

Impact of Level 5 Restrictions

With the Government moving the country to Level 5 of the Resilience and Recovery Plan, which come into effect at midnight tonight October 21, 2020, there is no doubt that for the next 6 weeks there will be a huge impact on organisations that will have far reaching consequences for society and individuals.

From an employment perspective, at Level 5, the restrictions apply to attending the workplace with all but essential services and essential retail being required to work remotely.

As a result of the closure of businesses, employers will inevitably be faced with difficult decisions of placing employees on temporary lay-off or short-time working. Given the wider economic impact of this the government have sought to address this through the reinstatement of the higher pandemic unemployment payment and changes to the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme.

Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP)

The Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment is available to employees and the self-employed who have lost their job on or after 13 March due to the Covid-19 pandemic and is due to be in place until April of next year.

Considering the imminent restrictions at Level 5 of the plan changes to the rates of the pandemic unemployment payment have been made and are noted as follows:

October 16, 2020

From **16 October 2020 until 31 January 2021** the Pandemic Unemployment Payment will be paid at 4 rates.

The rate an employee will receive will depend on the amount they used to get paid:

- if they earned less than €200 per week - the rate of the Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment will be €203 per week
- if they earned between €200 and €299.99 per week - the rate of the Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment will be €250 per week
- if they earned between €300 and €399.99 per week - the rate of the Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment will be €300 per week
- if they earned €400 or more – they will receive €350

February 1, 2021

From **1 February until 31 March 2021** the Pandemic Unemployment Payment will be paid at 2 rates.

The rate an employee receives will depend on the amount they used to get paid:

- if they earned less than €200 the rate of the Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment will be €203 per week
- if they earned between €200 and €300 per week - the rate of the Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment will be €203 per week
- if they earned over €300 per week - they will receive €250 per week

April 1, 2021

From April 1, 2021 if an employee remains on the pandemic unemployment payment at that point, they will have to apply for either job seekers benefit or job seekers allowance.

The Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme

The Government has also announced that the rate of subsidy provided under the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS) has been revised to better support businesses dealing with Covid 19 Level 5 restrictions.

The result of this is that the rates under the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme will be aligned with the rates of payment under the pandemic unemployment payment, in the amount of up to €350 per week, effective from the next payroll date after October 19, 2020.

Disclaimer – The information in this section is provided for reference purposes only to assist Employers with the government protocols and guidance and must be read in that context and should not be used for or interpreted as a legal definition of any of the information provided. Some of the information provided is per information published on the government websites at www.gov.ie, www.dbei.ie. Professional advice should always be sought before making any such decisions.

**For further information or advice, please contact the designated HR & Employment Helpdesk at thewheelhrhelpdesk@adarehrm.ie or via telephone on (01) 5394661
Monday – Friday 9.00am- 5.00pm**