



# **Lead Worker Representative Return to Work Safely Protocol**

# Who and Where does the Protocol apply to ?

- The protocol applies to the protection of workers in **ALL WORKPLACES.**
- Those workplaces that have remained open and where workers have continued to carry out their work throughout the lockdown.
- Those that are reopening under the various phases of the lifting of the lockdown.

# Why a Protocol & Lead Worker Representative (LWR)?

- Covid-19 is a highly infectious virus from which workers need to be protected.
- Workers who have been off work are returning to the workplace.
- Safety measures must be in place and maintained to protect workers' health.
- Worker safety is enshrined in legislation and supported by a spirit of co-operation and responsibility.

# Where did the Protocol & Lead Worker Representative come from?

- The Return to Work Safely Protocol was developed through the Labour Employer Economic Forum [LEEF] – Government, Unions & Employers.
- Each workplace to have at least 1 Lead Worker Representative.
- Meaningful discussion between Workers and Management is required in each workplace.
- Responsibility of Management to address Covid-19 concerns of employees.

# Who is the Lead Worker Representative?

- Workers are entitled to select a Lead Worker Representative as they are a Safety Representative, the LWR should where possible be incorporated into present H&S structures
- There is nothing to prevent an existing Safety Representative also being the LWR
- More than one LWR may be required depending on the nature of work, numbers of employees, number of workplaces, different occupations in the workplace etc.
- Where the LWR is not the Safety Representative there should be clear liaison and consultation between these two key personnel.
- The role of LWR and the consultation with the LWR is mandatory – not negotiable.

# What is the Role of the Lead Worker Representative ?

- To collaborate with the Management to prevent spread of Covid-19
- To be aware of the latest Covid-19 advice and the Company response plan
- To keep fellow workers up to date on latest Government Covid-19 advice
- To assist in the implementation of and adherence to preventative measures identified in the national Protocol
- Consult with and make representation to Management on any Covid-19 issue of concern.

# How is the LWR Role Carried Out ?

- Ensure consultation on the control measures and response plan put in place
- Be aware of the control measures that are in place for prevention of Covid-19
- On a daily basis check the workplace using the Protocol LWR checklist from the HSA
- Keep a record of any problem areas and actions to rectify them
- In the event of an outbreak, ensure adherence to the detailed response plan

# When is LWR Complaint Procedure Required ?

- Most workplaces will be able to implement good procedures in the workplace based on cooperation between the designated management representative and the worker representative. If there are difficulties in implementing the protocol, there is a suggested procedure for resolving issues.
- Such difficulties may arise:
  - Where noncompliance with checklist requirements are observed or complained of by employees.
  - Where the employer refuses to implement the action plan.



# How does the Complaint Procedure Work ?

- LWR should raise the matter with a more senior manager in the employment.
- Notify the safety representative and trade union representative.
- Seek a solution.
- Where a senior manager is unable, or refuses to deal with the issue, refer to [wcu@hsa.ie](mailto:wcu@hsa.ie)
- If HSA send an inspector, the LWR is entitled to accompany them during the inspection, and receive a copy of any recommendations or orders.
- If your complaint is not dealt with, or you are dissatisfied, you may take the matter up with your union or refer to [covid@ictu.ie](mailto:covid@ictu.ie)

# Resources & Information on Covid-19

There are key resources that anyone taking on the role of Covid **Lead Worker Representative** should be familiar with. These are:

- [The Return to Work Safely Protocol document](#)
- [The Congress User Guide to the Protocol](#)
- [The Congress Introductory video](#)
- [The HSA Checklists and templates](#)

These and a range of other resources from many organisations are available on the Congress <https://www.ictu.ie/healthandsafety/covid-19/>