



Mr Troy Wright
Assistant General Secretary
Public Service Association of NSW
GPO Box 3365
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Ref EAP17/2739

Dear Mr Wright 

Inherent Requirements of Caseworker Role Ref No: CMcK:ijm: A17/0398

I refer to your letters of 13 and 24 March 2017 regarding the Association's concerns about a document titled 'Caseworker Position – Inherent Requirements'. The Association has also raised a number of issues in relation to workplace assessments and return to work arrangements for Casework staff.

The inherent requirements document describes the context within which a caseworker works and the tasks they must be able to complete. It is provided to medical practitioners as part of a package of information and is not a standalone document. Medical practitioners should consider all of the documents provided to them. It is usual for them to meet with the employee that they are assessing to discuss and assess their capacity to undertake the functions of the caseworker role. Medical practitioners often request further information from the Department about the functions of the role.

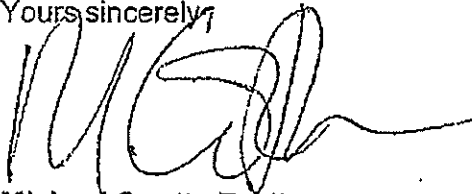
Medical practitioners will usually provide the Department with a written report as to an employees' capacity to undertake a role and any physical or other limitations the employee may have that are relevant to their work. They may also suggest reasonable adjustments that FACS should implement. FACS carefully considers on a case by case basis whether accommodation may be achieved by implementation of reasonable workplace adjustments. We make decisions about reasonable adjustments in the context of the discrimination and workers compensation legislative framework.

FACS believes the document provides the basis for reasonable and fair decisions about employment, including those relating to employees who are returning to work from injury. We do not intend to withdraw the document. If the Association have questions or concerns about specific items in the document we would be pleased to review those concerns with you.

FACS is committed to providing a workplace that is safe and fair for employees and that allows us provide critical services to the community. When an employee is injured or suffers an illness that may impact on their ability to fulfil the duties of their role, we must assess the situation. We work with employees to make reasonable adjustments so that they may remain in their role. If adjustments aren't possible without adversely impacting clients, other employees or the organisation we continue our commitment and work with an employee to identify alternative duties or other solutions.

In your letter of 13 March 2017 you asserted there are a large number of caseworker vacancies. As of December 2016, the vacancy rate was 4 per cent. Considering seasonal variations, this is a low vacancy rate. Nevertheless, we continue to implement targeted recruitment strategies to ensure vacancies remain low. If the Association has any further enquiries please contact Ms Catherine Carvoth, Director Employee Relations, Safety and Wellbeing on (02) 8879 9085.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MCT', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael Coutts-Trotter
Secretary