

***Staff Panel of Trade Unions for the Health Sector Welcome
Recommendation to increase Compassionate/Bereavement leave***

The Health Sector Panel of Trade Unions argued before the Labour Court that a benefit introduced in the Civil Service and Local Government to increase bereavement leave should apply to staff working within the health sector. The Staff panel of Trade Unions have been pursuing this matter for over 2 years and have attended the conciliation service of the WRC on three occasions. The matter was originally raised by the MSLA, within the Staff Panel and all members unions of the staff panel agreed to pursue the matter.

We argued that reductions in conditions of employment including paid sick leave, pension etc., applied uniformly across the public sector. By contrast when a benefit was being applied, it was done so selectively by sector which is unfair and unjust. We also argued that the matter of bereavement/compassionate leave and the matter of personal loss and grief applies to all public servants regardless of the sector they work in.

The Labour Court recommends that the HSE and Section 38s funded agencies bereavement policies be amended in line with the concession that has applied in the Civil Service to allow for 20 working days for spouse/partner and Child (included adoptive and in "loco parentis") and five days in the case of a close relative as currently defined in the HSE and Section 38 own policies. The Labour Court also recommends that the parties return to the WRC for conciliation to constructively engage on the issue of the need for backfill arising from these changes and other relevant issues with a view to implementing the changes with effect from the 01st of October 2019.

This is an example of how the Staff Panel of Trade Unions, when working together as one, can achieve successful outcomes for all our members in the health sector.

Yours sincerely



Tony Fitzpatrick
Director of Industrial Relation