



**Frequently Asked Questions – 2 April 2020**  
**Temporary Assignment Arrangements for certain staff in the education and training sector**

The purpose of this document is to provide further information on the arrangements for the temporary assignment of certain staff to different areas of work. These FAQs should be read in conjunction with Department of Education and Skills [Circulars 0027/2020](#) and [0028/2020](#).

**An individual staff member MUST NOT upload their details to the temporary assignment website/questionnaire without having been authorised to do so in advance by school management or the HR section of their employer. If you do so, you will delay to the assignment of staff who have been validly released. If in doubt, contact your school management or HR section to confirm whether they have deemed you to be releasable.**

**1. Why are temporary assignments required?**

COVID-19 is the most significant crisis faced by our country in living memory. The primary focus in the civil and public service is to support the health and wellbeing of all our citizens. To achieve this, and to keep delivering the essential services to society, especially for the most vulnerable and at-risk, we need to come together and work as a unified public service.

Temporary assignment of staff will help to ensure the continuation of essential public services and is one of the many responses of Government and the health authorities to the unprecedented challenges posed by the current COVID-19 pandemic.

All public servants who are not medically advised to self-isolate must be available to carry out work either to deliver services in their current post (as a priority) or for temporary assignment within the wider public sector.

**2. I am a Teacher/ Lecturer or am involved in delivering tuition – am I required to be available for temporary assignment?**

All public servants who are not medically advised to self-isolate must be available to carry out work either to deliver services in their current post (as a priority) or for temporary assignment within the wider public sector.

The priority for staff in the education sector is to continue the provision of education. You must wait to be nominated by your school management or HR Section before uploading your details to the questionnaire for temporary assignment.



### **3. I am a Special Needs Assistant - am I required to be available for temporary assignment?**

All public servants who are not medically advised to self-isolate must be available to carry out work either to deliver services in their current post (as a priority) or for temporary assignment within the wider public sector.

All SNAs are considered available for temporary assignment, subject to the terms of Department of Education and Skills [Circular 0024/2020](#), and are required to complete the questionnaire, a link for which will be sent to you by your school management or HR section in the case of ETBs.

A dedicated temporary assignment process has been established for SNAs, given the particular skills and experience of these staff in assisting children with additional care needs.

### **4. I am in an at-risk group - am I required to be available for temporary assignment?**

The current advice is that employees in an At Risk Group should not leave their homes to travel to work with the exception of essential workers, until the 12<sup>th</sup> of April. There may be potential for remote working, depending on the requirements of the role in question, and the availability of technical resources.

### **5. I have childcare or other caring responsibilities - am I required to be available for temporary assignment?**

All public servants who are not medically advised to self-isolate must be available to carry out work either to deliver services in their current post (as a priority) or for temporary assignment within the wider public sector.

There may be potential for flexible hours and remote working, depending on the requirements of the role in question, and the availability of technical resources.

### **6. Can I volunteer for temporary assignment?**

No. You cannot volunteer for temporary assignment. You must wait to be nominated by your school management or HR Section before uploading your details to the questionnaire for temporary assignment.

School Management Authorities, Chief Executives of ETBs, and Human Resources sections will identify staff necessary to provide and support the essential delivery of tuition to all students during the closure period and which staff are available for temporary assignment and will inform you if you have been nominated for assignment.



The only exception to this is Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) who are all considered available for temporary assignment.

**7. I have not heard from my employer, but I am aware of the Public Appointments Service (PAS) survey link. Can I go ahead and upload my details?**

No you MUST NOT upload your details to the temporary assignment website/questionnaire without having been authorised to do so in advance by school management or the HR section of their employer. If you do so, you will delay to the assignment of staff who have been validly released. If in doubt, contact your school management or HR section to confirm whether they have deemed you to be releasable.

**8. Do all releasable employees have to complete the Temporary Assignment questionnaire?**

Yes, all employees identified by their organisation as currently releasable, are required to complete the linked online questionnaire which they will have received from their school management or HR section. This is to seek to ensure the most appropriate skills and location match, where possible, as needs arise.

