DENMARK

Negotiations and agreements in the public sector

As a kind of follow-up to the private sector national level tri-partite agreement announced on March 15 talks are now taking place between the government and the public trade unions representing public employees in the State sector including central administration, authorities and higher education in order to reach an agreement regarding work related issues during the Corona crisis.

An agreement was reached between the Danish Government and the public sector social partners Friday 27 March on the settlement of vacation days etc. during the Corona crisis for public employees who do not perform critical functions in, for example, hospitals. The agreement means that all public servants who do not perform critical functions must stay free/home up to five days during the current Corona crisis. The purpose is that not too many days should be settled when employees return to work after the crisis. The agreement covers municipal, regional and state/central administration employees and is applicable from 13 March to 13 April 2020.

New agreement on redeployment
(between Public Employers and Public employees (Municipalities):

KL (Local Government) and Forhandlingsfællesskabet (T. U. Negotiation Community) - which negotiates general agreements for workers in municipalities and regions- have discussed how to best use the resources. This has led to a new agreement (Mach 19) that allows some public sector employees to be moved to a different job than they normally have. These may be home-educated kindergarten educators who may be asked, for example, to care for children at night or mentally ill children in residences. The goal is to ensure staffing for the most critical functions during the corona crisis. (The full text attached in Danish)

Common manifestation between Public Employer and Public Employees (Regions):

The Danish Regions and Forhandlingsfællesskabet (T. U. Negotiation Community) has declared a common manifestation, that ongoing dialogue and adaptation of solutions is a necessity for the healthcare system to handle the efforts in relation to COVID-19. The Employees’ frameworks and conditions for performing the work will be affected, but the consideration of employees and patients must at the same time be secured as best as possible.
Read the Manifestation here (Danish)

Health Sector

Safety for the employees – lack of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The Danish Medicines Agency has a coordinating role to ensure the supply of PPE to the health system. The Danish Regions, Local Government Denmark (KL) and the Danish Medicines Agency have established a new logistics center to strengthen the overview of critical medical equipment and protective equipment in municipalities and regions and the logistic center will redistribute as needed. Read here
Several employees in the health sector have experienced a lack of PPE. The trade unions have called for immediately action – “We need to take care of the Health Professionals, if they shall take care of the patients”. The authorities have acknowledged that there, unfortunately, is a challenge with the supply of PPE in some parts of the Health System. They have declared different initiatives and actions.

**Ensuring a sufficient work force - Regional job banks**
The regions have set up job banks so that unemployed or retired nurses, doctors and other health professionals and nursing students, medical students and educators can sign up. The purpose is to ensure a sufficient work force. The trade unions support but underline that we must not compromise when it comes to safety and guidelines must be drawn up. Almost 8.000 have signed up for the regional job banks.

**Testing of COVID-19 in Denmark (safety of employees and a sufficient work force):**
On March 12, Denmark switched to testing only patients requiring hospitalization. It has received criticism from the WHO. Furthermore, the trade unions have been fighting for increased opportunity for testing of the health professionals. On March 22, the authorities have acknowledged that test capacity must be increased. Testing of health professionals is important for safety reasons but also to ensure sufficient work force.

**New agreements - Critical functions must remain in the healthcare system under COVID-19**
Danish Health Authority has described critical functions in the health care system. There are many critical functions in the health care system and shutdown of these should only be done in an urgent need. New agreements are made to minimize the consequences for sick and vulnerable citizens. An example is patients with chronic diseases. Instead of physical consultations at the General Practitioner or Nurse, they can now have tele- or video consultations. Read [here](Danish) (Danish)

**Latest figures from Denmark as off 30 March**
Tested: 21.378  
Infected: 2.555  
In hospitals: 499  
In intensive care: 131  
Deaths: 72