



**Australian
Nursing &
Midwifery
Federation**
VICTORIAN BRANCH

Newsflash

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

Monday 27 July 2020

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Restrictions on working at more than one aged care site

Urgent update

Late Saturday 25 July 2020 the Commonwealth Department of Health notified aged care providers of a significant change in the conditions attached to any funding it would provide residential aged care employers to enable 'cohorting' of the aged care workforce to a single site. On Sunday 26 July 2020 the ANMF participated in a key stakeholder conference with the Federal Aged Care Minister, Senator Richard Colbeck, and Department of Health officials.

What has changed?

Aged care providers will only receive additional Commonwealth funding **if the employee chooses - as their primary worksite - the site at which they ordinarily work their most hours.**

What does this mean for me?

The worksite where you work the most hours will become your primary workplace, rather than you getting to choose which site will become your primary workplace. Your 'primary workplace' will be the single site at which you will work all your shifts. **That worksite will employ you for at least your total normal hours by providing additional hours equal to or greater than the hours you were working elsewhere.**

If the employer does not have sufficient rostered hours to employ you for the additional hours then they must employ you for supernumerary hours (shifts that are additional to the usual number of staff on a shift) up to the foregone amount of hours.

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary

The primary employer can then make a declaration to the Commonwealth for reimbursement of the supernumerary paid hours that have been worked.

Who is impacted?

Employees (including casual employees) of residential aged care who work at more than one residential aged care site, where one of those sites is in either metropolitan Melbourne or Mitchell Shire. You can see a map of the affected areas on the Department of Health and Human Services' website via bit.ly/3hroSwW

If you have more than one job and one is in metropolitan Melbourne or Mitchell Shire, and the other is outside metropolitan Melbourne or Mitchell Shire, you will work at the site at which you work the majority of your hours even if that site is not in metropolitan Melbourne or Mitchell Shire, and your other job/s must be preserved.

What if I have been tested?

If you have been tested and are awaiting your test results, you should isolate. **If you do not have access to sick leave you can access the Victorian Government's payment of up to \$300.**

If you have tested positive, cannot attend work due to COVID-19 symptoms, or you are in isolation as a close contact, and **are not entitled to take sick leave, you can access to the Victorian Government's one-off payment of up to \$1500**

For either payment, call **1800 675 398**.

New for support for aged care workers in Greater Melbourne and Mitchell Shire

The Commonwealth Government has announced that aged care providers will be funded to provide income support to residential and home care workers for employees unable to work due to a positive test for COVID-19, symptoms, self-isolation or quarantine

This applies to all permanent and casual employees (including non-care workers).

Employers will receive funding to be able to pay for leave where the employee does not have sufficient sick or personal leave provisions or where leave is exhausted. Where a worker is eligible for the Worker Support Payment through the Victorian Government, the amount paid by the Commonwealth will reduce commensurately.

These arrangements take effect from Monday 27 July and will be in place while the 'Guiding Principles' are in effect (currently 8 weeks). Further details will be provided as we learn more.

What is cohorting?

Cohorting is a system where each aged care employee works at only one site for a period, currently eight weeks. This time period may be extended.

Similarly, if the Victorian Government declared an extension of COVID-19 lockdown into other areas of Victoria, these principles would be extended to those areas.

Who is not impacted?

- An employee who only ever works at one residential aged care facility.
- An employee who does not live or work in metropolitan Melbourne or Mitchell Shire.

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- An employee who lives in metropolitan Melbourne or Mitchell Shire but does not work in residential aged care situated in metropolitan Melbourne or Mitchell Shire.

When will this commence?

Residential aged care employers are expected to commence the process of cohorting **from Monday 27 July 2020** and implementation of the changes will take place as soon as practicable.

The changes will initially be for a fixed term of 8 weeks from Monday 27 July **until 25 September 2020**.

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.

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 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-funded employer '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 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 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.

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Who can become 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 anmfvic.asn.au/join

Matters that are still being determined

The agreement between the ANMF, providers and their representatives, and government is something that will evolve.

The following are unresolved issues:

1. An employee works at a residential aged care facility and also works for an agency doing additional shifts. At this point the agreement does not cover that circumstance.
2. An employee works at a residential aged care facility and also works providing aged care in people's homes.
3. Agency staff working across multiple sites.

Discussions will continue to seek to address these situations, and other issues as they arise.

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 anmfvic.asn.au/resubscribe

Please display this newsflash on your workplace noticeboard.

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