**Press Release 28th March 2020 Criminal Justice workers Union (CJWU)**

The CJWU has been contacted by many staff that work for Her Majesty’s Prison & Probation Service, who over the last couple of days have been contacted by their employer advising them to return to work or face their pay being stopped.

These people are those staff that fall into the NHS’s identified increased risk group. They include pregnant workers, those over 70 years old and staff with serious underlying medical conditions, whom the Government have advised to strictly follow social distancing guidance in order to reduce the transmission of coronavirus.

Additionally, staff who have caring responsibilities or who live with family members who are considered at increased risk, with serious underlying medical conditions, or who require shielding, are being forced to attend work and place family members at increased risk of contracting Covid-19 through their increased risk of exposure at work.

The CJWU does not believe these staff should be made to choose between protecting their health with potentially fatal consequences or face pay being stopped. We condemn this irresponsible and flawed policy.

The CJWU calls on leaders in the Criminal Justice system to re-evaluate its current policies, and protect vulnerable staff and their family members, without the pressure to make a choice between being paid or carrying and spreading a virus that could lead to fatal consequences.

The CJWU stands ready to work with all employers in the sector, to find workable solutions in order to make policies more considerate and designed to protect and preserve life as an essential priority.

Contact info@cjwunion.co.uk or call 07946 832345 for more information