



Banc Ceannais na hÉireann  
Central Bank of Ireland

Eurosystem



Human  
Resources

# Health and Wellbeing at Work Policy

**Applicable to:** All Employees

**Policy Owner:** HR Support Manager, Human Resource  
Division

**Health and Well-Being at Work**

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## **Introduction**

As a responsible employer and in the interests of staff health and well-being, the Bank wishes to encourage a positive and preventative health culture within the organisation. In encouraging staff to take responsibility for their health and well-being the organisation has put in place the following initiatives:

### **1. Health Screening**

#### ***1.1 Full Health Screening including Cancer screening***

A screening facility for staff is offered every three years and consists of a subsidy for a number of health screening programmes. The subsidy offered can be offset against a number of screening services, offered by a clinic in Dublin.

#### ***1.2 Eye-sight Testing***

At regular intervals, or as required, VDU (Visual Display Unit) eye-sight tests are carried out free of charge, by a trained specialist appointed by the occupational health providers for all staff who frequently have to use alphanumeric or graphic display screens for one continuous hour or more as part of every day work. The testing takes place in each of the organisation's premises. This type of health check is also required under legislation, which covers staff working with VDU equipment. Where an individual is found to require glasses specifically for use on VDU equipment the organisation will pay a subsidy towards the cost of these glasses.

While the organisation engages a trained specialist to carry out this screening, the screening is VDU specific and is not a full sight care programme. For information, staff that pay full (Class A) PRSI are also likely to be entitled to a full eye test every two years (subject to their contribution record). This eye test would be arranged privately by the staff member.

#### ***1.3 Audiometric (Hearing) Checks***

Under legislation, the organisation is obliged to ensure that regular hearing tests are provided free of charge for staff in certain areas of the organisation. These tests are carried out by the Bank's Occupational Health Service Providers. In the event that the results of a test recommends further follow-up due to a work-related issue, the

services of an ENT (Ears, Nose & Throat) consultant will be arranged by the Occupational Health Service Providers. In the event that a further referral is recommended but not work-related, the staff member will receive the full report of the consultant and be advised to progress the matter themselves with their GP.

These hearing checks are a requirement for new employees commencing work in the designated areas (completed as part of the recruitment process) in addition to periodic testing for staff working in other, related, designated areas.

An independent survey of noise and dust levels, in compliance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 and the 2006 Noise Regulations, is carried out periodically.

## **2. Anti-Flu Vaccine**

In ensuring a healthy work place the organisation also provides staff with the option to avail of the anti-flu vaccine. This service is provided free of charge on the premises by the Central Bank's Occupational Health Service Providers in October/November each year.

## **3. Health and Safety at Work**

### ***3.1 Safety Statement***

The Bank has a Corporate Safety Statement which outlines the overall structure of the Bank's Health and Safety programme. This statement details the duties of all management and supervisory personnel and also outlines the responsibilities of employees. Each staff member has a duty to take care of their own safety, health and welfare as well as that of others. The Safety Statement is available to all staff on the Intranet or from local departmental management.

### ***3.2 Protective Equipment***

The Bank provides personal protective equipment (e.g. eye and ear protection, safety shoes etc) for certain staff to carry out their duties in a safe and secure manner and to comply with certain regulations/legislation. It is mandatory for staff issued with personal protective equipment to wear/use this equipment.

### ***3.3 First Aid Officers and Equipment***

Each Department in the Organisation has assigned the role of First Aid Officer to one or two (depending on the Department size) of its staff members. These Officers receive proper training, and regular refresher training and will act in circumstances within the work environment which might require first aid assistance. A standard first aid kit is available in every department for small emergencies.

### ***3.4 Fire Officers***

Each Department in the Organisation has assigned the role of Fire Officer to one or two (depending on the Department size) of its staff members. These Officers receive proper training to ensure they will be able to assist in the event of a fire on the premises.

