

Overtime, staff facilities, vaccinations and more: Service NSW February Joint Consultative Committee report back

The following is a report back to members after the recent Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) with Service NSW on 24 February 2021.

Contact Centre duties dispute

This has been an ongoing dispute for the PSA. Your union is concerned that Customer Service Operators in the Contact Centres regularly undertake work which, in the PSA's opinion, should be done by Customer Service Representatives or at least properly remunerated for when done.

The Department provided a progress report to the committee. It noted that the delineation of duties between the roles had not been a simple task and it is back to looking as to whether the role descriptions needed to be changed.

A further meeting with the PSA separate to the JCC will be arranged as to how to proceed with this matter.

Overtime inconsistencies

Another long-running issue is the inconsistent approach to managing overtime across Service NSW. The PSA provided a report based on our members' survey on unpaid overtime. Our survey found that:

- 84 per cent of respondents started working BEFORE their shift times at least four days a week, with 94 per cent of those staff working up to 20 minutes' extra each day
- 56 per cent of respondents reported rarely or never receiving overtime for this additional time worked
- disturbingly 44 per cent of respondents reported being DIRECTED not to claim overtime. The PSA considers this wage theft.

Service NSW has advised it will now survey its managers so that they can have a better understanding as to what processes are applied across centres.

Ultimately the PSA wants a fair and consistent approach for all staff across Service NSW. It was hoped that the introduction of Kronos and the use of early-start staff would address these. However, there is still work to be done to ensure your work is properly and reasonably recognised and remunerated.

Toilet facilities

The PSA has notified the Department of a dispute and raised WHS concerns with respect to Service Centres that do not have their own staff toilet facilities.



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Service NSW stated that it was a last resort and that the first preference when negotiating for new centres was for them to have their own bathroom. Where that was not possible, it will then look for a 'staff only' option, with the use of public toilets as a last resort.

Assurances were given to the PSA that there would also be more transparency as to the centre facilities for any future recruitment to those centres.

COVID-19 update

Currently all areas of Service NSW are operating largely under the same COVID-19 precautions since November. One exception is that, following changes to the Public Health Orders, areas have been able to move to the two-metre rule. This has been an improvement, as fewer customers now have to wait outside centres.

Driver Testing continues with the same restrictions: mandatory masks, temperature checks and health declaration. It was also discussed that some Cost of Living appointments will move back to face-to-face meetings.

At this time, the main message from management was one of simply reinforcing current precautions and COVID-safe practices to combat against complacency.

Vaccinations

A number of members have asked questions about the Service NSW position on vaccinations. At this time there is no clear plan but the Department does consider Service NSW staff as 'front-line', and will endeavour to secure vaccinations for staff if possible.

Further consultation with the PSA regarding vaccinations will occur. Additionally, the PSA is forming a committee to develop principles surrounding the deployment of COVID-19 vaccination policies in the public sector.

Service Centre operating hours

The consultation process for this has finished and at the time of the JCC Service NSW was still reviewing the feedback. It is expected that the responses to that feedback will be released via FAQ in the first week of March.

The PSA sought feedback from members with the main concerns being raised to do with potentially reduced access for Driving Tests.



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Live Chat Pilot – regional centres

The Regional Director provided the committee with an overview of a recent 'live chat pilot' that has been trialled in four regional centres.

Due to the success of the initial pilot, Service NSW will look to extend it to collect more data before considering the potential for a further roll out.

New Centre update

Of the 10 new Service Centres, three have now opened. For 2021 it is still planned for Edmondson Park and Glenmore Park to open, although there have been delays due to COVID-19.

Following that, the plan is the for Schofields and Northmead in 2022 then Randwick, North Sydney and Merrylands in 2023.

It was noted that the order of planned centres for 2022/23 could change.

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