IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ALL PRSI CLASS A CONTRIBUTORS

Changes in the number of days for claiming illness benefit with effect from 01st March 2021

In September 2019 the Department of Education (DE), as payroll provider, introduced revised procedures in regard to the collection of illness benefit deductions from teachers, special need assistants and other staff paid on the payrolls operated by the Department.

Claims for illness benefit by staff paid on Department payrolls who pay "A" Class PRSI contributions are made to the Department of Social Protection (DSP) and the illness benefit is paid directly to the staff member by DSP. **Staff should not send their DSP claims to the Department of Education for processing. All forms should be fully completed and submitted to the DSP directly at the address provided on the IB1 and MED1 (Certificate of Incapacity for Work).**
Staff must also obtain a standard medical certificate from their doctor for school records and ensure the school receives the medical certificates and enters the absences in a timely manner through the On-Line Claims System (OLCS).

New Arrangements for Claiming Illness Benefit from 01st March 2021.

1. When teachers, special need assistants and other staff are absent on sick leave (certified, critical and pregnancy-related at full/ half rate of pay) for more than **three days** after the 01st March 2021, they **must** submit a DSP illness benefit claim. Prior to the 01st March 2021 this was six days. The employee should obtain and complete the application form for illness/injury benefit (IB1). The certificate of incapacity for work (MED1) is completed by the doctor and either returned to the employee or submitted to DSP directly. **The teachers, special need assistants/staff member's bank account details must be included on the form IB1**. The completed application form (IB1) and certificate of incapacity for work (MED1) form should be forwarded directly to DSP at the address referenced on the forms.

2. Ensure the school receives the medical certificates and enters the absences in a timely manner through the On-Line Claims System (OLCS).

3. The payroll system will calculate the number of eligible days for illness benefit based on the sick leave record entered by the school and will deduct the amount from the salary. Deductions from salary will continue until the full amount due based on dates of absence on OLCS has been recouped.

4. DSP will notify the Revenue Commissioners after the illness benefit is paid and tax credits will be adjusted automatically by Revenue to take account of the income.

It is very important that schools are advised of the sick leave absence by the staff member and that the school authorities enter the absences on the OLCS system as soon as possible after the absence starts. **If an absence is not notified in time or if a number of weeks have elapsed before the absence is entered on the OLCS, the recoupment of illness benefit due to the Department for the full period of the absence will be deducted over a number of payrolls.** Deductions will be made in line with the DSP (Department of Social Protection) rules governing eligibility for receipt of illness benefit. The payment received by the claimant from DSP will compensate for this deduction.

Where a teacher, special need assistant or other staff member is in receipt of reduced rate of illness benefit due to income levels or insufficient contributions and not eligible to receive illness benefit, **they should notify the Department of Education of this by forwarding a copy of the DSP decision letter to Illness Benefit Unit, Department of Education, Athlone, Co. Westmeath, N37 X659 as soon as possible**. The daily deduction rate will be adjusted on receipt of this notification.

Please ensure your Bank Details are up to date and included on the IB1 form. The illness benefit payments will be issued to your account directly by DSP.
Further information on the illness benefit process is available on the DSP website -
https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-social-protection/

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