Other Contractors

Last update: **31 May 2022**

AMEY WASTE & REFUSE UPDATE

Noticeboard Bulletin - 31-05-2022

Posted on: 31 May 2022

GMB union members working as Refuse Operatives for Amey on the Isle of Wight are currently being balloted for industrial action. Members are in dispute with your employer over pay which is well below industry rates.

All messages of solidarity and support are welcomed. If you would like to send a message of support, please email Charles.harrity@gmb.org.uk

If you want to follow the campaign you can do so on social media by following on @GMBSouthern on Twitter and @GMBSouthernRegion on Facebook.

If you and your colleagues have issues with regards pay, terms and conditions that you would like a GMB campaign on, please speak to your local GMB Officer.

Want information about being a GMB Rep in your workplace – email PublicServices@gmb.org.uk

MITIE WASTE

Noticeboard Bulletin - 30-05-2022

Posted on: 30 May 2022

GMB union members working At St George's Hospital, Tooting, London are taking three days of strike action. The first day of action was on Monday 30th May and received huge support from the community who joined a protest march down the local high street. The next two days of action will take place on Monday 6th and Tuesday 7th June.

These key workers carry out cleaning and hostess roles at the hospital and are demanding compensation for changes to their pay cycle that has resulted in delays to their pay for seven weeks.

All messages of solidarity and support are welcomed. If you would like to send a message of support, please email helen.oconnor@gmb.org.uk

If you want to follow the campaign you can do so on social media by following on GMBSouthern on Twitter and GMBSouthernRegion on Facebook.

If you and your colleagues have issues with regards pay, terms and conditions that you would like a GMB campaign on, please speak to your local GMB Officer.

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Previous Bulletins

Letter To Rish Sunak On Contractor Relief

Posted on: 8 January 2021

Date: 08/01/21

FAO: Rishi Sunak MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer
Cc: Michael Gove MP, Minister for the Cabinet Office

Dear Chancellor,

Re: Procurement Policy Notes 02/20 and 04/20–Supplier relief due to COVID 19

I am contacting you regarding the Cabinet Office guidance previously issued that was applicable to all contracting authorities, excluding Devolved Administrations, that expired on 31 October 2020.

The guidance specified that all contracting authorities should: "inform suppliers who they believe are at risk that they will continue to be paid as normal (even if service delivery is disrupted or temporarily suspended) "also" suppliers should agree to act on an open book basis and make cost data available to the contracting authority during this period. They should continue to pay employees and flow down funding to their subcontractors."

This applied to all contracting authorities including central government departments, executive agencies, non-departmental public bodies, local authorities, NHS bodies and the wider public sector (excluding Devolved Administrations)

This guidance was instrumental inensuring that suppliers received continuity of payment, which ultimately benefited GMB members who are now facing real hardship.

Throughout the pandemic, GMB has consistently raised concerns that contractors have not always played their part in protecting workers and slowing the spread of the virus.

Many central government contractors have failed to provide adequate Covid absence payments to their staff, relying instead on existing SSP sick pay terms which do not go far enough.

GMB has raised on several occasions the lack of equality and fairness across this sector and even produced an Equality Impact Assessment setting out where the government was failing low paid workers across the contracting sector.

GMB is of the view that all staff should receive full pay if they need to self-isolate, as is the case for those staff directly employed by government departments.

The issue is being acutely felt in healthcare settings. In March 2020, unions agreed with NHS Employers and the DHSCthat all staff working in healthcare settings should continue to receive full pay should they be required to isolate due to Covid-19.

This agreement was extended to subcontractors. Since the expiry of the supplier relief, some contractors have ceased to pay their staff working in hospitals for Covid related absences.

Many GMB members are now being forced into attending work against Government advice as they cannot afford not to.

This is a serious public health concern, as inadequate sick pay arrangements are associated with higher infection rates.

This scenario is being replicated across contractors to many government departments and may contribute to the ongoing spread of the coronavirus.

