

Members' Briefing REVENUE & CUSTOMS GROUP

To: **All Members**

cc: **Branch Secretaries, Group Executive Committee, Equality Chairs, VOAC** (for info)

Can this Briefing be circulated via HMRC IT systems: **YES**

Website: **YES**

Action to be taken: **For the attention of all members**

Date: **10 May 2022**

Ref: **R&C/MB/023/22**

BALANCING HOME AND OFFICE WORKING

'Return to Office' talks continue

- *PCS in further talks with HMRC, following CEO announcement*
- *Members advised it is essential to participate in 'Return to Office Toolkit' process*

HMRC has issued a further update on the moves to re-establish a greater degree of office-based working, in a message from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) published on 9 May 2022. The message reiterates the measured approach being adopted by the employer in the areas of the UK, where the appropriate government has indicated that a return to office-based working is allowable.

It is essential that members engage with the process agreed for return to workplace discussions, using the Toolkits available for this purpose.

'Return to Office' discussions

Members working in England and Scotland were given notice earlier this year that, where possible, they should now be working in line with their Business Area expectation that staff can work from home for an average of either 2 or 3 days per week (depending upon the decision reached by the business area). In Wales, notice was given at the end of April; and in Northern Ireland notice has yet to be given. You'll already be aware that PCS has raised concerns with HMRC that we believe that giving such notice for members in Wales, potentially cuts across the Welsh Government's 'work from home if you can' guidance for Covid 'Alert Level Zero'.

In talks with the department, it was recognised that how the Business Area expectation is to be achieved, would need to be discussed with each individual worker. This is to ensure that any issues that any member of staff may have regarding returning to the office, could be identified and addressed. PCS has agreed with HMRC that it would be sensible to continue with the use of Toolkits to facilitate discussions, with two specific [Return to the Workplace](#) Toolkits designed for this purpose.

It is essential that members engage with their line manager about returning to the office. **If you have not yet discussed arrangements for returning, for whatever reason, you must now do this using the [Revised Toolkit](#).**

The arrangements for the 'Supported Return Plan' Toolkit are time-limited; for England and Scotland this was 30 April [Manager toolkit - Supported Return Plans England & Scotland](#); for Wales this will be 27 July [Manager toolkit - Supported Return Plans - Wales](#).

If you have previously agreed arrangements using a 'Supported Return Plan', you must now have a further conversation, and identify any remaining concerns using the [Revised Toolkit](#).

Further Advice

The employer has been clear that the policy approach will continue to apply across HMRC irrespective of business area, all staff are covered by the single set of policies and policy guidance published on the Covid HR Policies SharePoint Site.

Any concerns about adherence to policies or any other related matter should be raised with your PCS branch representatives. In turn if the issue cannot be resolved locally PCS branches can access assistance from the PCS group executive. The Group Executive Committee is ready to provide additional support and assistance to branches.

If branches need further support, please contact PCS HQ via responseteam@pcs.org.uk. Branches can also access advice on the return to office process via dtus@hmrc.gov.uk.

Join PCS

If you've read this briefing and you aren't yet a member of PCS, then [join today](#), and be a part of the organisation working to defend your interests and keep you safe.

Get involved!

Remember, HMRC applies restrictions on the content of union circulars distributed using the department's email system, so make sure that you stay in touch with your union. You can find your membership number in your latest email digest from PCS.

If you haven't already done so, let PCS have your personal/non-work email address and your mobile phone number. We'll only use it to keep you informed about PCS matters. You can update your details securely online by registering for [PCS Digital](#) or by contacting your local PCS rep, and asking them to enter your details securely on the PCS Organising App.

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