

Furloughs for many

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Many people are “on furlough” this month, in many European countries.

A “furlough” is a period of time away from work - it can be a voluntary decision by a person who needs time away from work, or a temporary requirement from an employer or business that is facing enormous difficulties.

Let’s look at the use of the word. Examine these:

- The company will furlough 40 workers when the factory shuts down (la empresa despedirá temporalmente 40 trabajadores durante el cierre de la fábrica).
- Mr. Sánchez’s harsh measures mean that many furloughs are necessary. You could also use the phrase “temporary lay-offs” (un despido temporal).
- Many workers have been furloughed in Spain and Britain.
- I have a tough choice - accept a 2 month furlough or lose my job (...una decisión dura - aceptar un despido temporal o...).

Sometimes people ask for a furlough, a temporary absence from work for personal reasons because they want to travel or go on a course, for example. These furloughs are usually unpaid (sin paga).