



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



National Ambulance Service (NAS)

Workforce Support Guideline for

Appropriate and Effective Utilisation of Unrostered Staff

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1.0 POLICY

- 1.1 It is the policy of the National Ambulance Service (NAS) to provide Managers, Supervisors and Staff with clear and unambiguous operational guidelines. This policy will be revised and updated to encompass any future requirements identified following a national capacity and workload review.

2.0 PURPOSE

- 2.1 To ensure the full utilisation of staff to accommodate the demands of the Service and thereby reduce/eliminate service interruption to patients/clients.
- 2.2 To maximise the level of service that can be provided from available resources
- 2.3 To provide Unrostered staff with a fair, equitable and transparent approach to rostering arrangements

3.0 SCOPE

- 3.1 This Guideline applies to all NAS Unrostered Staff in any grade.

4.0 LEGISLATION/OTHER RELATED POLICIES

- A. Organisation of Working Time Act 1997
- B. Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act 2003
- C. Financial Regulation 2009 NFR-03 Payroll

5.0 GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 Unrostered - A staff member who is not permanently assigned to a roster.
- 5.2 Minimum notice of rosters - The Organisation of Working Time Act defines minimum notice of rosters as twenty-four hours in advance of the first working day of that week (Section 17, Subsection 2, 3).
- 5.3 Short Notice Changes to Rosters - The Organisation of Working Time Act defines short notice changes as changes to working hours, notified within twenty four hours of the notified starting time (Section 17, Subsection 4). Such changes are permissible only in exceptional circumstances where such circumstances are unforeseen by the employer, i.e. short notice sick leave, force majeure leave, compassionate/bereavement leave, paternity leave, staff injury, Stress Management stand down, critical staff shortage or Major Emergency.

6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 Each Senior Manager will ensure that each Manager, Supervisor and Staff member is aware of and understands this Guideline.
- 6.2 Each Manager, Supervisor and Staff member must adhere to this Guideline.

- 6.3 Relevant Managers to implement and support this Guideline and to supervise it's operation.

7.0 GUIDELINE

7.1 ASSIGNMENT OF UNROSTERED DUTIES

- 7.1.1 Initially Unrostered Staff are assigned to an NAS Area of Operations. This in practice requires Unrostered Staff to work in a number of locations. Structured annual leave arrangements facilitate the long-term planning of duties for the majority of unrostered staff.
- 7.1.2 It is not the intention of NAS to have Unrostered Staff incur excessive journeys to report for work. In this context, Unrostered Staff will be assigned to a Station, which will become their "HUB" Station. Staff will be required to work within 45KM driving distance by the shortest route (from their HUB station or home whichever is shorter.) Some geographical variation may occur. Travel and or subsistence payments will not apply within the HUB.
- 7.1.3 Reference 7.1.2 above does not prevent Unrostered Staff being re-assigned to another station (HUB) to meet service needs.
- 7.1.4 Where no vacant shifts exist at locations, Unrostered Staff will be rostered over a 4 week period, subject to the limitations set out in Section 7.3 for Paramedic staff, as additional resources or in exceptional circumstances, will, subject to approval by an Operations Resource Manager or Control Manager (as appropriate to grade), provide release of staff for training, meetings, etc. This is also subject to limitations set out in 7.1.4
- 7.1.5 Where Unrostered Paramedic Staff are utilised as additional crews, they will be rotated throughout the Area of Operations to respond to demand or cover for short notice absence.
- 7.1.6 Whether additional resources are available or not, short notice staff absence will not be covered unless deemed essential by Ambulance Control or an Operations Resource Manager or a Control Manager (as appropriate to the grade). This decision will be based on resource availability versus actual activity demand and remains a management responsibility and decision.

7.2 NOTIFICATION OF UNROSTERED DUTIES

- 7.2.1 Completed Rotas will be determined solely by and distributed by the relevant Supervisor responsible for rosters ideally by email.
- 7.2.2 The Supervisor will ensure that the shifts allocated to the Unrostered Staff are distributed at local level and Unrostered Staff should be assigned to a single supervisor for monitoring of utilisation of hours over a four week period.

7.2.3 Supervisors will plan working hours for Unrostered Staff over an average 156 hours period, i.e. average 39 hours per week over 4 weeks. Every effort should be made, subject to the exigencies of the service and requests for leave, to spread working hours evenly over the four week period in so far as possible. In the majority of circumstances, the maximum rostered working hours in a particular week should not exceed 48 hours and the minimum rostered working hours in a week should not be less than 32 hours (if on 8 hour shifts) or 36 hours (if on 12 hour shifts). We note the 156 hours equates to 13 X 12 hour shifts whereby rostering should combine planning & flexibility requirements.

It may also be permissible where, following an established line, to exceed the 4 weeks, if an unrostered member of staff has been assigned to a continuous established roster, either on a rotational or quasi permanent basis, that incorporates a 39 hour week. "

7.2.4 Under/Over utilised hours will not be carried forward into the following period unless there is documented agreement signed by the relevant staff member and their line manager. Under utilisation of any basic pay hours (Contracted Hours) is not allowed and is prohibited under National Financial Regulations.

7.2.5 Weekly work assignments will be notified to Unrostered Staff, in normal circumstances, within forty-eight hours of the first assigned working day of the coming week.

7.2.6 Minimum notice is twenty-four hours of the first assigned working day of the coming week. Minimum notice should be the exception rather than the norm (see Section 5.3).

