

No. 127/2020

16th March 2020.

TO: ALL BRANCHES WITH POSTAL MEMBERS

Dear Colleagues

RE: SICK ABSENCE DUE TO CORONAVIRUS – COVID 19

The department wrote to Royal Mail on 9th March to discuss assurances around what will happen in the event of members having to self-isolate due to coronavirus. A response was received on 12th March and a meeting took place on 13th March 2020. A further discussion has taken place today.

Whilst advice will change on a regular basis going forward around self-isolation, we wanted to ensure members are not put in a position where they could be faced with the decision to come to work and risk spreading the virus or taking the proper medical advice and stay at home. A major part of the decision making process in the above scenario will be whether they can afford to stay at home and also have the security of knowing they will not be have the absence counted under the Attendance Agreement.

We welcome the sick pay being paid to members within their first year of employment and see this as a positive way forward. This was confirmed in Royal Mail's Communication sent out on Friday 13th March 2020. This is attached at Appendix A.

We have also spoken to Royal Mail about discounting absences within the Attendance Agreement relating to coronavirus. Royal Mail's response to discounting absence due to coronavirus is below.

Will absences due to coronavirus be counted within the attendance procedure?

Answer: We would expect the vast majority of coronavirus absences to be discounted from the normal attendance procedure. However, in the event coronavirus absences are for an excessive duration or repeat in nature further investigation may be required.

Where members have to take time off to look after dependents they will be able to take annual leave, unpaid time off or be able to work flexibly.

These terms apply to everyone within Royal Mail group, including RMPFS members. Parcelforce have similar arrangements in place, through a separate communication.

All enquiries regarding the content of this LTB should be addressed to the **PTCS** Department, quoting reference 415. Email address: khay@cwu.org

Yours Sincerely,

Carl Maden.
Assistant Secretary (Acting).