

Civil Service Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme

General Council Report 1512

(Meeting/s of 31 October 2007, 12 December 2007, 26 November 2008)

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Claim: This claim seeks to have the existing full sick leave pay provision extended from six months to twelve months where the medical condition involves ongoing oncology care

The terms and conditions of the existing Civil Service sick leave scheme are laid down in Circular 25/78 Appendix A. The Scheme provides:

- Six months (183 days) sick leave on full pay in any one year
- Twelve months (365 days) paid sick leave – between full and half pay – in any four year period.
- After the paid sick leave entitlement had been exhausted, an employee may in certain circumstances be entitled to pension rate of pay. Officers who qualify for social welfare benefits keep these benefits while also receiving pension rate of pay. (Circular 6/95, para.10c)

Income continuance schemes are in place to allow employees to make provision for long term illness. Contributions to such schemes are fully tax deductible and if necessary, payment can continue to normal retirement age. Both management and staff unions should make information available to staff on such schemes early in their career.

The Civil Service sick leave scheme provides a high level of ongoing support to staff suffering from serious illness. It would be difficult if not impossible to justify the very significant enhancement in the scheme sought in the claim for one type of serious illness only. There are many other

chronic medically disabling disorders, mental and physical, that require prolonged periods of treatment. It would be extremely difficult to justify refusing to extend similar terms to an employee suffering from such illnesses. It is more than likely therefore that pressure would arise, and justifiably so, to treat all long term serious illnesses equally.

The very significant enhancement to the scheme sought in this claim could lead to significant Exchequer costs, particularly as there would inevitably be pressure to extend the scheme to other serious illnesses requiring long term treatment. As such this claim represents a cost increasing claim prohibited under the terms of 20.7 of Towards 2016.

Similar claims have been brought to General Council in the recent past; a claim for enhancement of the sick leave scheme for officers suffering from cancer, was disagreed in April 1999 (GC Report 1352) and for officers suffering from serious illness, was disagreed in March 2007 (GC Report 1483).

Agreed report recording disagreement
This report was adopted on 26 November 2008

Aengus O Riain
Official Side Secretary

Joan Byrne
Staff Side Secretary

Agreed Report recording disagreement

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