

No. 174/20

2nd April 2020

TO: ALL BRANCHES WITH ROYAL MAIL GROUP MEMBERS

Dear Colleagues,

RE: CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 SICK PAY AND POLICY UPDATE

Further to LTB 164/20 dated 30th March 2020, I received an email yesterday afternoon from Royal Mail and a telephone call from RMPFS stating they have reviewed the current sick pay and attendance policy and are not changing it at this time. The policy will be reviewed mid-April.

Royal Mail & RMPFS are blatantly ignoring the safety of employees and customers, despite not having any valid reason for not implementing full sick pay, to keep members and the public safe.

I have written to Helen Diksa, Royal Mail Group, IR, HR and Policy Director (which covers all Royal Mail Group members including Parcelforce, excluding RMPFS) and Charlene Ryan HR Director for RMPFS and requested Royal Mail/RMPFS reconsider the decisions they have made to simply re-endorse their current policy.

The letter points out:-

Their current policy, is outdated as this was made over 2 weeks ago, when the self-isolating period was a maximum of 14 days, it is now 12 weeks. As we all know, this was also prior to a lot of new information being given and prior to the emergency measures implemented by the Government to stop the spread of Coronavirus Covid-19.

Royal Mail and RMPFS should follow the statements they have made about making your safety their number one priority by ensuring full sick pay for anyone who has to go sick due to having symptoms/contracting the virus or has to take time off to look after a dependent. This will bring consistency with the policy to pay members with less than 12 months service and it will save lives. If our request is refused, it is clear the policy decisions they are making are based on cost and not on the safety of their employees.

The update published by Royal Mail & RMPFS yesterday does not explain why they have not updated their policy, we have asked them for an explanation.

It cannot be right our members who have had to previously take time off to battle Cancer or recover from a Heart Attack etc. are now penalised by a decision to self-isolate which is out of their control and enforced by the Government.

It was announced yesterday the number of UK deaths in hospitals rose to 2,352 – an increase of 563 (31%), the highest day-on-day rise so far. Also, during the period of the next two weeks, between now and your next proposed review date, it is expected the number of positive cases of Coronavirus Covid-19 will peak. This is and will continue to be at a time when the NHS staff are not getting the correct equipment and are already overwhelmed with patients.

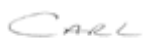
How this crisis is handled will never be forgotten and I believe our suggestions will go some way to giving members comfort in not being forced to take risks by having to come to work, due to not being able to afford to stay at home.

A copy of the letter in full is attached to this LTB.

We have had reports into the department Managers are telling members if you have to self-isolate due to someone in your household having symptoms, this is without pay. To be clear if you have to self-isolate due to someone in your household having symptoms, you should self-isolate for up to 14 days, i.e. 7 days after you develop symptoms. E.g. If you get symptoms on day 3, self-isolation is until day 10. The 14 days should be extended if you get symptoms in the latter stages and this should be **paid** sick leave. Managers should choose "Coronavirus with Symptoms" if the employee has symptoms and "Coronavirus Self Isolation" if they do not have symptoms.

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

Yours Sincerely,



Carl Maden
Assistant Secretary (Acting)
PTCS Department.