



## Stat Report 2021/29

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### Enterprise Agreement workload rights not infected by COVID-19

With workloads exploding in many of our services because of the pandemic it is timely to remind members that rights, including enterprise agreement entitlements, still apply. The latest surge in COVID-19 cases and the numbers of people seeking to get tested has generated a new level of high workload, and sadly this difficult situation is very likely to worsen before it eases. We know all too well that high pandemic workloads, just like any other unsustainable workload, directly correlate to increased physical and mental injuries.

Your rights to be protected from the adverse impacts of high workloads have not been diminished by the pandemic, lockdowns, or public health orders. Your right to a safe workplace (which includes safe workloads) are covered in OH&S legislation and for many of our members, specific enterprise agreement provisions.

The Union is very aware of the commitment of our members to support the sick and help see us through to the end of the pandemic, and we wholeheartedly thank you for your ongoing effort and sacrifice. We recognise that members are having to make significant decisions about work and respect your need to do that.

However, it is important to remind members that your work should be safe, and if you feel workloads have become a risk, your rights to fix that risk remain intact. If you have a workload issue, make sure you talk to the Union to get advice and support; throughout all lockdowns we have maintained representation for members.

We continue to receive reports that staff are not replaced when they go on leave, work isn't prioritised when staff are on sick leave, and vacant positions are not being filled. These have long been identified as significant contributors to high workloads hence why it is particularly egregious this continues as the state continues to record massive numbers of people testing positive to COVID-19 and our hospitals are under ever-increasing pressure.

It is essential that you let your managers know that it is not acceptable to be forced into unsustainable workloads and doing unpaid work on a regular basis just to get your work done. It is important to remember that you have the right to refuse to do unpaid work.

With working long hours known to be responsible for about one-third of the total estimated work-related burden of disease, it is established as the risk factor with the largest occupational disease burden.

The Union remains unapologetic about our backfill and staffing-level campaigns given the very real need for all health services to employ more staff to deal with the ever-growing workloads and longer working hours. Please make sure you report positions not being backfilled or vacancies that remain open so that we can take it up.

If you have any workplace issues, please don't hesitate to contact us by phone or email at [enquiry@msav.org.au](mailto:enquiry@msav.org.au)

On a final note, we want to acknowledge that Sunday is World Mental Health Day, so we want to take this opportunity to thank all of our members who are supporting communities with their mental health during the pandemic. Your dedication and commitment are making a massive difference to improving the mental health of all of us.

In solidarity  
Paul Elliott  
Secretary

## About the new VPA Secretary, Lisa Alcock



Thank you to members for supporting my nomination as Secretary.

I wanted to share a little about myself, and about what I believe, particularly for those who may not have met me yet.

I believe in unions.

Every day when our union supports members, we are working towards correcting the imbalance of power which exists in workplaces. When we support members to, recover an underpayment or when we support a psychologist returning from parental leave to negotiate flexible working arrangements, we are helping that individual. But we're also increasing our collective knowledge.

I believe that our workplaces are healthier and happier when workers know and can enforce their rights, and when there is more participation in decision making: when there is more democracy.

Workplaces are unhealthy when workers don't feel they can ask questions and raise concerns, particularly about health and safety.

Unions are more important now than ever.

A strong union has always been the best driver for improving the terms and conditions in our workplaces. Over the last 12 months, the VPA and the MSAV have worked very hard to ensure that Psychologists continue to have entitlements which are growing. I believe that unless entitlements are protected in enterprise agreements, there is no assurance that things like supervision,

professional development, career progression, will be provided. These are entitlements which are negotiated and protected by unions; by our union.

Finally, I believe deeply that you, the members, are the union. And we will always work best when members are engaging, sharing what is important to you, your concerns, issues, ideas, opportunities, particularly as the royal commission changes roll out. For our union to operate most effectively, members need to drive your union. I will always be available for members; call, email, or write.

On a personal note, I have a 3-year-old Lagotta Romagnolo puppy called Finn who is a much beloved member of the family. And I've been spending my lockdown weekends relearning the piano (having saved a \$50 upright from Facebook marketplace a couple of years ago).



## Union Round Up

### **Meal breaks in Microbiology Lab at Monash Health**

It has come to the Union's attention that staff in Microbiology at Monash weren't being paid the meal allowance for overtime and recall. An audit is being undertaken with respect to back pay.