7.2.7 Weekly work assignments will include a minimum of two consecutive designated off duty days. Unrostered Staff who wish to request a specific day off MUST notify the Supervisor, responsible for rostering, NO LATER than 12.00 hours on the first working day of the week preceding the requirement. The Supervisor will make every effort to accommodate, subject to operational demands. Supervisors should ensure that the allocation of days off is evenly spread and reflects the volume of relief cover required so as to ensure there is no requirement to utilise off duty staff. While changes to day off (Rest Days) are allowed for they should occur with as much notice as possible to ensure short notice changes are at a minimum and staff receive more than a weeks notice where possible of such changes.

7.2.8 The Supervisor will notify Unrostered Staff at the earliest opportunity, should their shifts change from those previously published (minimum notice - see Section 5.3).

7.2.9 It remains the staff member's responsibility to contact the duty Supervisor, responsible for rostering, directly, to ascertain their forthcoming shift pattern.

7.3 SHORT NOTICE CHANGES TO ROSTERS

7.3.1 Where due to an unforeseen event (see Sections 5.3), and rostering arrangements require change at short notice, Unrostered Staff will have their shift pattern changed across the previously notified working days.

7.3.2 Every effort will be made to avoid changing the Unrostered Staff allocated off duty days. This notification takes into account provisions set out in 7.2.6 / 7.2.7.

- 7.3.3 Where Unrostered Staff are requested to work on their allocated days off, overtime payment is applicable if this falls within the weekly cycle only as referenced in 7.2.5 and 7.2.6. A working day is recognised as the day in which a shift starts. Only in exceptional circumstances should Unrostered Staff be required to work on their allocated days off.
- 7.3.4 Ensure such short notice changes are distributed evenly and fairly among Unrostered Staff so as to minimise the impact of such changes on any one individual.
- 7.3.5 Such changes may be notified by a Supervisor, Operations Resource Manager, Ambulance Control or Control Manager (as appropriate to the grade).
- 7.3.6 In the context of utilising Unrostered Paramedic Staff as additional crews rather than focussing on covering short notice staff absences, the frequency of changes should be exceptional (see Sections 5.3, 7.1).
- 7.3.7 Where Unrostered Staff express difficulty with the change, the staff member should be advised to complete the shift and given the opportunity to discuss the matter when the potential for service interruption has passed. Where the staff member lodges a grievance, the timescales set out in the HSE Grievance Procedure should apply.

7.4 CREWING LIMITATIONS

- 7.4.1 From 1st January 2013, NAS will only permit Post Graduate Paramedic Interns to work alongside a fully registered Paramedic or Advanced Paramedic. - Under no circumstances is it permitted to crew two postgraduate paramedic interns together.

8.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- 8.1 This Guideline will be circulated electronically to all Managers, all Supervisors and Staff.
- 8.2 This Guideline will be available in electronic format in each Ambulance Station and Ambulance Control for ease of retrieval and reference.
- 8.3 Each Operational Support and Resilience Manager will ensure that the Manager/Supervisor responsible for updating Policies and Procedures will return the Confirmation Form to NAS Headquarters to confirm document circulation to all staff.

9.0 REVISION AND AUDIT

- 9.1 This Guideline will remain under review and may be subject to change to facilitate any changes/developments in service requirements.
- 9.2 This Guideline will be subject to review following any new National Framework Agreement on Structured Leave or on the introduction on Min-Max Rostering
- 9.3 Each Operations Resource Manager will monitor compliance with this Guideline on a case by case basis and any deviation will be reported to the relevant Operations Performance Manager for remedial action
- 9.4 Any deviation will be followed up on as soon as practically possible so as to ensure the necessary remedial action is taken.
- 9.5 Area Operations Managers will review the effectiveness of this Procedure and propose amendments were deemed necessary.

Revision History:

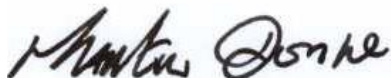
(This captures any changes that are made to a SOP when it has been revised. This may be placed at the back or close to the front of the document according to local preference.)

No	Revision No	Date	Section Amended	Approved by
1	2	03/01/2017	7.1.3	HR

10.0 Appendices

- Document Control Sheets 1-3

11.0 Signatures of Approval



National Ambulance Service Director
On Behalf of the National Ambulance Service

Date 3rd January 2017

Document Control No. 1 (to be attached to Master Copy)

NASWS022 Workforce Support Guideline for Appropriate and Effective Utilisation of Unrostered Staff

Reviewer: The purpose of this statement is to ensure that a Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline (PPPG) proposed for implementation in the HSE is circulated to a peer reviewer (internal or external), in advance of approval of the PPPG. You are asked to sign this form to confirm to the committee developing this Policy or Procedure or Protocol or Guideline that you have reviewed and agreed the content and recommend the approval of the following Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:

Title of Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:

NASWS022 Workforce Support Guideline for Appropriate and Effective Utilisation of Unrostered Staff

I acknowledge the following:

- I have been provided with a copy of the Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline described above.
- I have read Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline document.
- I agree with the Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline and recommend its approval by the committee developing the PPPG.

Name

Signature (Block Capitals)

Date

Please return this completed form to:

Name: Niamh Murphy
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Dublin 24
email niamhf.murphy1@hse.ie

Document Control No. 2 (to be attached to Master Copy)

Key Stakeholders Review of Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guidance Reviewer Statement

Reviewer: The purpose of this statement is to ensure that a Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline (PPPG) proposed for implementation in the HSE is circulated to Managers of Employees who have a stake in the PPPG, in advance of approval of the PPPG. You are asked to sign this form to confirm to the committee developing this Policy or Procedure or Protocol or Guideline that you have seen and agree to the following Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:

Title of Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:

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I acknowledge the following:

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- I have read Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline document.
- I agree with the Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline and recommend its approval by the committee developing the PPPG.

Name

Signature (Block Capitals)

Date

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