



ANMF (Vic Branch) Policy

12 hour shift roster agreements

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (Victorian Branch) [ANMF (Vic Branch)] considers the most effective roster configuration is the 8 hour day shift, the 8 hour evening shift and the 10 hour night shift.

Enterprise agreements can allow for 12 hour shifts, or pursuant to a new 12 Hour Shift Agreement between the employer and ANMF where certain criteria are met, they must include as a minimum two meal breaks inclusive of one paid meal break and three 10 minute paid rest intervals / tea breaks in each 12 hour shift.

A 12 hour rostering schedule is typically arranged as a compressed work week, which includes an individual working two (2) or three (3) days in a row with two (2) or three (3) days off in a row.

ANMF preference for employees working a standard 8:8:10 roster pattern is premised on contemporary research, which highlights that worker fatigue often results for employees rostered to 12 hour shifts. Employee fatigue can lead to health or safety hazards¹, as well as reduced productivity, and increased turnover and absenteeism².

The implementation and working of 12 hour shifts must be on a voluntary basis. 12 hour shift arrangements should generally be limited to high dependency clinical care areas and only considered following requests from nursing/midwifery employees working in such clinical areas.

ANMF has developed guidelines for the agreed implementation of workplace trials of 12 hour shifts. All 12 hour shift trials must be conducted via an approved and mutually agreed process by the parties involved and must include ANMF consultation, agreement and signed authorisation. Where a 12 hour shift trial agreement is reached between the employer and ANMF it is signed off by the employer and the ANMF State Secretary, or a designated officer assigned by the ANMF State Secretary. The 12 hour trial agreement must include an appropriate and agreed evaluation process.

Where a 12 hour roster configuration is agreed, the roster must provide both employees and the employer with a number of assurances including:

- a) Quality and continuity of patient care
- b) Maintenance of employee's psychological and physical health and safety
- c) Employee satisfaction
- d) Skills mix appropriate to the needs of the patients and ward/unit

¹ Ball, J., Maben, J., Murrells, T., day, T., Griffith, P. 2015 12 hour Shifts: Prevalence, views and Impact National Nursing Research Unit, King College; University of Southampton Available at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/6cs/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2015/06/12-hour-shifts-report.pdf>

² Advantages and Disadvantages of 12 Hour Rostering: <http://www.heas.com.au/publications/twelvehour.htm>

Employees will work 12 hour shifts only on a genuinely voluntary basis

Because of known health effects and other concerns from working extended shifts or long hours, 12 hour shifts should only be worked under strict guidelines with ongoing monitoring and evaluation, as well as pre and post-trial comparative analysis of the effects on employees working extended shifts or long hours.

12 hour shift guidelines

1. 12 hour shift trials cannot proceed unless there is a majority of ANMF members, or persons eligible to be members, in the ward/unit willing to be involved in such a trial.
2. The trial roster pattern must offer a genuine mix of 8, 8, 10- and 12-hour shifts.
3. 12 hour shifts must be optional to each employee within the unit.
4. Roster pattern consisting of no more than three consecutive shifts, even distribution of days off, forward rotation of shifts and no extension of work beyond 12 hours.
5. Regard must be given to the health and safety implications for employees of 12 hour shifts and appropriate provisions made.
6. Appropriate education in relation to 12 hour shifts, including the health and safety effects, must be provided to employees.
7. 12 hour shifts must be trialled for at least 6-12 months after initial agreement on the trial with ANMF.
8. Provision must be made for the ongoing monitoring and regular review of 12 hour shifts including final review prior to permanent introduction.
9. Following the trial of 12 hour shifts, employees must vote on their continuation and there must be a majority in favour and written agreement with ANMF for continuation to occur.

Professional development

On wards / units where 12 hour shift agreements exist, appropriate arrangements must be made to relieve employees from duty to ensure they can undertake Professional Development.

The ANMF (Vic Branch) is to be involved in members meetings on wards / units where 12 hour shifts exist or are proposed.