

Monday 24 January 2022

## **CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**

Update 66a

### **RAMSAY HEALTH, MEDIBANK AND AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE MEMBERS Test positive? COVID-19 stressed? Make a Comcare claim**

Please note that this newsflash relates only to the employers named above. If you also work elsewhere, or have changed employers, see Newsflash 66, dated 19 January 2022 about Workcover via <https://bit.ly/3fOtBtB>

If you test positive to COVID-19 or believe you have been impacted psychologically, ANMF **strongly recommends** you make a Comcare claim.

Your employer is self-insured under the Comcare scheme for work-related injuries. Your claim for work-related injuries and illness must be completed under this scheme rather than the Victorian WorkCover scheme.

If you are directly employed by the Australian Defence Force you come under the Comcare scheme. However, WorkCover applies to you if you are contracted to work for Australian Defence Force.

#### **1. I'm COVID positive, but my employer is discouraging me from making a claim because of the high rate of community transmission? Should I still make a claim?**

Yes. To be covered, the disease must be contributed to, to a significant degree, by the employee's employment. Where an employee's employment puts them at greater risk of contracting the virus, the significant contribution test may be easier to meet. In many circumstances, nurses and midwives generally belong to a higher-risk group, and would therefore be at a greater risk of contracting the virus, circumstances dependent.

It is also important to make a Comcare claim because you don't know how you will be affected by your illness in the future. ANMF is supporting members who contracted COVID who are still unwell weeks and months later.

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary

If you have contracted COVID, it is important that you include in your form details of your exposure to COVID, and how it links to your employment. This doesn't have to be a definitive record of when you contracted COVID, but that your employment gave rise to a significantly greater risk of contracting the disease.

Each claim will be considered on its individual merits, having regard to the individual circumstances and evidence.

## 2. **I'm stressed and burnt out. Should I make a claim?**

The Comcare workers compensation scheme covers work-related mental injury, as well as physical. It provides the entitlements and benefits in relation to weekly payments (or income support) if you are unable to work, or only partially able to work, as well as medical and like-expenses such as psychologist or specialist appointments, and home assistance, rehabilitation, prescriptions etc.

## 3. **How do I make a claim?**

The first step to making a claim is to complete a Comcare claim form. You can get this from your HR department.

If you are claiming for weekly payments (income support), you also need to have an appointment with your GP (or another GP if you are unable to get an appointment with yours) to complete a Certificate of Capacity. This can be done in person or via telehealth. It is different to a normal medical certificate, and the GP will have access to this form (<https://bit.ly/356Aww2>)

We recommend that you contact your employer's human resources team and ask them their preferred method to accept your claim form. In these circumstances we anticipate that employers will not object to receiving the claim form by email. If you are emailing a claim form to the email address designated by your employer, please ask that they confirm receipt of the claim form. You should keep a copy of that email as that will become the date from which the time for assessment of the claim commences.

If the human resources team is not able to assist you with a method for lodgement, immediately contact the ANMF for assistance.

Contact ANMF Member Assistance via <https://anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance> for advice and referral where necessary to assist with your claim, and ensure you mention that your employer is a Comcare employer.

## 4. **What if my claim is rejected?**

If your claim is rejected, contact ANMF Member Assistance straight away via <https://anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance> for advice to assist with your claim, and referral to Gordon Legal where necessary.

**ANMF Job Reps and Health and Safety Reps are encouraged to display this newsflash on their workplace noticeboard.**

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