



An Roinn Airgeadais  
Department of Finance

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To: All Personnel Officers

**Re: Protecting staff from assaults at work**

Personnel Officers are asked to review the measures in place for protecting the safety of staff at work and to bear in mind the need to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to protect staff against injury or assault while carrying out their official duties. In this context, I would be grateful if you would review your procedures in the following areas:

**Health & Safety:** Departments/Offices should carry out an examination of all their health and safety arrangements on a regular basis, particularly in those areas where there is a risk of assault on staff.

**Preventive measures against assaults:** Departments/Offices should regularly review and if necessary improve their existing measures to ensure that staff who may be at risk are protected against assault. It is particularly important that Departments/Offices review procedures in place to deal with situations where staff must interview members of the public in public areas or away from the workplace (Circular 5/86).

**Report of assaults:** Departments/Offices should ensure that a report is made to the employing Department/Office and/or to the Gardaí in all cases of alleged assault (cf. Circular 5/86, Appendix A for Report Form). The onus is on officers themselves to make a report of cases of alleged assault and to do so as soon after the event as possible.

**Possible sick leave arising as a result of an assault:** It has been agreed with the staff side that the Department of Finance should be consulted in cases where a staff member has been absent from work on certified sick leave for over six months due to a workplace assault and the issue of moving to pension rate of pay arises. In this Department's view such cases should be the subject of a detailed review, taking account of all the circumstances, before moving a staff member to pension rate of pay.

Yours sincerely,

Marie McLaughlin