

## **Private Security Authority and Coronavirus (COVID-19) update from Paul Scallan, Chief Executive**

I hope you are all keeping safe and managing through these difficult times. We are monitoring the advice from the HSE and the Department of Health as well as communicating with the Department of Justice and Equality during this time. Any information which we receive which is important for you we will pass on without delay.

If you or a member of your staff come into contact with the COVID-19 virus you must follow the instructions issued by the HSE and other authorities in the interest of public health.

We accept that if your business is impacted by COVID-19, it may not be possible to meet all requirements of our standards and licensing. The PSA will not penalise any contractor where such a situation arises.

Where suspension of duties e.g. keyholding service occurs please inform your customers that you will not be able to provide the service for a period of time and that alternate operations may need to be put in place.

We are still open though we are receiving a much increased volume of calls and emails. We will continue to process renewals and new applications until we have to close the office. Our online systems will continue to operate in the event that we do close.

We are continually looking at what measures we can take to assist you during this time. I've listed below those measures we have already announced together with a change on screening which we've introduced from today.

### **Lockdown**

We have sought clarification on what role the different sectors of the security industry might be required to play in the event of a lockdown. We will be guided by the instructions which will be issued by Government and the Department of Justice and Equality and will keep you updated as best we can. This is an ever changing and challenging situation and I hope you understand when we have to prioritise our communications to one sector over another.

### PSA Contact Details

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The Private Security  
Authority  
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Co. Tipperary, E34 PY91

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### Certification

- All certification bodies have been notified to suspend audits until the end of April 2020 (this date will be kept under review).
- Contractors whose certification expires between now and the end of April 2020 will not be required to provide the PSA with certification during this period.
- While contractors may not have certification during this period they are required to continue their compliance to the relevant standard(s). Non-compliance will be dealt with as normally.
- If your insurance company or other body requires you to hold certification for other purposes you should check your position with them.

### Renewals

- Contractors and Employees who are due to renew their licences between now and the end of April 2020 are being asked to renew as normal using the online renewal system.
  - o Contractors who do not hold current certification please add the date 01/01/2021 when prompted for your certification.
  - o If prompted to upload your certification certificate please upload your last certificate in PDF or JPEG formats.
  - o Tax Clearance Certificates are still required. If you do not have a current Tax Clearance Certificate and you are engaged with the Revenue Commissioners regarding same you should provide evidence of this to us.
  - o You may be required to complete the Garda vetting process.
  - o If you have difficulty renewing your licence or paying your licence fee you should contact [contractors@psa.gov.ie](mailto:contractors@psa.gov.ie).
- You should also be aware that if you lodge your renewal before the expiry of your current licence you are covered under section 23 of our legislation to continue providing a security service until your new licence issues or a determination made on your application.

### Licences

- We are issuing licences as normal and will endeavour to do so for as long as possible. Where this is not possible we will update the licence register with licence details.

<https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>

For up to date information and advice please visit the HSE website on Coronavirus

### Training

- All training providers have been notified to suspend training courses until the end of April 2020 (this date will be kept under review).
- As the prescribed training courses for individuals are no longer available we will accept applications for Security Guard (Static) licences without training until further notice. Training will have to be completed at a later stage.
  - Application must be made online.
  - Applicants must complete the application form and return to the PSA.
  - Applicants must complete the Garda vetting process.
  - Applicants must receive a one day in-house training course from their employer.
  - These staff must work with experienced licensed security guards.
  - When training courses are available again, the applicant will be required to complete the prescribed training within 3 months. Failure to complete the training at that stage will result in the revocation of the licence.
- This exemption of the training requirement only applies to applicants for security guard (static) licences.

### Screening

- We have deferred the screening requirements set out in our standards for all new employees until further notice. Screening requests should be sent out as normal and evidence of having done so retained.
- When screening resumes contractors will be required to complete the screening within the timeframes set out in the relevant PSA Standard.

### Event Security

- In view of the Government decision on large gatherings, the PSA has decided to suspend the issuing of temporary licences in the event security sector. All applications currently received will issue in due course with a start date of May 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 (this date will be kept under review). Deferring the start date will ensure that licences will not issue before they are needed. Applicants currently in the system are being asked to continue the process and complete Garda vetting and respond to any other matters raised.

### Communications

- We will communicate any changes we make in the days and weeks ahead directly to our licence holders by email.
- We are currently operating with a reduced staffing compliment and are receiving an increased volume of calls and emails. If you do have to contact us we would ask that you do so by email at [contractors@psa.gov.ie](mailto:contractors@psa.gov.ie). If the matter is a routine one it may be several days before you receive a reply.

### Feedback

*We welcome your feedback on our ezine and its contents. We also welcome any suggestions for future issues. You can contact us at [info@psa.gov.ie](mailto:info@psa.gov.ie).*

*If you wish to unsubscribe or a colleague wishes to have their name added to our distribution list please let us know at [info@psa.gov.ie](mailto:info@psa.gov.ie)*

### Thank You