The same guidance issued to NHS contractors in March needs to be issued across all government contractors as a matter of urgency and we need you to step in and do this and your department needs to underwrite the funding of thisimmediately.

The Government has now placed the whole of England in to national lockdown. This has once more brought about great uncertainty for GMB members who work within contracted services in the public sector such as hospitals, schools, job centres, prisons and prisoner transport.

Covid infection rates are at their highest ever level, and the majority of these skilled workers are low paid, female and many are from Black Asian Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

GMB are therefore demanding that the PPN Guidance is reinstated with immediate effect and that notification is served to all contractors regarding the payment of full pay for those on sick leave or Covid related absence.

I look forward to your response in order for us to reassure our members during these unprecedented times.

Yourssincerely,

Rehana Azam
GMB National Secretary

Waste Industry - Updated Covid 19 Guidance

Posted on: 19 January 2021

WISH, the Waste Industry Safety and Health forum have updated their advice for managing coronavirus risks for the waste industry.

GMB have a seat on this forum and WISH members include representatives from HSE, Trade Unions, trade and professional associations, recycling organisations and National and Local Government bodies.

The updated guidance reiterates that the most important control in preventing the spread of the virus continues to be good hygiene, social distancing (physical distancing in Scotland) and good ventilation. These practices should already be in place across all waste management operations.

To reduce the opportunity for person-to-person transmission Social Distancing should continue to be maintained. Where this is not practically possible other measures should continue to be in place such as staggering changeovers, staggering rest breaks ensuring that rest areas are thoroughly cleaned after rest breaks and other uses. All surfaces should be thoroughly cleaned after use and surfaces, doorknobs and other touchpoints cleaned periodically throughout the day. Where possible, windows in welfare facilities should be kept open to encourage a good flow or air and ventilation. In smoking areas there must be a 2m separation during smoking breaks which are often gathering points. If vehicles have to be shared controls must be maintained and enforced with regard to hygiene and ventilation such as always keeping windows open in shared cabs.

The guidance states that where waste operatives must enter a building where it is mandatory to wear face coverings then this must be complied with. If a third-party site has inadequate COVID controls in place and does not feel safe to enter, this should be reported to your manager.

There has been further clarification on the use of face shields/visors which have become popular for some people. The evidence is that they provide little protection and should not be used on their own.

The guidance has given further clarification on the vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable:

> “Vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable people with pre-existing conditions, or other individual factors, may be more prone to suffering more serious effects from COVID-19. Current guidance uses two categories - ‘vulnerable’ and ‘clinically extremely vulnerable’ persons. In outline, vulnerable persons may be more prone to the effects of COVID-19 because of factors such as their age, being overweight etc. Clinically extremely vulnerable persons include those with specific clinical conditions which may make the effects of COVID-19 extremely serious.”

It states that employers should protect all of their employees, vulnerable or not, the precautions which may need to be put in place are typically the same, and strict adherence by employees to controls should be the same no matter their status

In particular, employers should note any requirement for clinically extremely vulnerable persons to ‘shield’ (self-isolate) in specific circumstances, such as in England dependent on the ‘tier’ they live in, or if a lockdown is in effect, or if they have been contacted and instructed to shield.

To access Version 9 of the WISH COVID 19 guidance document click on the link below

INFO-13-COVID19-and-waste-management-activities-issue-9-6-Jan-2021.pdf (wishforum.org.uk)

Noticeboard Bulletin - 04-03-2022

Posted on: 4 March 2022

If you're looking to get more involved, but don't know where to start, contact our National Officer for Contractors: **sharon.wilde@gmb.org.uk**

Check out some examples of what GMB Members are up to across the country!

Veolia in Northamton

Workers "hung out to dry" and balloting for strike action after Veolia pocket additional funding! - **via Northants Live**

Amey in Sollihull

Latest: Strike Action to go ahead in Sollihull - via The Birmingham Mail

Read GMB Officer Dave Warwick's Statement