

Macedonia: Demands from the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia

Following the adopted Decision for State of Emergency throughout the State, the Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia (SSM) received numerous calls from workers that certain careless employers are using the situation and plan to cancel employment contracts for entire companies. In that regard they call on the Government immediately to adopt these urgent measures:

- Moratorium on all cancellations of employment contracts due to economic, organizational, technological, structural or similar reasons by the employer (business reasons) for a period of 60 days (a measure taken by Italy to protect workers and prevent abuse) to all employers who are using this difficult time for self-interest)
- Payment of salaries without their reducing, delayed payment of compulsory social security contributions, by having them paid into the appropriate funds within 6 months of overcoming this crisis.
- Delay in payments for loans and reprogramming for 6 months for all private sector workers, citizens and companies.

In these extremely difficult times, solidarity and togetherness are needed and therefore SSM demands that the proposed measures need to be taken urgently so that no one is left without income and salary in times of emergency and health crisis.

The Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia demands the adoption of a set of emergency measures that shall help workers, businesses and public services to survive the crisis regarding the COVID-19 so that they can return to their normal activities when it is over.

All measures should be aimed at saving jobs mitigating financial losses while protecting workers against unemployment and loss of income.

People who are sick, who care for family members or are unable to work due to Coronavirus should not suffer financially, so the government needs to provide financial assistance to all employees.

In this regard, SSM demands:

- that the Government provides financial assistance to workers who are sick or looking after a family member with COVID - 19 (financial resources, loan write-offs, reduction or deduction from overheads, etc.);
- measures and financial assistance for self-employed workers, intellectual activities that cannot perform business due to the virus (a certain amount of financial assistance for families, tax exemptions or a reduction in tax liabilities)
- that the Government provides financial assistance and support to companies that will not be able to perform business due to the COVID-19 or they will perform with significantly reduced volume, primarily and exclusively to provide workers with a salary;
- that companies provide hygiene conditions for employees in accordance with WHO recommendations (as well as the recommendations of the Government of RNM) and adequate hygiene protection of premises and facilities;

- that companies provide hygienic means for protection of consumers and service users and to anticipate the dynamics and manner of using the services without the presence of large numbers of people in the premises (in accordance with the recommendations of WHO and the Government of RNM);
- that the Government provides necessary hygienic means for the protection of employees in public enterprises and institutions;
- to reorganize the work and reduce the number of employees in the workplace, rotate the staff (to introduce work from home, work time, etc.) for which 100% salary will be paid;
- to fully comply with the recommendations for workers with children up to 10 years, chronically ill employees, etc. to be released from work;

SSM advises workers and employers to regularly monitor the situation and updates from the competent authorities and to follow the procedures of the competent healthcare institutions.

SSM on behalf of the workers, whenever receives information that recommendations are not being complied with, shall intervene and report to the relevant institutions and will endeavor to take all actions within their competencies and sanction anyone who fails to comply with the recommendations and the measures.

SSM as the only representative trade union in the country which at this time cares for all workers who are daily exposed to the possibility of being infected by the COVID-19, puts all its resources available to workers to contact us for any assistance or protection. The contact numbers are being published on our website.

Sources:

- <http://www.ssm.org.mk/en/ccm-demands-adoption-set-emergency-measures-workers-protection-regarding-covid-19>
- <http://www.ssm.org.mk/en/emergent-measures-stop-layoffs>