The Union believes that this issue only affects micro but we want to remind members in other departments & services to check they're getting the paid meal allowance under cl 50.4 of our enterprise agreement.

If you have any questions or wish to raise this issue if you're from another department or service to contact Heidi at [heidib@msav.org.au](mailto:heidib@msav.org.au)

### **St Vincents Private EBA Update - new Ballot**

After a long wait and many calls to St Vincent's Private representatives about a new ballot, we are told the organisation has set a new ballot timetable.

The ballot timetable will be as follows:

- Access period commences on Monday 11 October 2021 - This will be when you can review the new agreement ahead of the vote.
- Ballot opens at 9am on Tuesday 19 October 2021
- Ballot closes at 4pm on Monday 25 October 2021

There are some small changes to the agreement most notably increases in pay and parental leave Medical Scientists and Dietitians pay increases will be as follows:

- 2.25% from the first full pay period on or after 1 January 2021
- 0.25% from the first full pay period on or after 1 July 2021
- 2.5% from the first full pay period on or after 1 January 2022
- 2% from the first full pay period on or after 1 January 2023

St Vincent's also proposes to increase paid primary carers leave (parental leave) as follows:

Leave that commences after:	Period of paid leave
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Commencement of the Agreement	11 weeks
1 July 2022	12 weeks
1 July 2023	13 weeks

If you are casual also confirm that you will receive a ballot - if your manager says no, please contact Heidi at [heidib@msav.org.au](mailto:heidib@msav.org.au)

### **Dorevitch members – Are you receiving your change of shift allowance?**

The shift allowance should not be confused with the “change of roster” allowance, which is paid when your roster is changed without 7 days’ notice.

The “change of shift” allowance is paid when your shift start times, changes by 4 hours or more.

For instance, if you’re rostered to work Monday 3pm-11pm and then Tuesday 11pm-7am, you’re entitled to the change of shift allowance. The allowance is currently \$47.04.

There are 2 exceptions when you’re not entitled to be paid the allowance:

1. If a colleague has asked, and you agree to work the shift with changing start times – and this agreement is in writing; or
2. If there is a break between the shifts of 48 hours or more.

If you’re not receiving your allowance, get in touch with the union by emailing [enquiry@msav.org.au](mailto:enquiry@msav.org.au)

### **Special Leave for COVID-19 vaccines**

Below is what is being advised by the Victorian Department of Health with respect to employees in the public sector who have an adverse reaction after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine (emphasis is ours):

#### **Where an employee experiences an adverse event after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine**

Employees may experience minor side effects after receiving the COVID-19 vaccination. There is some overlap between an expected adverse event following immunisation (AEFI) following the COVID-19 vaccination and the presenting symptoms of COVID-19. This can lead to uncertainty around requirements for testing and isolation in a person with symptoms following vaccination.

The Department of Health has issued Recommendations for testing and isolation following COVID-19 vaccination which provide guidance on distinguishing AEFIs from other symptoms of illness that an employee may experience.

Where an employee is required to isolate in the circumstances described in the Recommendations for testing and isolation following COVID-19 vaccination, the employee has access to paid Special Leave for the requisite period of isolation.

Paid Special Leave should also be made available to an employee who was prioritised in Group 1A or Group 1B to receive a COVID-19 vaccination and who suffers an AEFI that does not require them to isolate but does result in them being unable to attend work because of the symptoms experienced. To access paid Special Leave in this circumstance, the employee is required to provide a medical certificate confirming that the reason for not attending work is due to an AEFI that does not require them to isolate.

**In this instance, paid Special Leave will be capped at a maximum of two days per COVID-19 vaccination received, or four days of leave in total per employee across all COVID-19 vaccinations received by the employee in 2021.**

**Employers should retrospectively authorise paid Special Leave to an employee who has already received a COVID-19 vaccination as part of the Group 1A or Group 1B vaccinations** and took Personal Leave for any absence that resulted from an AEFI that did not require them to isolate. The evidentiary requirement may be waived in such cases and the employee may have their Personal Leave recredited.

Employers should assess such situations on a case-by-case basis.

# World Mental Health Day - 10 October

World Mental Health Day will be celebrated on 10 October this year.

