

GS UPOIP NEZAVISNOST

Delovodnik 72/20 14.04.2020.

Respected,

on 03/15/2020 in the Republic of Serbia, a state of emergency was introduced to prevent the spread of COVID19. On the same day, GS UPOIP Nezavisnost ceased most trade union activities, which include presentation of work, union group meetings, education, seminars, ... and focused on legal assistance to members and contacts with the employer.

The emerging situation has caught the eye of both the employer, employees and trade unions, so everyone is still adjusting to the circumstances and it is evident that after the epidemic is over, there will be plenty of procedures to define and prove employees' rights, both financially and status-wise, because in certain situations of engagement the existing laws, regulations and instructions cannot be applied to soldiers.

At the outset of the epidemic, there were many failures and poor organization by the Ministry of Defense (lack of protective equipment, training for more people,...) and this was a reason to submit a set of proposals to take measures to prevent the spread of COVID19 in the military. Some of the proposed measures were adopted and the situation stabilized after a few days.

There are numerous examples of non-compliance with the recommendation of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, especially in terms of protection of high-risk groups (chronic patients, single parents, heart patients, parents whose children are younger than 12 years,...), so that some soldiers are not allowed to work from home or paid leave on time.

The foregoing is generally not carried out by the commanders of the basic units because in the said situation they do not have enough manpower to carry out regular and extraordinary tasks. The result is two deaths and more than 150 infected, and criminal charges have been filed against some commanders by the union.

In addition to regular and urgent activities, members of the military have taken on a large part of the burden, especially in the provision of hospitals, temporary hospitals, old people's homes, migrant camps, etc. And in carrying out these tasks, they are extremely exposed to the possibility of contagion.

The union was able to arrange the procurement and donation of protective equipment and supplies in several garrisons while contacts continued with the employer in terms of presenting information of importance and making suggestions for better organization and, therefore, protection of employees.

Members of the military engaged in peacekeeping missions are acting in accordance with the recommendations of the UN, and so far there are no sick in the missions.

The latest news is that all infected members of the military will be treated exclusively under the supervision of doctors and in temporary hospitals that will not treat civilians.