

19 December 2019

**RE: Northern Ireland Strike Action Dec 2019**

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to you further to the industrial action involving the Royal College of Nursing and a number of other trades unions, action for which The Social Workers Union has previously clearly indicated its wholehearted support.

The position of The Social Workers Union in relation to our members participation in recent strikes, and as directed by our legal advisors, was set out in a letter sent out to all local SWU members on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019.(A copy is available on the SWU / BASW website for information). However, notwithstanding this, it has quickly become evident that a significant number of our members have unfortunately found themselves in a very difficult and pressured situation, particularly concerning respect for picket lines.

It has never been the intention of The Social Workers Union to place our members in such difficult circumstances and indeed SWU would wish to take this opportunity to express a heartfelt apology to any member so affected. Again, we would remind members who have any queries about this to please discuss further with the Advice and Representation Service.

Going forward, SWU can additionally reassure its membership that we will, as a matter of priority, be re-examining our position in regards to the issue of industrial action generally within the legal constraints available to us and will keep members fully informed of this process.

In conclusion, The Social Workers Union would like to express its thanks to all our members for their patience and understanding on this complex matter; your continuing membership is vital to our strength as a union as we continue in our aim of improving the working conditions of Social Workers and fight for better resources for the people who use these services.

Yours in solidarity,



Gerard Madden

Honorary Treasurer & Northern Ireland

Representative on the SWU National Executive