

Early Childhood Education and Care – Excessive Daily Hours of Work in ECED

Your Delegates & the PSA were concerned about reports of members working up to 16 hours a day, sometimes over consecutive days and the impact this could have on their health and wellbeing.

The Department is to be commended for the attitude it has to members in ECED working incredibly long hours, not only because of the health and safety implications but also the work / life balance that is becoming ever more difficult to achieve.

Below is a copy of the advice that was received from the Department about hours of work;

In relation to your enquiry regarding hours of work for Field Staff in ECED, I am advised that staff have the capacity to manage their own time with respect to the activities allocated to them.

Field Staff arrange their own start time with the service (i.e. the childcare centre) when organising and planning their visit, with most services finishing at 5:00 pm unless it is an out of school hours service.

ECED Field Staff are not directed to work more than the seven contract hours in a day, and Field Staff retain the capacity to organise their working hours to best suit their needs. I'm advised that there is a low frequency of Field Staff working successive long days involving field visits. Senior ECED Field Officers (Grade 7/8) are scheduled for two visits per month, and ECED Field Officers (Grade 5/6) are scheduled three visits per month. While these situations may arise from time to time, it is not expected that employees would work in this manner on a regular or systematic basis.

Finally, all ECED Field Staff flex sheets are monitored by their line manager, and staff members are discouraged from working excessive daily hours. Field Staff are encouraged to speak with their manager in the event that they have concerns regarding their hours of work.

