

Covid-19: steps for escalating local health and safety concerns/disputes

Negotiation:

- 5 W's and UCU 5 tests (sector and national variations)
- risk management framework
- risk assessments (generic and specific)
- safe systems of work
- serious and imminent danger procedure
- policies and procedures to support above.

Ongoing review (jointly with institution management):

- monitoring and implementation of risk assessments
- employer contingency plans based on 'tiered' risk assessments
- health surveillance data and other relevant information held by employer
- national, local, and sector-wide infection rates
- government infection control measures and systems
- union inspection and investigation of incidents and near misses.

Steps branches can take with ongoing support and advice from their regional/devolved nation office if employer fails to consult union regularly on health and safety measures; refuses to accept union advice on necessary control measures; or issues instruction for workers to return to work despite known risks to health and safety:

- object to employer's risk assessment(s) if not 'suitable and sufficient'
- share findings of union inspections with employer to improve risk assessments
- consider reporting to relevant regulatory body if applicable
- campaign and organise around the H&S issues
- provide advice and support to members
- use relevant UCU template letters
- emergency safety committee and/or joint negotiating committee meetings
- formal letters from UCU regional or nation office
- provide information to members on individual rights in respect 'serious and imminent danger'
- lodge failure to agree
- consultative ballot
- formal declaration of local dispute
- prepare for statutory industrial action ballot and GTVO campaign.