

No. 290/20

4th June 2020

Dear Colleagues,

£200 COVID-19 Recognition Payment

Further to LTB 263/20 circulated on 20th May 2020, colleagues are advised that a response has now been received from Royal Mail which provides clarification on their qualification criteria for this payment.

For ease of reference the questions raised by the union and the company's response is listed below:

Q 1: Will the payments be made in the spirit of the Christmas guidelines for such payments?

A: *"We make two separate payments to employees in the run up to Christmas. You are right that there are some parallels with one of these, the Christmas Supplement that is paid to just OPGs, albeit not directly the same.*

This is a one-off discretionary non-contractual payment. This payment is based on appropriate eligibility criteria linked to colleagues contracted duty hours."

Q 2: In respect of part timers and the pro-rata nature of the payment (especially given the payment is focused on those who worked), will part-timers be paid for the actual hours they have worked?

A: *"For all eligible employees the calculation for the payment is based on contracted duty hours. Additional hours worked on scheduled attendance and overtime does not count towards the payment for part time or full time employees. However, part-time employees that varied their contractual hours and worked full-time for a four-week period during the period (between Monday 16 March 2020 and Sunday 10 May 2020) will be paid the one-time Covid-19 payment in full."*

Q 3: Attendance - To be eligible will an individual need to have attended work for the entire 16th March – 10th May 2020 period?

A: *"As we encouraged employees to take booked annual leave, employees who were absent due to annual leave do not have these days or weeks deducted for the purposes of calculating any payment.*

The payments are proportionate. Ultimately this is not about judgement on those who could not work but a positive recognition of those who could and did support."

Q 4: Equality Act 2010 - Is there a potential risk that the qualification criteria could be discriminatory by excluding those who have been absent from work during the 16th March/10th May period due to conditions which mean they are likely to be considered disabled under the Equality Act 2010? Is there a further potential risk of discrimination claims by excluding those who have had to take unpaid leave due to caring responsibilities as in many cases this will be female employees.

A: *"We believe our approach complies with all equality laws"*

I trust the above information provides colleagues with clarification on the company's position with regards to their qualifying criteria for the £200 recognition payment, although I appreciate the response may be disappointing for some members. It should however be remembered that we are dealing with a one-off, non-contractual, discretionary payment made to recognise the contribution of those members who were able to work and support the operation under the status of key workers.

Colleagues are however advised that I have written again to the company with the request that they reconsider the criteria for our part time colleagues who worked in excess of their conditioned/contractual hours, in light of the fact that many colleagues would not have had the opportunity to vary their conditioned hours of attendance at short notice. Branches will be updated accordingly once a response is received.

Any enquiries in relation to the content of this LTB should be addressed to the DGS(P) Department.

Yours sincerely,



Terry Pullinger
Deputy General Secretary (Postal)