Italy

On 3 April, the main trade union confederations – CGIL, CSIL and UIL – have signed a new agreement on health and safety if civil servants in relation to COVID-19 health emergency. The agreement includes 10 main provisions that in summary cover:

- information and consultation with trade unions over measures taken to ensure the safety of staff and service users;
- application on rules for smart/telework, allow for changes in shifts without impact on pay and measures to minimise contact including staggered entry/exit for workers who have to go to the workplace;
- ensuring health and safety measures for those who have to go to workplace;
- work that can’t be done remotely (computer/phone) and can’t be postponed needs to be carried out at workplace with appropriate PPE;
- workers who cannot work use annual leave and potentially extraordinary parental leave to cover their time off work or remote training all with a view to protect earnings;
- workers who have to be absent to support a family member are entitled to an additional 24 days of paid leave on top of their six days of monthly paid leave;
- ensuring cleaning of premises, offices, workstations etc;
- closure of workplaces for cleaning for at least 24 hours where employee or citizen/user has tested positive for COVID-19; and
- guarantee of confidentiality and dignity of any worker who has symptoms and has to self-isolate.

The 10 points in more detail:

1. for the period of emergency, administrations should promote arrangements for communication and discussion with trade union representatives on the points of this protocol in order to share information and actions aimed at balancing the need for staff protection and of users, with that of guaranteeing the provision of essential and non-deferrable public services;
2. the need to reshaping the organisation of work and offices in order to reduce the presence of staff and users: for this purpose, including the use of the methods referred to in the point 1, the activities of public administrations are routinely carried out via smart work; administrations provide for rostering or rotation plans of employees that do not affect on remuneration aspects; establish staggered entry and exit times for employees; and of possible users so as to avoid contact in common areas as much as possible;
3. the need to ensure, for the purposes of continuing administrative activity, the most appropriate healthy and safe working environments in which activities are to be carried out in staff presence;
4. that, where the organisational capacity of the administrations and the nature of the service to be provided, the activities and services that cannot be postponed are also rendered as uniformly as possible remotely, in smart working mode or through computer or telephone services and, where not possible, the provision of services to the public is carried out with scheduled appointments at the headquarters providing that the staff, in order to carry out their work activities, are equipped with appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment) provided for in the regulations and in accordance with the provisions of the competent authorities in relation to the specific nature of the sectors and activities themselves, and that, in the context of
organisational autonomy, safety actions are implemented, including those of a similar magnitude to those set out in the Shared Protocol for the Regulation of Law Enforcement Measures and the containment of the spread of the Covid-19 virus in the workplace;

5. that, in line with circular call No 2/2020, if it is not possible to use smart forms of work, administrations, without prejudice to the possible use of holidays past accrued up to 31 December 2019, to leave or similar institutions where provided for in the National Collective Agreement in force, as well as, where requested by employees, extraordinary parental leave provided for at the guarantee of parental care to be provided, they can resort, in the manner provided by the current National Collective Agreement, to placement in remote training activities using identified training packages by the employer. Administrations make use of the exemption from the service on the following grounds as provided for in Article 87(3) of Decree-Law No 18/2020, in order to safeguard the total remuneration of those workers who are forced to be absent due to strict contingencies related to the exceptional nature of the Covid-19 pandemic;

6. on the need to harmonise the indications of all public administrations regarding the extension of the paid leave referred to in Article 33(3) and (6) of Law No 104/1992, conforming to Circular no. 45 of 25/03/2020 in relation to the use of paid permits and the cumulative use of the same, where the worker holds another permit 104 to assist a dependent family member, thus making it clear that the additional 12 days are also cumulative, therefore to the extent of a total of 24 days added to the 6 days of monthly permit already recognised in that case;

7. on the importance of limiting access to the common areas, canteens, waiting areas, with the provision of continuous ventilation or aeration of the rooms themselves, of a reduced dwell time within these spaces and with the maintenance of a safety distance of at least 1 metre between the people who occupy them;

8. the need to ensure the daily cleaning and periodic sanitation of the premises, of the environments, workstations and common and waiting areas for users;

9. the need to proceed, where an employee's COVID-19 is positive or of any citizen/user who has recently had access to the premises of an administration, to the closure of the same administration for at least 24 hours in order to carry out the operations of cleaning and sanitation of the premises concerned in accordance with the provisions of Circular No 5443 of 22 February 2020 of the Ministry of Health as well as their ventilation and the adoption of all the prescribed measures in case of exposure to contagion;

10. on the guarantee, in the event of temporary isolation due to exceeding the threshold of temperature or on receipt of symptoms related to COVID-19, confidentiality and dignity of the worker placed in preventive isolation