

Principles for requests to amend planned leave: Coronavirus context

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These principles apply to:

- all ongoing employees across the Transport cluster, and to fixed term or temporary employees who are employed for over 12 months
- employees covered by an Award or Agreement and TSSE and TSSM employees

These principles apply in the specific context of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and are in place from the date of publication until 1 October 2020, at which time they will be reviewed.

PURPOSE OF THESE PRINCIPLES

These principles are in place so that our approach to requests for amending planned leave across Transport balances the need to:

- ensure employees maintain a positive work/life balance and overall wellbeing;
- ensure our leave liabilities are sustainable and requests to cancel planned leave are managed fairly and equitably in the Coronavirus environment; and
- continue to comply with Premier's Memorandum M2012-07 [Reduction of accrued recreation leave balances](#) as far as reasonably practical. Noting thresholds for excess annual leave may differ across occupational groups and the relevant industrial instrument should be referenced. Managers should take a sensible and considerate approach to managing excess leave during the Coronavirus outbreak.

References below to the booking and taking of leave at a *forward date* means before **30 June 2021**.

KEY MESSAGES

- Meaningful rest is an important part of maintaining a positive work/life balance and overall wellbeing.
- Leave is not only provided for employees to travel on holidays. Its primary purpose is for employees to take a break from the rigours of day to day work and have adequate rest time.
- It is important to take these rests even when working remotely or if you work flexibly.
- Employees should be accessing at least two weeks of annual leave per year.
- Some operational areas may not have as much flexibility as other areas, given the lead time, coordination and cost that goes into organising leave rosters.
- The uncertainty of the Coronavirus environment is acknowledged so flexibility will be applied where possible if forward leave plans need to be amended.

PRINCIPLES FOR REQUESTS TO AMEND PLANNED LEAVE

- Managers should approve requests for annual leave as they ordinarily would.
- Maintaining operational requirements remain a consideration in leave decisions.
- Managers maintain the discretion as to whether to approve the cancellation of previously approved leave.

- Managers should ensure that employees are accessing at least two weeks annual leave in a 12 month period. This may not apply to employees engaged for less than 12 months where insufficient leave has been accrued.
- If cancellation of planned leave is requested, deferring that leave to an alternate forward date is the preferred option.
- If an employee has excess leave balances, cancellations can occur if they've submitted a leave request at a definite forward date for a period of time that would reduce the balance below excess.
- If employees have concerns about a decision for their request to amend planned leave, they should forward those concerns to Role 60 as per the [Employment and Industrial Relations Delegations of Authority](#).

CONSIDERATIONS TO GUIDE DECISION MAKING

The following considerations should be taken into account for employee requests to re-credit approved leave:

- Is the employee requesting to cancel the leave in order to resubmit the equivalent leave for an alternate period?
- Has the employee already taken a minimum of two weeks leave in the past 12 months as per the current leave procedures (notwithstanding the period of cancelled leave)?
- Has the employee taken any other form of leave of at least two weeks duration in the preceding 12 months (i.e. Long Service Leave)?
- Was the leave planned for a meaningful life event – e.g. wedding, family event – and if so, is there flexibility to re-credit a portion of the leave rather than the entire leave?
- If cancellation of leave is sought (and not postponed or resubmitted to an alternate forward date):
 - Will the cancellation result in an excess leave balance (within the meaning of Premier's Memorandum M2012-07, taking into account relevant industrial instruments in place)?
 - Can an alternate forward date be agreed to defer and take that leave (prior to **30 June 2021**)?
- Does the employee have an excess leave balance (within the meaning of Premier's Memorandum M2012-07, taking into account relevant industrial instruments in place)?
- Operational employees are often required to book leave 12 months in advance. Will re-crediting leave result in significant resourcing and rostering issues in the short to medium term?