

Reference No: E109/123/97; **Date:** 02/08/2001

02/08/2001 LP:- Re Circular 31/2001: Civil Service Worksharing Scheme
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2 August 2001

Re: Circular 31/2001: Civil Service Worksharing Scheme

Dear Personnel Officer

1. I am directed by the Minister for Finance to write to you about the Worksharing Scheme which was introduced in the Civil Service with effect from 1 June 2001. In accordance with the terms of the Circular, the operation of the scheme remains subject to the principle that the operating requirements of Departments are not adversely affected and the implementation of the scheme within Departments is at the discretion of management in the light of the operational needs of Departments. While acknowledging that Worksharing is already operating in a number of Departments/Offices, it appears that, until recently, a minority of Departments/Offices had not made the Circular available to their staff as required. However, I am to remind you that, as the scheme came into effect from 1 June 2001, the details of the Worksharing scheme as set out in Circular 31/2001 should be available to all civil servants covered by the Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme, and applications for Worksharing should be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Circular. The issue was discussed at General Council on 25 July, and it was agreed that a Circular issued under the C&A Scheme must be made available to all civil servants as soon as possible.

2. A number of Departments have requested further clarification of paragraph 8.5 relating to alternative paid employment outside the Civil Service. This paragraph was included in line with advice received from the Office of the Attorney General that a provision simply prohibiting a worksharing civil servant from taking up alternative employment could be argued to be indirectly discriminatory against women. The Office of the Attorney General has confirmed that their original advice stands, and that there is no reason why part-time employees or those worksharing should not be permitted in the same strictly limited circumstances to engage in outside employment as are all other Civil Servants. Accordingly paragraph 8.5 of the Circular should be amended to read:
“A person participating in the worksharing scheme may not take up alternative paid employment except subject to the same conditions that apply to full-time civil servants, in particular that there be no conflict of interest and that the alternative employment does not interfere with the proper performance of their duties as civil servants.”

3. In relation to pensions and superannuation, the final sentence of Paragraph 14.2 should read: “It is, however, accepted by both management and the staff panel that this

method of deduction is without prejudice to the final policy decision on the application of co-ordination to part-time workers and the outcome of the working group provided for in the PPF to advise on the implementation of the relevant Government decisions on the Report.”(The version of Circular 31/2001 available on the Department of Finance website has already been amended to reflect this change.)

4. With regard to the provisions in Paragraph 18 in relation to extra attendance, I am to say that staff who were Jobsharing prior to the introduction of Worksharing, are subject to the provisions of Paragraph 18 on payment for extra attendance with effect from 1 June 2001.

5. A number of Departments/Offices have raised with us the question of the Corepay payroll software and whether it will work for the Worksharing patterns. The Centre for Management and Organisational Development (CMOD) has informed us that all Departments/Offices have been issued with the Worksharing software recently. Departments should discuss with CMOD the best approach to scheduling the testing of the worksharing software in conjunction with the migration to the Euro version of Corepay. However, this should not preclude those Departments/Offices who wish to do so (or are already doing so to accommodate parental leave patterns) from manually adjusting the payroll to accommodate worksharing patterns.

6. It is intended to convene a meeting of all Personnel Officers in early September to discuss the implementation of the Worksharing Circular.

Yours sincerely

John O’Connell
Principal Officer