



Northern Ireland

# Civil Service

People and Organisational Development

Forbairt Daoine agus Eagraíochta

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**To: Permanent Secretaries**

**From: Jill Minne**

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## Hybrid Working Policy

I am writing to advise that the Finance Minister approved the NICS Hybrid Working Policy yesterday, and this is scheduled for introduction in September with full implementation of these new arrangements anticipated by October 2025.

As you know, during consultations with trade unions – which have now concluded – amendments were made to the draft policy in response to union feedback. These changes include enhanced guidance on annual leave management, strengthened communication regarding legislative requirements for reasonable adjustments under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and further clarification on the use of Connect2 hubs.

The draft Hybrid Working Policy was endorsed by Unite and GMB. However, NIPSA, FDA, and the Prison Officers Association did not provide their endorsement, primarily due to the stipulated 40% minimum workplace attendance requirement for civil servants and, in the case of the FDA, expectations concerning Senior Civil Service attendance.

While the policy establishes a 40% minimum weekly workplace attendance, managers retain discretion to consider individual circumstances. All requests for reasonable adjustments related to hybrid working will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to ensure thorough consideration and appropriate support for individual needs.

Through ongoing constructive engagement, management committed to providing trade unions with sufficient advance notice prior to implementation, as well as ensuring comprehensive communications to all staff and line managers regarding these changes.

We will work closely with departments during August to support effective implementation and - where appropriate - consistent communication across the Service. Some earlier internal communications regarding this issue led to industrial relations matters and delays. At this point in the change process, please share this information only with those individuals you deem appropriate.

If you have any immediate queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

*Jill Minne*

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