

Important Notice

New sick leave arrangement from 1 September 2014

- ✎ Changes to sick leave conditions for public servants (other than school staff) were introduced on 31 March 2014.
- ✎ **These changes came into force for teachers (and SNAs) with effect from 1 September 2014.**
- ✎ The detail of the changes are set out in DES Circular 59/2014 which was issued on 18 July last.
- ✎ This circular is based on regulations established by Statutory Instrument 124 of 2014 which gives a statutory basis for the changes.
- ✎ **The changes to the sick leave conditions are significant and it is imperative that teachers familiarise themselves with the new sick leave conditions.**
- ✎ Members are asked to inform themselves of the revised provisions by consulting the comprehensive information on the INTO website.
- ✎ In particular, a podcast on our website provides a succinct summary of the key changes.
- ✎ These changes can be summarised as follows:
 - ➡ The new sick leave scheme does not reduce the amount of **time** a teacher can be absent owing to illness. But depending on the duration / frequency of sick leave absence(s) it could reduce the amount of **pay** a teacher will receive while absent.
 - ➡ Paid sick leave may not always be at full pay (as it is at present) as the revised scheme provides for a move from 'full-pay' to 'half-pay' to 'temporary rehabilitation remuneration' – again depending on the duration / frequency of sick leave absence(s).
 - ➡ The duration of paid sick leave absence will now be determined by whether the absence is regarded as 'ordinary' illness or a 'critical illness'.
 - ➡ Absence in respect of 'ordinary illness' in a rolling four year period will be a maximum of three months on full-pay followed by three months on half-pay.
 - ➡ The threshold for a 'critical illness' will be six months on full-pay fol-



- ➡ lowered by six months on half-pay.
- ➡ Medmark will advise (following an online request) as to whether an illness falls into the 'critical illness' category.
- ➡ A new method of counting sick leave absences will apply known as a 'Dual Countback'. The dual countback (which is more favourable than a single countback)

- ➡ is explained well in our podcast;
- ➡ Under the new arrangements a teacher who has exhausted paid sick leave (i.e. full pay and half pay) will receive Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration (TRR) [Previously a teacher would have been on unpaid leave]. The amount of TRR is linked to a teacher's salary and service.

Members are welcome to contact the INTO Queryline for clarification on the new arrangements but we would ask that members would in the first instance, view the podcast to get a broad understanding of the new provisions. In addition, it would be very helpful if members could determine how much sick leave they have used over the past four years in advance of ringing the INTO Queryline. This information can be sourced at school level from the OLCS.