

Ministry of Health and PSA Joint Consultative Committee

Happy Festive Season

As a very tough year comes to a close, PSA staff and your Delegates would like to say thank you for all the work you've done under extremely difficult circumstances. You have all worked hard to support the people of NSW during the year and we hope that many of you will be taking a well-earned break over the festive season.

The PSA met with Ministry representatives on 3 December for our last meeting of 2020. The following is an update for members on the matters discussed:

New Ways to Work – 1 Reserve Road

As staff have moved into 1RR, we had the last of the Sub-JCC meeting and the New Ways to Work teams are now winding up.

We have had members raise concerns around how sound travels across each floor and that some groups are congregating in workspaces to talk, not realising how the noise travels. We raised this with the Ministry and they advised there's an etiquette that's expected of staff and they will look at ways to try and mitigate the issue.

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Low activity period – Christmas Close Down

With the holiday period fast approaching, we asked about the concession day and when it can be taken if you're working Christmas Eve.

As per policy, if you are directed to remain on duty for the full day on 24 December, you are entitled to a half day concessional leave to be taken on any normal working day during the low activity (closedown) period. This is in addition to the full day Public Service Holiday on New Year's Eve.

If you have any concerns or questions in relation to this, please contact your Delegates or the PSA Member Support Centre on 1300 772 679

Working hours and workload

This time of year often brings about long hours to try and get the work done by the holiday period. The PSA reminds its members to make sure they're not working excessive hours and are managing their time wisely.

If you find that your workload is leading to you losing flex hours and/or working excessively, you need to speak to your manager first and together work out a strategy to help you bring your hours down. This may include carrying over excess hours to the next six-week period with your manager's approval and taking the hours as time off as soon as possible; working shorter days for a period; parts of your



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workload being deferred, not proceeded with, or transferred to other staff; and recruitment of additional staff.

We have asked if there is a simple way to track lost hours, as this is a concern for the PSA, its members and, so it stated, the Ministry. Unfortunately, at this time, there's no simple way to do this. This puts some impetus on you to keep an eye on your hours. It is good that members are conscientious about getting tasks completed by deadlines. However, the provision of sufficient staff to do the required tasks in the hours allowed is a management responsibility.

Remember that every excess flex hour that you lose is an hour which you have worked for no pay!

Returning to the office

With the great work being done by Ministry staff and overall reduction of Covid cases, the Ministry have indicated they are looking at safe ways to start bringing staff back into the office.

Social distancing, COVID-safe plans and flexible work practices are some of the strategies being used to maintain safe and sustainable management of COVID-19.

Health Professional Council Authority – Delegates

It is with great pleasure that the PSA announces a new Delegate with the HPCA, Jill O'Meara.

Jill will bring her enthusiasm to the workplace and help to support members along with Simon Milton. If you see either walking around and have any questions, please do not hesitate to speak to them.

Your Ministry of Health Delegates

Julie Westacott
John Bertacco
Peter Gilfedder

Do you know someone who still needs to join the PSA?

You can support the work of the PSA and delegates to get better outcomes for everyone just by asking your colleagues to [JOIN](#) the PSA.

