

3 September 2024

Enforced roster changes leave Heathrow Border Force members feeling suicidal

PCS members working at passport control at Heathrow Airport have reported major adverse impacts to their family life, physical and mental wellbeing as a result of enforced roster changes.

Amongst [over 250 responses to our survey](#), PCS members were unequivocal in their condemnation of the changes to the roster, with several members reporting that not only were they finding it difficult to maintain a work life balance, but that several had lost access to their children completely.

One member told us “Due to the imposed new roster I was forced to give up my parental custody. It was made very clear that if I did not accept the new roster I would be forced out to find a new job which would have cost me my home.... this has affected my mental health.

“I have been told on a number of occasions that if I don't like it then I should quit and find another job. Managers within my command have tried to help, but they are not allowed to make decisions anymore. I have had suicidal thoughts through all of this. My mental health is on a downward spiral.”

Another member told us “There is no time for family; we finish at midnight and for three or four days I don't see my children at all. When I go home they are asleep and in the morning when I wake up they've gone to school or university.”

Other members also told us that they had been hit financially as they had to reduce their hours to make the new roster fit around their lives. “I had no choice but to reduce my hours to part time. This is not going to be the solution to my issues to manage work and family life. Now, the concern is the financial stress; part time hours were not in my plans at the moment.”

Members on the picket line at Heathrow airport during the [four days of strike action](#) that finish today have been holding signs with personal testimonies,

including: "I'm so tired that I'm scared I'll make a mistake" and "The shifts are so long that I just never feel like I have a break from work."

After a solidarity visit to the picket line from Hayes and Harlington MP John McDonnell, , members are more determined than ever. Plans are in place for more parliamentary work to help bring the dispute to the attention of the new government.

The members will now follow a work-to-rule and overtime ban until 22 September.