Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS) guidelines for People Managers on supporting staff members during the current COVID-19 crisis

Seirbhís Chúnaimh
d'Fhostaithe na Státseirbhíse

Civil Service Employee
Assistance Service

During the current COVID-19 crisis there are significant changes happening within the Public Service whereby you and your staff have to adjust to a new reality and a totally changed working environment. Keep in mind that this process may continue to evolve rapidly as your organisation reacts to a very changed workplace. Be prepared for an ongoing process of adjustment as your organisation tries to find its footing in the face of rapid change. You will need to be flexible to ensure continuity of the business needs and be considerate of the needs of the staff in your area of responsibility.

Communicate the immediate business needs to your staff

- Be clear on the immediate business needs of the organisation and communicate this information clearly to your team. This communication is two-way
- You will need to spend time communicating with your team to ensure that they clearly understand the changes and to listen to them as they relay any concerns. This is an emotional time for your staff as they adjust to a very different work environment in a time of national crisis. Communication is critical and your team will appreciate your extra efforts to engage with them and respond to any concerns they may have

Allow your staff to provide input and assist you in implementing changes

- This will positively impact their morale. It will also give them some ownership of the change process and a sense of purpose which can give them a sense of control at a time of huge uncertainty
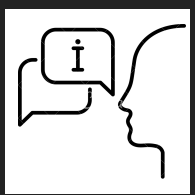
Help your employees find their place in a rapidly changing work environment

Staff who are rapidly adjusting to 1. **remote working** 2. **re-deployment and** 3. **greater work demands** may experience a range of emotions. They can be confused and fearful about the changes occurring in their work. Help your team to adjust to their new working environment by

- Pairing up experienced staff with redeployed staff for on-the-job training
- Implementing a buddy system within your team so each staff member is clear who they can turn to for immediate help/support
- Checking in regularly with remote-working staff and ensuring they have readily accessible IT support and back-up, when required. Be aware that staff have different levels of IT skills. Try to offer additional support to these staff members
- Reminding your staff that the **Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS)** is available at ph. 0761 000 030 Mon – Fri (9am – 8pm) and Sat and Sun (12pm – 4pm) or by email at cseas.per.gov.ie

Finally

Be present. Be calm. Do not put yourself at risk. Be patient with yourself and others. Tell staff what you do know and be honest if you do not know the answers. Keep abreast of current official information. Encourage staff to avail of the **CSEAS** for self-care. Please continue to take care of **yourself** at this time. Remember your own support systems - your line manager, HR and the CSEAS. Check out the CSEAS COVID-19 support page on our CSEAS website cseas.per.gov.ie