We've seen how the COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on people's mental health. It's clear some groups, including health and other frontline workers, students, people living alone, and those with pre-existing mental health conditions, have been particularly affected. And services for mental, neurological and substance use disorders have been significantly disrupted.

This year's slogan is "Mental health care for all: let's make it a reality"

We know that to make mental health care a reality for all we must ensure the mental healthcare workforce, and especially psychologists, is fully funded and supported, and above all expanding to cope with the ever-increasing workload and the growing complexity of cases.

We want to take this opportunity to thank all our members who are supporting communities with their mental health during the pandemic. Your dedication and commitment are making a massive difference to improving the mental health of all of us.

## Public Holiday Pay

To make sure you know what your entitlements are and whether you've been properly paid, use the flowchart below.

The flow chart applies mostly to public sector members so if you have any questions about your public holiday pay and you work in the community or private sectors, please contact the Union on 9623 9623 or at [enquiry@msav.org.au](mailto:enquiry@msav.org.au)

# Public Holiday 2021 Payments

Did you work that day?

YES

NO

Are you full-time,  
part-time or casual?

Would you have  
worked if it wasn't a  
public holiday?

Full-time

Part-time

Casual

YES

NO

2 times ordinary pay  
with a minimum of 4  
hours or 1 day and  
TOIL amounting to  
the hours worked  
with a minimum of 4  
hours time off.

250% for  
all work  
done,  
minimum  
of 4 hours'  
pay

1 day's  
pay

Do  
you only  
work  
Monday  
to Friday?

YES

NO

No additional  
benefit

Are you full-time, part-  
time or casual?

1 day of  
ordinary  
pay or 1  
day off

Full-time

Part-time

Casual

Pro-rata  
payment

No additional  
benefit

# COVID-19 Vaccinations

The Union strongly supports members getting a COVID-19 vaccine when you can; after all we support science and the science that's behind the vaccines.

There are special leave provisions available to help you get a COVID-19 vaccine.

There are lots of questions about the COVID-19 vaccines and no doubt you're getting some friends and family asking you about them because you work in the health system. Sometimes you might not have all the answers.

Check out this great video from the Australian Academy of Science on what you need to know about COVID-19



vaccine - [COVID-19 vaccine: What you need to know](#)

The Australian Academy of Science has some great resources about COVID-19 and the vaccines, which you can access and share with your family and friends. [You can find those resources here.](#)

As a Union we believe in science and the science that stands behind vaccines; as such we believe that to protect yourself, your colleagues, your patients and your family and friends, it's vital to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

If you have any queries regarding the vaccine rollout and how it may impact you, please contact the Union at [enquiry@msav.org.au](mailto:enquiry@msav.org.au)

## Save the Date: MSAV/HSU #4 Annual General Meetings

The MSAV/HSU Victoria #4 Branch Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 20th October 2021.

The HSU Victoria #4 Branch Annual General Meeting will be held at 12:30pm with the MSAV Annual General Meeting to be held at 1:00pm.

Members can access the [HSU #4 Annual Financial Report 2021 on our website here.](#)

# Contacting the Union

Members can ring the Union to seek support, advice and assistance with workplace issues.

MSAV: (03) 9623 9623

VPA: (03) 9623 9625

AHP: (03) 9623 9624

As always members can raise workplace issues by emailing the Union at [enquiry@msav.org.au](mailto:enquiry@msav.org.au)

## Membership Issues – Experiencing hardship?

### Non-Members

For non-Union members who work in workplaces across our coverage; **we will give advice immediately over the phone if they join.**

In the spirit of supporting health workers through this unprecedented time we hope you might have a quiet word to colleagues who are not members and suggest that there has never been a more important time to join a Union. Let them know that it is as simple as going to our website and [clicking on the 'JOIN' link](#).

### Members

If you are in the unfortunate position of being stood down or forced on to unpaid leave, [contact us to move your membership payments to a 'non-working' subscription rate of \\$8.26 per month](#).

## Psychologists: If you need help at work you need the VPA Inc.

If you are a psychologist and not in the VPA, you are taking unnecessary risks with your reputation and career. [Download an application form and join today.](#)

### Common beaches of employment entitlements and negotiation of enterprise agreements

The VPA routinely assists members over issues such as harassment and bullying, under classification, organisational re-structuring, incorrect calculation of leave entitlements and health and safety. In addition, it negotiates enterprise agreements for psychologists in the public and private sectors to ensure that rates of pay and conditions remain up to date.

