

NATIONAL INSURANCE

The affiliate advocate receives more claims for medical discharges

We are setting up a new working group to receive policyholders who only want to ask for information

CASS workers show no sign of disagreement over a six-month period

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The affiliate ombudsman's balance sheet report records, during the six-month period from June 15th to December 31st, 2021, a total of 17 complaints, most of which were related to delays in the resolution of sick leave and on grounds of disability. According to the same advocate, Judith Silvestre, «the work does not differ much from the pre-pandemic stage, but we have noticed an increase in claims for medical discharges in recent months».

In this regard, the defender stressed that the main claims are based on a medical and legal decision, «what the institution I represent can do is explain what rights the member has, within what timeframe the procedures should be complied with and I remind him

The report's recommendations revolve around improving information and the quality of service for staff

what tools he has at his disposal». As she explains in the balance of her experience during 2021, all health effects go through a medical court if an appeal has been made beforehand. «These courts consist of three extras; on the one hand, a representative of the medical branch of the CASS, the referring doctor of the affected person, and a third doctor in order to guarantee neutrality and independence in decision-making», pointed out Silvestre.

One of the novelties highlighted by the affiliate advocate is the increase in the number of people who came to her just to ask for information and guidance. So much so that, according to Silvestre, «we have set up a new working group of information seekers». In fact, the report's report reflects how these claims (33) reach almost the same number of claims procedu-



► Archive image of people accessing the CASS premises.

res (40). It should be noted that at the time of the launch of the automatic coronavirus decommissioning, which experienced difficulties in its inception, the defender received «an avalanche of consultations overnight that overflowed the system», since «neither the citizens nor the CASS professionals themselves knew how it worked at all». On the other hand, the institution wants to highlight the increase in daily interviews conducted by members. Citizens, however, «are getting used to conducting consultations online instead of personally approaching the CASS headquarters; This is one of the dynamics that brought the pandemic to us and that seems it has come to stay», said Silvestre. She also stated that



Judith Silvestre
AFFILIATE ADVOCATE



«Neither the public nor the CASS workers knew how automatic deregistration worked in its implementation»

«The population is abandoning face-to-face presence and increasingly preferring to use telematic methods to make inquiries»

a fact that surprised the defender is «the absence of any complaints or claims by the CASS workers themselves», which is interpreted as an improvement of the system, «as it is true that during stages prior to my representation of the institution, some complaints were registered by these professionals».

Finally, the recommendations emanating from the report revolve around an improvement in the information and dissemination of aspects that affect members, both in the medical and other branches, as well as the improvement of the quality of CASS staff service in meeting the needs and requests of applicants. According to Silvestre, «we are working on all of this, even outside of emergency hours». ≡

MARICEL BLANCH

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LABOR

The USDA welcomes the equality law but warns that a definitive solution is needed

The union is betting on collective agreements to end the wage gap and achieve a «comparable» salary

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After a year of processing, the Bill for the effective application of the right to equal treatment and opportunities and non-discrimination between women and men was approved by the General Council at the end of March, in a historic session that even provoked the excitement of some general councilors who spoke, the applause at the time of its approval (an unusual fact in the Andorran chamber) and the presence of feminist associations in the gallery of guests, who were precisely the ones who started the applause, which was later followed by some general councilors and government ministers. One of the aspects regulated by the new rule is the labor market, both in the private sphere and in the supply of public employment. In this sense, the Andorran Union of Trade Unions (USDA) considers

He points out that the birth rate is low because women have a «big handicap» when they enter the labor market

that the law will not be enough and that a «definitive solution» will have to be found to overcome the gender pay gap.

And what is this definitive solution? According to the general secretary of the union, Gabriel Ubach, «we think that the final solution is to set the salaries for each professional category based on the negotiation between the representatives of the company and the workers, with company committees and collective agreements». In other words, he specified, «if you are a bus driver or work in the hospitality or trade business, you have to pay a predetermined salary, regardless of whether you are a man, a woman or any other consideration, in the same way, for example, if you are a police officer.

According to Ubach, the USDA made a proposal many years ago



CONSELL GENERAL

►► The plenary session of the General Council approved the equality law a few weeks ago.



Gabriel Ubach
USDA SECRETARY GENERAL



«We are taking steps forward that we applaud, but politicians are turning the tables and if the problem is not closed it is because they do not want to»

«It is absurd and it is out of place to impose on companies 50% men and 50% women, effective equality must be sought»

to establish the figure of first-class officer, second-class officer and apprentice, but «we were ignored at the time,» he recalled. «It is in style to search the equality, but for many years a substantial change could have been made with the situation of women however, we are pleased that they have now realized that it was a necessity,» he said.

The union points to the need to generalize collective agreements and works councils as the keys to achieving this definitive solution. «With the pension debate we have been told that business plans are needed, but how do you plan to make a business plan if there are no business committees? And how do you go about reaching collective bargaining agreements if

first be earned with a comparable wage. That is, «what you have to look for is that the workers you have all get the same pay and all have the same opportunities and the same training; If you do, you will be hit hard by the payroll» he said.

As a deficit that still exists, the union believes that if the birth rate is still low today in Andorra, it is because women have a «great handicap» when entering the labor market, and it is at this point that «we should fight to find effective solutions,» Ubach demanded. The law includes the development of equality plans in companies, protocols to combat harassment, the reconciliation of family and work life, and an annual record of the wage gap. ≡

there are no works councils?» the union leader asked. «Andorran social and labor legislation is completely destroyed, because there has been a certain interest in the policies that have been carried out so far,» said Ubach, who added that «yes they are becoming small steps that we are applauding, but politicians are turning the tide and if there is no definitive solution to the problem, it is because they do not want to,» he said. With regard to quotas, one of the aspects of the new law on equality between men and women, the Trade Union of Andorra considers that «it is absurd and out of place to impose on companies that must have a 50 % of men and 50% of women, because what we believe is that effective equality must be sought, and effective equality must

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