

Global People Solutions

Ireland to extend paid force majeure leave for 2021

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The Irish Labour Party recently proposed the Sick Leave and Parental Leave Bill 2020 (the "Bill"), which amends force majeure paid leave for employees whose children are unable to attend school or preschool as a result of COVID-19 governmental measures.

If passed, the bill would not be effective until at least April 2021.

Key details

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Currently, the Parental Leave Act 1998 provides employees with employer-paid force majeure leave for urgent family matters where a close family member is ill or injured. The maximum amount of leave is three days in any 12-month period or five days in any 36-month period.

If the bill passes, employees whose natural or adoptive child is unable to attend school or preschool due to COVID-19 governmental measures would be allowed to take leave until school or preschool reopens.

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In addition, the bill states that the force majeure leave also applies for as long as the employee's presence is required to care for their child at home. It is still unclear whether this means that the leave would apply when the employee's child is unable to attend school because of illness or exposure related to COVID-19. If the Bill passes, implementing regulations would provide clarification.

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While the current force majeure leave is paid by the employer, it is unclear whether the extended

leave period would be paid by the government or by the employer.

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Additional resource

[Sick leave and parental leave \(COVID-19\) bill 2020](#)

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