

MEDICAL REFERRAL TO THE CIVIL SERVICE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PRACTITIONER

1. PURPOSE OF A MEDICAL REFERRAL

The purpose of a medical referral is to obtain medical advice to assist the Public Services Commission in managing attendance and health issues relating to a civil servant.

A medical referral may also:

- confirm the fitness of a civil servant to fulfil the duties of their post
- provide management with information to take any necessary steps to ensure the future smooth running of a department or aid the delivery of uninterrupted services
- assist supportive discussion with the civil servant in order to address health issues and seek appropriate remedy/action

Managers must be familiar with [Section E](#) of the Public Services Commission Civil Service Regulations 2015 (the Regulations) and with the Government Policy on '[Management of Sickness Absence Policy and Guidance](#)'.

2. PROCEDURE

a) When to seek a Medical Referral

When initiating the following procedure, managers should contact the HR Advisers within the Office of Human Resources, to seek advice and clarify the reasons for the referral.

Regulation [E12](#) provides guidance for when a medical referral should be sought.

In all cases, the civil servant must be made aware of management concerns in relation to their wellbeing/attendance, and have been given the opportunity for open discussion, before seeking a referral.

b) How to seek a Medical Referral

The manager should formally write to the Secretary of the Public Services Commission, using the appropriate form at [Appendix A3](#), asking that the civil servant be referred to the Occupational Health Practitioner. Along with this form, the manager must include the civil servant's attendance record covering the previous 2 years and the current job description. The form requires a summary of the situation to date, including the actions taken to rectify the problem and any other relevant information.

An HR Adviser within the Office of Human Resources will, on behalf of the Public Services Commission, make the necessary arrangements to refer the civil servant to the Occupational Health Practitioner and write to the civil servant confirming when this has been done.

c) What the Occupational Health Practitioner will do

The Occupational Health Practitioner will contact the civil servant directly with details of appointment date, venue and the information they will be required to take with them. If the Occupational Health Practitioner requires further medical information from a third party, i.e.

Consultant, Specialist or GP, consent will be required from the civil servant and the Occupational Health Practitioner will issue the consent form.

d) The outcome

The Occupational Health Practitioner will provide the Secretary of the Public Services Commission with a report which will include advice for consideration by management and the civil servant. This report will be copied directly to the line manager and the civil servant. Advice may include:

- i) prognosis on absence and return to work
- ii) further review or monitoring by the Occupational Health Practitioner and/or management
- iii) a short period of rehabilitation into work. (Guidance Notes on **Sick leave - part time return to work**, can be found in the Public Services Commission Civil Service Regulations Handbook 2015).
- iv) return to work with some adjustment to duties
- v) return to work in the near future is unlikely. If the Occupational Health Practitioner cannot recommend a return to work date, it may be necessary for the manager to implement the capability procedures (**Section B** of the Public Services Commission Civil Service Regulations 2015 – advice can be sought from the HR Advisers within the Office of Human Resources).
- vi) medical retirement on the grounds of permanently impaired health. In these cases, the Office of Human Resources will advise the department concerned of the Occupational Health Practitioner's recommendations and will refer the case to the Public Services Commission with a recommendation that the civil servant be dismissed on the grounds of capability by reason of permanently impaired health.