

Revenue & customs briefing

 Public and Commercial Services Union | pcs.org.uk

Members' Briefing **REVENUE & CUSTOMS GROUP**

To: **All Members**

cc: **Branch Secretaries, Group Executive Committee, Equality Chairs, VOAC** (for info)

Can this Briefing be circulated via HMRC IT systems: **NO**

Website: **YES**

Action to be taken: **Publicise to members and potential members working for ISS**

DATE: 24 April 2020

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PCS SECURES AGREEMENT ON OUTSOURCED WORKERS **Union to campaign and ensure there is 'no going back'**

- *Report any breaches of agreement to the Group Executive Committee*
- *Use agreement to recruit and organise outsourced workers*
- *Dial-in meeting for all PCS members working for ISS on Friday 1 May*

Background

PCS has reached a significant agreement with the Cabinet Office that all private sector staff working on outsourced, central government contracts will receive their full pay if they are absent from work due to the coronavirus.

This means that outsourced staff will:

- Receive full pay, rather than statutory sick pay, if they are sick with coronavirus symptoms,
- Receive full pay if a member of their household has coronavirus symptoms and need to self-isolate for 14 days,
- Receive full pay, if they are in the extremely vulnerable group and government need to shield for 12 weeks.
- Receive full pay if caring arrangements cannot be arranged and they need to care for their children due to school closures,
- Receive full pay if their workplace is closed or partially closed.

The agreement covers outsourced staff employed to provide services to the civil service and non-departmental bodies e.g. caterers, cleaners, IT workers, maintenance staff, porters, receptionists, security guards etc.

The agreement is effective from the COVID-19 outbreak in the UK in early March and individuals are entitled to backdated payments, where appropriate.

No Going Back

This crisis has made many of us all re-evaluate who the key workers are in our society. Many are low paid workers on statutory minimum employment terms.

PCS is in dispute with cleaning contractor ISS over pay and conditions, and this crisis has not only emphasised the value of the workers who clean the offices but also that providing them full pay whilst off sick (a key demand of the dispute) is fully possible. Once the crisis is over, there must be no going back on this.

ISS cleaners all members meetings, Friday 1 May

In order to discuss organising to build on the gains made in the agreement, the union is holding all members meetings by teleconference on Friday 1 May. One meeting will take place at 12pm and one meeting will take place at 1pm. The meetings will last for a maximum of 45 minutes.

Any member wishing to take part should email outsourcedworkers@pcs.org.uk with your name, preferred telephone number and home email address, and which of the two meetings you will be dialling in to. If you don't have a home email address, your local PCS rep can do this for you.

All PCS members who work for ISS in HMRC offices are welcome to attend.

We would ask all branches to ensure that their members, and potential members are aware of the meetings and encouraged to take part.

Action for branches to enforce the agreement locally

Raise awareness of the agreement: The key thing for branches is to make sure this agreement is publicised. Make sure all your branch representatives are aware of it. Make sure your members are aware of it and make sure potential members providing outsourced services are aware of it, whether PCS is formally recognised or not.

Explain to existing outsourced members even though we have reached this agreement, employers are likely to resist paying them what they are due. They need to help make sure that their workmates are aware of their rights and ask them to commit to making two other colleagues aware of it.

Inform the Group Office of any breaches of the agreement: HMRC has a role in ensuring that their contractors are complying with the agreement and pay their staff in full.

You should encourage members to let you know if they have not received full pay for coronavirus-related absences. You should then send these examples, with the relevant evidence i.e. correspondence with the outsourced employer, wage slips etc, to philip.dickens@hmrc.gov.uk so that we can raise it directly with HMRC.

Recruit and Organise: Encourage potential members to join PCS. This easiest and quickest way to do this is to [JOIN ONLINE](#). This crisis provides us with a massive organising opportunity when it is over if we can set out the case to our colleagues providing outsourced services the value of organising collectively through their union.

Please make part of your discussions with potential members about whether they are willing to be a PCS contact, advocate or representative and email their details to philip.dickens@hmrc.gov.uk. Over the coming weeks we will be considering how we can encourage and support our traditionally non-unionised outsourced members into union activity and will keep branches and potential activists informed as plans develop.

Get involved!

Remember: HMRC are restrictive about what circulars can be distributed using the department's email system, so make sure that you stay in touch with your union.

If you haven't already done so, let PCS have your personal/non-work email address and your mobile phone number. We'll only use it to keep you informed about PCS matters.

CLIVE BRYANT
Assistant Group Secretary

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Group Executive Committee

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