

Civil Service Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme

General Council Report 1277

(Meeting/s of 30 November 1994, 19 December 1994)

Smoking - code of practice

General Council Agreed Report No. 1277

(Meetings of 29 September, 24 November 1993 and Health and Safety sub-committee meetings of 24 March, 24 May, 30 August and 2 November 1994)

Claim that Civil Service offices be declared smoke-free zones by 1st January, 1994 with designated rooms being provided as smoking areas for smokers.

1. The claim was that Civil Service offices be declared smoke-free zones with designated smoking rooms to be provided.
2. A written submission on the claim was submitted by the Staff Side at General Council on 24 November, 1993. The Official Side in response to the claim said that what they envisaged was a voluntary code which would serve as a model document, the details of which would be agreed at Departmental Council. The Staff Side welcomed the code but argued for the inclusion of smoking rooms. The Official Side, taking into account the views of Departments, said that they could not agree to include the provision of smoking rooms in the code. However, they said that they had no objection to the matter being discussed at Departmental Council and they agreed to include a reference to this effect in the covering letter to Personnel Officers.
3. It was agreed by both sides that while this code has been voluntarily adopted, it would represent management policy to promote the health and comfort of the staff in general and that persistent non-compliance with its terms may be regarded as conduct inimical to the welfare of colleagues and dealt with in the manner appropriate in cases of such conduct generally.
4. This report was adopted on 19 December 1994.

SMOKING IN THE WORKPLACE Codes of Practice

1. Background

Smoking is a major cause of lung cancer, chronic bronchitis/emphysema and coronary heart disease. In Ireland 7,000 deaths a year are caused by smoking.

Legislation on health and safety in the workplace requires that health hazards be identified and assessed and solutions found to resolve them. The Tobacco (Health Promotion and Protection) Regulations 1990 specifically prohibit or restrict smoking in certain areas (see paragraph 3).

The hazards of tobacco, as they effect the individual smoker are well documented. There is increasing concern about the effects on non-smokers of other people smoking in their environment i.e. the effects of passive smoking.

2. The Health and Welfare of Staff

Having regard to the foregoing, the Department is anxious to ensure, as far as it is reasonably practicable, that staff do not suffer discomfort in the workplace or any health risks which may be associated with passive smoking while they are at work.

This code of practice has therefore been prepared, following consultation and agreement with the staff representative bodies, who will give it their active support. While this code has been voluntarily adopted, it represents a management policy, which has been agreed with staff interests, to promote the health and comfort of the staff in general. Persistent non-compliance with its terms may be regarded as conduct inimical to the welfare of colleagues and dealt with in the manner appropriate in cases of such conduct generally.

3. Existing No-Smoking Arrangements

Under existing regulations which apply to public offices, smoking is prohibited in circulation areas, including stairways, lifts, corridors, landings, concourse areas, foyers, conference rooms and rooms/areas to which the public have access.

4. New Restrictions

With effect from Day Month 1994, smoking will be prohibited in all shared office accommodation and recreation areas with the exception of areas designated in canteen/tea rooms where staff may smoke during their normal

lunch breaks and tea breaks.

5. Supportive Action

Constructive encouragement will be given to smokers who wish to cease smoking. The Department will facilitate measures requested by staff to help them to stop smoking.

Information and publicity about the dangers of smoking and other health hazards will be provided as it becomes available.

6. Recruitment

The Department will inform new employees of the code of practice.

7. Visitors to the Department

Visitors and temporary members of staff are expected to abide by the terms of this policy. Prominent notices as to the existence of the policy will be displayed in the reception areas and lifts.

8. Management/Staff Association Support

This code of practice is supported by Management and by each staff association as the best practice for the staff of the Department.

This report was adopted on 19 December 1994