



Caring for Carers Returning to Work

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Caring for Carers Returning to Work

- World of work in NI in context of Covid-19
- Equality law considerations
- Employment law/Health and Safety law considerations
- Good employment practices



Caring for Carers Returning to Work

- Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (the furlough scheme) extended and amended
- Employers wanting to get back to business
- Caring responsibilities/support structures may not be in place
- Employers meeting their business needs and accommodating employees' caring responsibilities



Legal Considerations for Employers

- Equality Law
- Employment Law
- Health and Safety Law



Good Practice

Employers should:

- Appreciate that employees circumstances may have changed
- Start conversations with employees in advance
- Ensure employees are aware that they may apply for changes to their working arrangements – temporary or permanent



Flexible Working

- Consider requests fairly and without discrimination
- Implement in accordance with policy and procedure
- Commission **guidance** and **model policy and procedure** at equalityni.org/FlexibleWorking



Flexible Working

Flexible requests might include:

- Remaining on furlough (as allowed currently)
- Changing hours of work, start or end times, specific days off
- Working from home
- Holiday leave (paid) or unpaid leave



Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

The current Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme states:

Employees who are unable to work because they have caring responsibilities resulting from coronavirus (COVID-19) can be furloughed. For example, employees that need to look after children can be furloughed.

- Employees may remain on the current furlough scheme even where their employer has available work
- Recently, Government extended Scheme to include two phases



Summary

- Appreciate the context – employee circumstances may have changed
- Potential for indirect discrimination
- Constructively consider requests for flexible working
- Good practice



For advice and support from
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