**9. I have been informed by my School Management /Chief Executive of my ETB/my Human Resource Officer that I am being made available for temporary assignment. What is the next step?**

- (i) The School Management/Human Resource Section will send you a link to a questionnaire which is hosted by the Public Appointment Service (PAS).
- (ii) You must fill in this questionnaire, which will collect information relating to you, your location and details of your skills and work experience. This is necessary for the coordination of temporary assignments.
- (iii) You must inform your School Management/Human Resource Section once you have completed the survey

**10. I don't have a laptop. How can I complete the questionnaire?**

The questionnaire can be completed on a mobile phone, tablet or laptop for ease of use.

**11. I've filled in the questionnaire. What will happen now?**

- (i) PAS will collate the information provided in the questionnaire.
- (ii) PAS will confirm with the school or relevant HR Unit that those staff who have completed the questionnaire are still releasable (this additional verification step will not apply in the case of SNAs, as all SNAs are considered releasable).



- (iii) Releasable staff will then be added to the relevant PAS database for temporary assignment to a relevant body.
- (iv) Garda Vetting will be conducted if this is required for the role to which you will be temporarily assigned.
- (v) Staff may then be called upon by other providers of critical public services to carry out essential duties.

## **12. Will I be Garda Vetted?**

Garda vetting requirements may apply depending on the nature of the post to which the individual is being assigned.

## **13. Will all employees who complete the questionnaire be temporarily assigned?**

The temporary assignment scheme will be used to ensure essential public services continue to be delivered over the coming weeks.

Employees who have registered with PAS will be assigned as required to support the delivery of essential public services as needs are identified by public service bodies in consultation with the Public Appointments Service.

## **14. What role will I be temporarily assigned to?**

You may be temporarily assigned to work in a different role and organisation in order to support the delivery of essential public services. PAS will advise of role details upon assignment.

While the initial call is from the Health Service Executive, many other essential public services may require additional short term support. This is an evolving situation and demands may change.

In respect of SNAs, please refer to Appendix 1 of Department of Education and Skills [Circular 0027/2020](#).

## **15. When can I expect to start my assignment?**

The temporary assignment scheme will be used to ensure essential public services continue to be delivered over the coming weeks and months.



Employees who have registered with PAS will be assigned as required to support the delivery of essential public services as needs are identified by public service bodies in consultation with PAS.

Where the need arises, staff who have been temporarily assigned can return to their original jobs.

**16. What location will I be temporarily assigned to?**

In completing the questionnaire, you are asked to indicate your preferred location choices in order of preference. If you only have one preference, then only one location should be indicated.

**17. Is there a potential to work remotely while on temporary assignment?**

There may be potential for remote working, depending on the requirements of the role in question, and the availability of technical resources.

**18. Will a temporary assignment affect my Contract of Indefinite Duration (CID)/Contractual requirements?**

Your regular employer will remain your employer for all contractual purposes. For the purposes of CID entitlement, the temporary assignment will not be counted as a break in service.

**19. My contract is due to end in a few months. What happens if I am on a temporary assignment?**

If you are on a contract the temporary assignment will terminate at the current end date of your contract if that occurs during the assignment period.

**20. Who will pay me?**

You will continue to be paid by your regular paymaster.

**21. Who will be my manager?**

For the duration of the temporary assignment direct management and supervision will be provided by the temporary line manager.



## **22. What hours will I work?**

You will not be required to work beyond your current contracted hours. Working hours will be dependent on the particular needs and circumstances of the organisation. Some workplaces may operate different working arrangements which may be across an extended working day or week. These arrangements can support staff to manage caring responsibilities and facilitate social distancing measures.

## **23. Will I be trained?**

Training/up-skilling will be provided as necessary in order to ensure that staff are equipped to undertake the roles in question.

## **24. Can employees on temporary assignment return to meet business needs in parent organisation if required?**

Where the need arises, staff who have been temporarily assigned can return to their original jobs.

## **25. Is Travel and Subsistence (T&S) payable to staff on temporary assignment?**

Normal T&S arrangements will apply to staff who are temporarily assigned in the current crisis. Staff who are temporarily assigned should be treated as being headquartered at the new location. In this regard, normal Public Service and Revenue rules on non-payment of T&S for home to work travel apply.