### ***3.5 Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)***

The organisation currently has a number of AEDs throughout the various premises of the CBI. A number of staff members have been trained to use these machines in the event of a cardiac emergency. Information on the locations of the AED machines and the names and contact numbers of all trained staff is posted on the Health and Safety Notice Board on each floor within the various premises of the organisation.

## **4. Illness during Working Hours**

### ***4.1 Use of Recovery/Medical Room***

The organisation provides a quiet room for staff that become unwell during the working day, in order that they may take some time to recover. In this instance, staff must inform their supervisor/colleague that they are going to the recovery room and the supervisor should check the staff member on a regular basis (e.g. every ten minutes). This facility is available in each of the premises. Staff should be aware that this facility should only be used on a short term basis and Human Resources Division (HRD) recommend that if a staff member advises that they are feeling unwell they should notify local management and then either go home and/or seek medical assistance, as necessary.

It should be noted that the Occupational Health Specialist also has use of the various medical rooms throughout the organisation from time to time. Consequently, it would be advisable that staff check with Occupational Health staff to ascertain that the relevant room is available.

### ***4.2 Leaving Work due to illness***

If a staff member feels so ill that they need to go home, they should report the matter to their supervisor and seek permission to leave work. The absence will be treated as one half-day's uncertified sick leave. (Flexible Working Hours regulations, where applicable, should be read in conjunction with this section.)

If a staff member is too ill to go home alone, a colleague may accompany him/her (drive or arrange a taxi). Depending on the situation, it may be advisable for the colleague to ascertain the possibility of an immediate visit of the staff member to his/her GP.

When a staff member has left work during the working day due to illness, the staff member should contact their supervisor as soon as possible after they arrive home to let the supervisor know that they have arrived home safely and that they are being appropriately cared for.

### **4.3 Emergency Services**

In extreme circumstances, an ambulance should be called, ideally via the security console to ensure quick and easy access for ambulance staff. The assistance of the nearest First Aid Officer should be acquired immediately in these circumstances. In case the use of a defibrillator is required, the Health and Safety notice board should be consulted immediately for information on the location of the nearest defibrillator and operator.

## **5. Return to work after absence on Sick Leave**

If a staff member has been certified unfit for work by a GP they should not attend work within the time certified without first providing another certificate to say that they are fit to return to work.

After an extended period of absence on sick leave (e.g. 4 weeks or more) a staff member must provide a fitness-to-return to work certificate stating he/she is fully fit to resume normal duties.

### ***Graduated return to Work after long-term Sick Leave***

In certain instances, particularly post-operative, the occupational health specialist may consider that a reduced attendance at work for a short time is necessary to facilitate a staff member's reintegration into the workforce. The Bank may facilitate a gradual return to work through a process involving local management, HRD, the Bank's Occupational Health Specialist and the staff member.

## **6. Occupational Health**

The Bank employs an Occupational Health Service Provider who operate in conjunction with HRD. The team includes an Occupational Health Advisor and an Occupational Health Physician both of whom separately attend the Spencer Dock premises on a regular basis.

***Role of Occupational Health*** The Occupational Health Occupational Health Service Providers oversee the operation of our medical system covering the areas outlined below:

- a) Pre-employment medicals and medical referrals<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> See Sick Leave Regulations for more information on medical referrals of staff.

- b) The administration of the Anti Flu Vaccine.
- c) Oversees the organisation of audiometric (hearing) testing.
- d) Advises on Health Care issues e.g. Infectious Diseases.
- e) Advises on absence levels with particular emphasis on issues relating to the work environment and prevention of risk to staff. This also involves giving medical advice on dealing with issues in the area of “Substance Abuse”, “Stress Related Illnesses” and “Harassment and Bullying”.
- f) Advises on absenteeism management policy.
- g) Oversees the re-integration of staff into the workplace following an extended absence due to illness and also liaises with individuals’ medical practitioners.

Staff should attend their own GP for treatment of individual illnesses and obtain medical certification as required under the Sick Leave regulations.

