

Member update

On 10 June 2020, PSA staff and delegates met with the Department of Education, Corporate Services and Field Staff industrial relations, for our quarterly Joint Consultative Committee meeting.

Matters discussed on behalf of members included:

- Covid-19 measures/ Plans for return
- Flu vaccinations
- Flexible Working Policy & Procedure

COVID-19 Measures/Plans for return

Whilst the majority of people are pleased to be working from home during this time, members have communicated concerns about what the return to offices will look like when the time comes for easing the lock-down restrictions. The PSA has asked the Department to advise what plans are being made, concerning when and how staff will return from working remotely to COVID-safe workplaces, both back in the office and resuming field visits.

PSA staff and delegates had a separate constructive meeting with the Executive Director and Directors of the Early Childhood Education Directorate (ECED) to convey member concerns and provide feedback on the Guidelines for ECED return to field visits, the vehicle use, and travel policy and COVID-safe measures.

More broadly, members have raised concerns about returning to hot-desking, maintaining social distancing, using lifts, cleaning surfaces and provision of hand sanitiser; public transport congestion, as well as consideration for staff in high risk categories.

The PSA is informed the department has established a Covid-19 taskforce to address these issues and as more substantive and specific plans are formulated, the PSA will engage in further consultation concerning this.

Flu vaccinations

In light of the public health/medical recommendation, the PSA raised with the department the need to address their inconsistent approach to providing the influenza vaccination to staff across directorates. The PSA pushed for DoE to provide or reimburse costs for flu vaccinations as is common practice in many Government Departments. After consideration, the Department recently announced that they will reimburse the cost for all eligible staff who get the influenza vaccination. This announcement has been circulated and the form is on the intranet and is a significant win for PSA members.

Flexible Working Policy & Procedure

During this COVID-19 affected period, the facility for staff to work from home has been critical to maintaining both staff safety and essential services for the community. The PSA has long advocated for the department to support and promote more flexible working on an If not, Why not? basis. The response to the pandemic has demonstrated that remote and flexible working can be done in an effective and positive way for both employer and employee. To this end, the department recently provided the PSA with draft new flexible working policy and procedure documents for consultation.



Member update

We have some valuable PSA member feedback from our recent “Working from Home” Survey but we are also keen to hear more about what matters to you, when it comes to flexible working. Your comments will inform our feedback to the department on the proposed new flexible working policy and procedure. The PSA will soon be distributing another survey to members specifically aimed at collecting information relating to the new policy.

Two easy things you can do to support your union

1. Support the work of the PSA and delegates by asking your colleagues to [JOIN](#) their union.
2. If members you work with have not received this bulletin, forward the survey link to them and ask them to update their details by email their signature block and any new contact information to membership@psa.asn.au with “update work details” in the subject line.

