



Position statement: 12-hour shift roster agreements

1. Context

The ANMF (Vic Branch) considers the most effective roster configuration is 8:8:10. Health services may only trial and implement 12-hour shifts when their EBA allows and when they meet certain criteria.

2. Purpose

This position statement sets out the criteria health services must meet to trial, and subsequently implement, a 12-hour shift roster.

3. Key definitions

12-hour shift roster: Any roster comprising or including 12-hour shifts.

4. Branch position

It is the position of the ANMF (Vic Branch) that:

- 4.1 Nursing and midwifery employees should work a standard 8:8:10 roster.
- 4.2 This view is based on [contemporary research](#) showing employees working 12-hour shifts may experience increased fatigue. Fatigue can have [health and safety impacts](#) and lead to reduced productivity, increased turnover, and absenteeism.
- 4.3 A 12-hour shift roster must only be implemented on a voluntary basis and should generally only be implemented in high dependency clinical care areas.
- 4.4 12-hour shift rosters can only be considered following requests from nursing or midwifery employees working in the clinical area.
- 4.5 Before implementing a 12-hour shift roster, the clinical area must conduct a 12-hour shift trial.
- 4.6 This trial must be conducted through a process that has been agreed and authorised in writing by the ANMF (Vic Branch).
- 4.7 When the employer reaches a 12-hour shift trial agreement with the ANMF (Vic Branch), the agreement must be signed off by the employer and the Vic Branch Secretary or their nominee.
- 4.8 Because of the known health and other impacts of 12-hour shifts, the following guidelines (page 2) must apply.

12-hour shift guidelines

1. Getting agreement

Before an employer can make a 12-hour shift trial agreement with the ANMF (Vic Branch), they must obtain agreement from a majority of ANMF (Vic Branch) members, or employees eligible to be members, in the ward or unit.

The ANMF (Vic Branch) must be involved in all meetings where 12-hour shifts are discussed.

Before voting on a trial, employees must receive appropriate education about 12-hour shifts, including potential health and safety effects.

2. Implementing a trial

The trial agreement must include:

- a) appropriate measures to mitigate any adverse health and safety effects for employees working 12-hour shifts
- b) appropriate arrangements to relieve employees working 12-hour shifts from duty for professional development
- c) appropriate provision for meal and tea breaks
- d) adequate assurances and safeguards around:
 - quality and continuity of patient care, including skill mix
 - employee satisfaction
- e) an appropriate and agreed evaluation process, with a pre- and post-trial comparative analysis; monitoring and review throughout the trial; and a final review and evaluation at the trial's end.

The trial roster pattern must offer a genuine mix of 8:8:10 and 12-hour shifts, with 12-hour shifts optional for each employee.

The roster pattern must also include:

- a) no more than three consecutive shifts
- b) an even distribution of days off
- c) forward rotation of shifts
- d) no extension of work beyond 12 hours.

The trial must be in place for at least 6-12 months after the trial agreement has been finalised.

3. Implementing ongoing 12-hour shifts

For 12-hour shifts to be implemented beyond the agreed trial, the majority of employees must vote in favour of doing so.

Before voting, employees must have adequate time to read and discuss the full trial final evaluation report.

The employer must also obtain written agreement for 12-hour shifts to be implemented beyond the trial from the ANMF (Vic Branch).