## **7. Employee Assistant Programme (EAP)**

Through the EAP, the Bank provides a professional counselling, coaching and support service, which is available to all serving and retired staff. This is a recognition and acknowledgement of the value placed on our staff. As individuals we may be faced with difficulties at different stages in our lives. These may be of a personal or a professional nature. Sometimes these difficulties can overwhelm us and begin to adversely impact on our personal and professional lives. The EAP can facilitate individuals to look at some of these issues in a safe and confidential environment. The objective of the service is to assist individuals to identify and resolve the challenges to their professional development and personal well-being.

Some of the issues, which can be addressed through the service, include financial concerns, legal matters, personal well-being, relationship difficulties (both personal and professional) bereavement and loss, psychological health, trauma, stress, retirement planning and welfare entitlements. In some cases it may be appropriate, following an initial assessment to refer individuals to a more specialist service. The well-being of the individual is the primary focus of any intervention and it is they who make the final decision with regard to their welfare. Self-referral is one of the ways the service can be accessed, however, in some cases colleagues or managers may have concerns about individuals and they can also make contact with the service.

Currently within the Bank the EAP is delivered in two ways, by

- An Employee Assistance Officer (see paragraph 7.1 below)
- An EAP provided by a specific provider. This facility is reviewed on an annual basis by the Senior Management Committee (SMC) (see paragraph 7.2 below).

### ***7.1 The Employee Assistance Officer***

**The EAO is available from 9a.m to 5p.m, Monday to Thursday.** In order to facilitate all staff, she has offices in Spencer Dock, the Currency Centre and Dame Street premises. Appointments can be arranged with the EAO at any time and may be facilitated outside the normal working environment. The EAO is also available to staff who may be absent on long or short-term sick leave recognising that enforced and unforeseen periods of ill health can be a very stressful period. Any intervention here is designed not only to support individuals and assist in resolution of difficulties but also to assist in the removal of any barriers which could preclude a return to work. As well as addressing the type of concerns outlined above, the EAO facilitates awareness training in relation to equality and diversity issues and can also offer advice, guidance and support in relation to the Bank's Dignity at Work policy and other policies. The EAO is also a resource to departmental management in dealing with coaching and mentoring issues at local level.

### ***7.2 External Provider Facility***

In conjunction with the 'in-house' EAO, Health Assured also provide a complimentary confidential Employee Assistance Programme. This service can provide assistance on finance, legal, employment, education, health and family matters, and their website at <xxxxxxxxxxxx> has a lot of information available for easy access. Initial contact for counselling is by telephone at xxxxxxxx and, following assessment, face to face contact can be arranged if appropriate.

Staff can elect to avail of either strand of the EAP service depending on their own particular preference. The overall objective of the service is designed to assist staff, their families, partners and those close to them. In times of stress and anxiety the service provided could be invaluable in providing a supportive environment, which facilitates staff to resolve life's challenges.

## **8. Health at Work Events**

The Bank has encouraged the initiative of health in the workplace in recent years by holding 'Health at Work' events in addition to the existing organisational health programmes promoting awareness of health and well-being. A year long calendar of wellness provisions will be run, in line with the Government's 'Healthy Ireland' document, with the principle of prevention of illness at its core. Staff are encouraged to proactively manage a healthy work/life balance by participating in the events held, and to learn ways of supporting the healthiest possible lifestyle. Events vary in topic ranging from the basic preventions of Diet/nutrition, Exercise, mindfulness/relaxation, and smoking cessation.

In combination with this, the Health and Safety team organise ergonomic assessments to ensure each staff member has the best desk and computer alignment possible.

## **9. Sports and Social Activities**

In the interest of well-being, the organisation supports and sponsors the Sports and Social Club which provides many fitness, leisure and social outlets.

## **10. Ancillary Policies**

Other policies (all available on the Intranet) that you may need to read in conjunction with this document include:

- Dignity at Work: Anti bullying, harassment and sexual harassment policy
- Sick Leave Regulations
- Absenteeism Management
- Addictions and Substance Abuse