



Australian
Nursing &
Midwifery
Federation
VICTORIAN BRANCH

Newsflash

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

Monday 3 August 2020

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

URGENT UPDATE

Employment update

Single site employment

ANMF members who work at more than one residential aged care site, and one of those sites is in metropolitan Melbourne or Mitchell Shire, will be aware that the Commonwealth Government has made a number of announcements since Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt's media release of 19 July 2020 (<https://bit.ly/3juZlyX>).

To limit the potential spread of COVID-19, it remains the expectation that you will work at only one of those sites (your primary worksite) and that you will not be disadvantaged as a consequence.

Initially you could choose which site from your usual worksites that would become your primary workplace.

Just over a week ago that changed, with the Commonwealth Government announcing it would only fund providers to ensure no employee disadvantage where the employee agreed to work at the site at which they usually worked the most hours.

A few days later the Commonwealth Government foreshadowed a further change, that they would only fund providers to ensure no employee was disadvantaged where the employee agreed to work at the site at which they can work the most hours for the duration of the activity period.

It is unclear how this change will impact on members, with no clear guidance being provided beyond what the Commonwealth will fund providers to do. ANMF will work with the peak employer bodies to update the guidance available to employers and members as soon as this becomes clearer.

In the interim, members who are yet to choose a worksite should choose the worksite where you usually work the most hours or if you are aware, the **site that can offer the most hours for the duration of the activity period.**

Importantly, the Commonwealth Department of Health funding advice to providers will allow for employers to be reimbursed for costs incurred in good faith since 15 July in implementing the earlier single site models. ANMF will

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expect members not to suffer any disadvantage for working from a single site in accordance with the two previous instructions.

ANMF appreciates the frustration that these changed arrangements are causing in what is already a stressed and difficult work environment.

If you have been disadvantaged contact ANMF (Vic Branch) for assistance via anmfvic.asn.au/dualemployment

Pandemic leave

On a more positive note, the Commonwealth has agreed to fund providers to enable employees, including casual employees, to access paid pandemic leave. At this time funding is limited to residential aged care and home care in Mitchell Shire and metropolitan Melbourne.

The entitlement will only apply if you do not have access to paid personal leave, and after you have accessed the Victorian Government's one-off payments if eligible. These are:

- \$300 if you have been tested and are isolating awaiting your test results.
- \$1500 if you have tested positive or you are in isolation as a close contact.

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

Aged care employers will be financially supported to enable members to take paid leave who are not to attend work due to COVID symptoms, being diagnosed with COVID-19, testing, self-isolation and quarantine. This applies even where you do not have a legal entitlement to paid pandemic leave.

Why the lack of clear guidance?

These arrangements are what the Commonwealth Government will pay for.

However, each provider is a different employer, and the Commonwealth Government sees itself as a funder rather than a regulator in relation to these types of issues. ANMF expects all providers with sites in metro Melbourne and Mitchell shire to opt into the system to secure the additional funding.

The peak bodies, Aged Care and Community Services (ACSA), Leading Aged Care Services Australia (LASA) and the Aged Care Guild, are working together with the ANMF to generate clear guidance for employers and employees alike.

ANMF has been, is, and remains ready to ensure this work can be done, and trust that the peak bodies share the recognition that this work is time critical.

In the interim, ANMF will continue to support members to ensure you do not suffer any disadvantage.

Do you have a general question?

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

Please display this newsflash on your workplace noticeboard.

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