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## **COVID-19: New decisions made by the government on April 1, 2020**

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The OGBL informs you that the government, which met in council on April 1, has taken, in the context of the coronavirus crisis, in particular the following decisions, which directly concern the interests of employees:

### **Extension of the list of so-called essential sectors**

The sector „transport, loading and shipment of goods and freight“ has been added to the list of essential sectors, which must continue to operate. Consequently, in the companies of this sector, the working time could be increased to 12 hours per day, 60 hours per week in specific and justified cases, on decision of the Minister of Labor and after receiving the opinion of the staff delegation or the nationally representative trade unions.

### **Suspension of probation periods**

All probation periods (apprenticeship contract, permanent contract, fixed-term contract, interim contract) are suspended for the duration of the state of crisis for companies under short-time work. A dismissal during the probation period is not possible. This derogation corresponds to a request from the OGBL.

### **Suspension of deadlines for social plans**

All deadlines relating to the negotiation of social plans are suspended during the state of crisis, including the deadlines in the case of a referral to the National Conciliation Office. This also responds to a claim from the OGBL.

### **Derogation from medical examinations**

Legal requirements for medical examinations are suspended during the state of crisis for health professionals and the administrative staff of hospitals.

### **Preservation of early retirement rights**

The cessation of the right to early retirement in the event of resumption of a professional activity with remuneration greater than 50% of the social minimum wage is suspended, this in particular in relation to the volunteers who help to ensure the effort to confront the Coronavirus in the sector of health and care.

All these decisions were published in the Memorial on the same day and are in force with immediate effect.