



Ms. Tara Carton,  
Principal Officer  
External Employee Relations  
Department of Education and Skills  
Marlborough Street  
Dublin 1  
D01 RC96

22<sup>nd</sup> of October 2020

**Use of the SNA 72 Hours during Pandemic**

Dear Tara,

I write to you with regards the above matter. You will recall that at our last IR forum meeting we outlined our intention to refer the matter of the 72 hours to the workplace relations commission, which is in train.

However, given the current pandemic situation, we are seeking that the 72 hours are frozen and employers do not request their completion for the duration of the pandemic. This request is separate to the WRC referral on their abolition.

The basis of this request is on foot of the current pandemic situation which remains extremely uncertain, the risk of increase in community transmission of Covid-19 and the fact that the country has moved into higher levels (3 initially and then recently level 5) of the Governments Resilience and Recovery 2020 – 2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19.

Throughout all stages of the plan, the advice is to work from home where possible. In level 2 if it is possible to work from home, you are advised to only attend work for essential on-site meetings, inductions and training and this is further enhanced throughout the increased stages. It is clear that the intent of the plan, is that attendance in the workplace, should only be for absolutely essential tasks that cannot be done from home. On the basis of the above, Fórsa believe it is imperative that the practice of the 72 hours is to be paused throughout the current pandemic situation.

SNA's have been instrumental in getting schools re-opened and keeping them open, often despite their own concerns. However, we firmly believe that they should not be requested to be in the workplace for any longer than is absolutely necessary, in turn reducing the risk of infection, adhering with public health advice and supressing the virus further, helping protect them as workers as well as their families and the wider community.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shane Lambert", is placed over a light blue rectangular background.

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Shane Lambert

*CC by email : Caoimhe Allman, Assistant Principal, External Employee Relations.*