighting hard for your rights. The more people who join, the more strength we have. It's never been [easier to join Fórsa](#).

Once your membership has been ratified, you must follow union instructions regarding the dispute.

### **What should members say to public reps?**

We would encourage members to explain why they are taking industrial action to their local public representatives. You can advise elected representatives to contact the Chief Executive of the local authority in their constituency to urge them to resolve the dispute.

### **Is there a standard response we should use during the industrial action for third-party or out-of-hours communication?**

Where required, staff may use the following standard wording when responding to communication during the period of industrial action:

*"Thank you for your correspondence.*

*Please be advised that, due to ongoing industrial action, we are not in a position to engage with external third parties at this time. This includes all communication, meetings, and activities related to third-party requests, as outlined in the current industrial action directives.*

*Your message will not be processed during this period.*

*Please note that ICT staff are also not engaging in any out-of-hours ICT work for the duration of the industrial action, and requests received outside normal working hours will not be processed. We will resume normal engagement once the industrial action has concluded."*

### **I have some more questions, not answered above. Who do I contact?**

You should contact your local branch. If you are unsure of who to contact, please contact your closest Fórsa office:

- Cork 021 4255 210 [forsacork@forsa.ie](mailto:forsacork@forsa.ie)
- Limerick 061 319 177 [forsalimerick@forsa.ie](mailto:forsalimerick@forsa.ie)
- Galway 091 778 031 [forsagalway@forsa.ie](mailto:forsagalway@forsa.ie)
- Sligo 071 914 2400 [forsasligo@forsa.ie](mailto:forsasligo@forsa.ie)
- Dublin Head Office: 01 8171500 [lghelp@forsa.ie](mailto:lghelp@forsa.ie)