

Re: Special Leave Without Pay

Date: 16 March 1984

Document Type: Circular

Link: [Letter of 12 April 1985](#)

From: Department of Health, Ireland

To: Chief Executive Officer, Each Health Board

To: Secretary/Manager, Each Voluntary and Joint Board Hospital

A Chara

1. I am directed by the Minister for Health to state that in order to help improve the job opportunities for young people, he has decided that a more liberal attitude should be adopted towards the granting of special leave without pay to persons holding permanent appointments under health boards or other health agencies.

2. The Minister accordingly decided that:

(1) application by health staff for special leave without pay for a period not exceeding three years should as a general rule, be granted;

(2) an application for special leave should be refused only where the employing authority certifies to the Minister that the service of the person are such that release would not be in the public interest and that the person plays a key role in the organisation concerned;

(3) applications for special leave should not as a rule be granted to staff who have not completed probation in their existing grade or previous grade. This would not apply, however, to leave for study purposes, where the minimum service requirements would be one year, or to leave to cope with unusual domestic difficulties;

(4) the minimum period of special leave without pay will be one year, except where leave is required to cope with unusual domestic difficulties;

(5) all employees going on special leave without pay may be replaced; permanent replacements may be made in basic grades; where an employee has been serving in a promotion grade the vacancy may be filled by a normal promotion or replacement, subject to the provision that, where there are less than three posts in the grade in question, the vacant post should not be filled in a permanent capacity and appropriate acting up arrangements should be made for the temporary filling of the post;

(6) staff released on special leave without pay should be required to give advance notice of their return at least three months before they are due to resume duty;

(7) if, on return to duty, a vacancy does not exist in the grade formerly held by the employee, he/she could be offered a lower graded post (with appropriate lower pay) pending the occurrence of a vacancy in the higher grade.

3. The forgoing arrangements do not alter the existing leave provisions enabling staff to spend short terms working in overseas countries whose health services are in need of development. Under these special provisions, eligible persons may be granted special leave with nominal pay with the provision to continue payment of superannuation contributions and with the entitlement to appropriate incremental credit on return from overseas service. These special provisions will not apply to the other circumstances of special leave without pay covered by this circular.

4. It is requested that the above provisions should be brought to the attention of all staff. It will be necessary to furnish the Department at six monthly intervals commencing 30 September next with a return giving details of staff who have availed of the provisions and with details of the measures taken to replace them.

5. The terms of this circular will apply for the trial period ending 31 December 1985, when the position will be reviewed.

Mise le meas
J. O'Dwyer
Assistant Secretary (Personnel)