



**Australian
Nursing &
Midwifery
Federation**
VICTORIAN BRANCH

Newsflash

COVID-19 information for private and not-for-profit aged care members

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Re-introduction of single site employment in specific suburbs

Monday 11 January 2021

The ANMF (Vic Branch), along with other key stakeholders and government, held discussions on Friday 8 January regarding the proposed re-introduction of 'cohorting' of aged care employees in accordance with the (updated) *Guiding Principles for residential aged care- keeping Victorian residents and workers safe* (the '**Guiding Principles**').

Please note that single site employment arrangements are still in place for public aged care facilities within metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire until the end of February 2021.

What is cohorting?

Cohorting is a system where each aged care employee works at only one site for a period, for an agreed period of single site leave. This time period may be extended. This arrangement would only apply to Commonwealth defined hotspots in Victoria and to employees who work at multiple residential aged care facilities.

Please see below for a current list of suburbs in Victoria for which the Guiding Principles and single site employment arrangements apply:

- Brighton
- Doveton
- Glen Waverley
- McKinnon
- Mordialloc
- Moorabbin

These geographic locations are subject to change but are currently considered hotspots for the purpose of the Federal Government grant funding for aged care workers. ANMF will notify members accordingly if and when this list updates.

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary

What will happen?

Impacted employees who work at a facility in one of those six suburbs, will be invited to nominate a single aged facility (one of the sites you currently work at) to be your primary workplace.

Your 'elected primary workplace' is the single site at which you elect to work all your shifts, including those previously worked at other sites. The expectation is that you would work at the site where you can work the greatest number of hours. Importantly, aged care workers are not to be disadvantaged in any way. By electing to work at one site, you are exercising a workplace right and must be afforded all the usual protections in your workplace.

Who is impacted?

Employees (including casual employees) of private residential aged care who work at more than one residential aged care site, where one of those sites is in any of the above listed suburbs. Please note that single site employment arrangements are still in place for public aged care facilities within metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire until the end of February 2021.

Who is not impacted?

An employee who only ever works at one residential aged care facility in those six suburbs
An employee who does not work in the above listed suburbs.
Agency staff.

When will this commence?

Residential aged care employers are expected to commence the process of cohorting from Friday 8 January 2021 and implementation of the changes will take place as soon as practicable.

What happens with my other jobs in residential aged care?

Your other employer/s must:

1. grant you unpaid single site leave for the duration of the period.
2. preserve your accrued annual leave and personal leave
3. keep your job open for you to return to at the conclusion of the period
4. ensure that the period unpaid single site leave is treated as service for long service leave purposes.

Will I be financially worse off?

An impacted employee will not be worse off financially.

In the first instance your primary employer must pay you for all your usual hours, including those you usually work at your other residential aged care sites.

Your primary employer may offer you those same shifts, if practicable. If they cannot, or do not, you must be paid your usual hours regardless. You can agree to work different shift patterns than you would usually work, but you are not obliged to.

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Can ANMF assist me?

ANMF members will be provided representation to ensure this process works as intended.

Please ensure your membership details are up to date, particularly the number of hours you work per week, by going to the ANMF member portal via our website: <https://anmfvic.asn.au/memberportal>

To be entitled to representation you must be paying the correct category of membership, which is at two levels depending on the number of hours you work per week.

ANMF will work closely with the Federal Government 'Support Hubs' to work through any implementation issues.

Do you have a general question about 'cohorting'?

If you have a general question in relation to COVID-19 matters or the 'cohorting' arrangements, please contact ANMF via <https://anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance>

Do you believe you are being disadvantaged and require assistance?

If you require individual assistance because you believe you are being disadvantaged, please contact ANMF via <https://anmfvic.asn.au/dualemployment>

ANMF encourages members to raise any concerns they have with management in the first instance as quickly as possible in addition to seeking assistance from ANMF.

What if I don't elect to nominate a primary work site?

ANMF strongly encourages members to make this nomination as soon as possible, noting again that you are not to be financially disadvantaged through this process.

Members will be aware that in normal circumstances, a direction by an employer that you only work for them, or at only one site, is neither lawful nor reasonable. However, as our members have unfortunately experienced here in Victoria, these are not normal times. This process seeks to ensure the health and safety of the entire aged care workforce, it's residents and the wider community in the event we have another spike in COVID-19 cases.

What if I have symptoms?

If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 (i.e. fever, chills, runny nose, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath or a change in sense of smell), you are urged to get tested and then isolate until you receive a negative result or longer depending on the medical advice provided to you. The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services will direct you to self-isolate or quarantine in the following circumstances:

1. You have COVID-19
2. You have been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19
3. You are caring for a child (16 years or under) who has COVID-19
4. You are caring for a child (16 years or under) who is considered a close contact of a person with COVID-19.

If you cannot attend work due to COVID-19 symptoms, awaiting test results or you are in isolation, and have no available personal (sick) leave you may be entitled to the **Australian Governments' Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment of up to \$1500**. You can make a claim by calling 180 22 66 or print and complete the following form: <http://bit.ly/3nuQmUN>

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The Victorian Government also offers a \$450 payment for eligible workers who have to isolate while waiting for test results. For details visit <http://bit.ly/38wXonN> or call 1800 675 398 and select option 8.

Who can be a member of ANMF?

Registered nurses, enrolled nurses and personal care staff can all be members of ANMF. Please encourage your colleagues to join. Joining ANMF is quick and easy - membership can be completed online at <https://anmfvic.asn.au/join>

Got a colleague not receiving ANMF emails?

If you have an ANMF colleague who is not receiving these COVID-19 newsflash emails, please pass this on and let them know they can re-subscribe via <https://anmfvic.asn.au/resubscribe>

Please display this newsflash on your workplace noticeboard.

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