## Support the Healthy Futures campaign



The Union strongly believes that climate change is union business. We know that climate change threatens our health by increasing the risks of heatwaves, bushfires, droughts and storms, displacing people and straining our health systems.

Right now, Aware Super, Australia's biggest health industry super fund, is investing our money in fossil fuels - oil and gas. While they have plans to divest from fossil fuels, it's vital that we maintain the pressure to make sure they divest faster to ensure a reduction in financial issues posed by stranded assets like fossil fuelled power stations.

**Join us in asking Aware Super to divest from fossil fuels at**

<https://www.healthyfutures.net.au/awaresuper>

## Stopping Gendered Violence at Work

Far too often women are attacked, harassed and threatened in their workplaces. And it needs to stop. That's why the Union is fighting back against gendered violence in the workplace – it's a very serious occupational health and safety issue.

Gendered violence is like a disease in our workplaces. Working women's experience of violence at work indicates that the problem of gendered violence is endemic in our workplaces.

Sign up to support the campaign at: <http://www.unionwomen.org.au/stopgv>

## Student Strike 4 Climate

On October 15, thousands of young voters will hit the streets to strike for the climate and put pressure on the Government and MPs to do the right thing.

Join the Student Strike 4 Climate on October 15 – details and RSVP here:

<https://www.schoolstrike4climate.com/oct15>

## Do you need access to Domestic Violence services?

If you're experiencing domestic violence and need help, here is a list of Victorian services which may be able to assist you.

[Safe Steps \(formerly Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria\)](#)

[Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria \(FVPLS\)](#)

[Centre Against Sexual Assault \(CASA\) Forum](#)

[Community Legal Centres](#)

[Court Network](#)

[Domestic Violence Victoria](#)

[Elder Rights Advocacy \(ERA\)](#)

[Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Women's Service](#)

[inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence](#)

[Men's Referral Service](#)

[No To Violence](#)

[QLife Australia](#)

[Seniors Rights Victoria \(SRV\)](#)

[The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence](#)

[Victoria Legal Aid \(VLA\)](#)

[Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency](#)

[Women with Disabilities Victoria \(WDV\)](#)

[Women's Housing Ltd](#)

[Women's Information Referral Exchange \(WIRE\)](#)

[Women's Legal Service](#)

[Women's refuges](#)

## Worth Reading: Who can't have a COVID vaccine and how do I get a medical exemption?

"As Australia works towards getting 80% of over-16s fully vaccinated against COVID and higher, there's more pressure to mandate vaccination across a range of sectors.

Some sectors in certain states and territories already have a COVID vaccine mandate in place, such as health and aged-care staff. Victoria last week mandated COVID vaccination for all authorised workers in the state, which has been a tough but necessary decision. Governments and businesses are also considering mandates for many other groups.

Vaccine passports are also on the way, meaning you'll need to show proof of being fully vaccinated to do things like travel internationally, and to visit venues in hospitality, entertainment, retail and others in certain states and territories.

But there are some people who can't get a COVID vaccine for medical reasons, though these are very rare. So what are these conditions, and if you have one of them, how can you prove it?"

Read the entire article by Margie Danchin in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/who-cant-have-a-covid-vaccine-and-how-do-i-get-a-medical-exemption-168371>

## Worth Reading: Victoria's bail laws are harming Aboriginal women and Aboriginal families

"Fifty-five Victorian, national and international organisations signed onto VALS' open letter during Reconciliation Week this year, calling for urgent reform of Victoria's broken, punitive bail laws.

And yet, despite the theme of this year's Reconciliation Week being "More than a Word", we are all still waiting for a response to the letter, let alone action.

The devastation wrought by the bail laws does not get a daily media conference.

And while most Victorians are certainly aware of the shameful overincarceration of Aboriginal people, they are not aware of how the Andrews Government's bail laws contribute to this crisis, putting immense pressure on the prison system.

In a political play to be seen as tough on crime, the Andrews Government's knee-jerk reaction to the Bourke St tragedy was to create a punitive bail regime, against the advice of experts, and ignoring the voices of marginalised communities."

Read the article by Lee-Anne Carter and Andreea Lachs in the National Indigenous Times at: <https://nit.com.au/opinion-victorias-bail-laws-are-harming-aboriginal-women-and-aboriginal-families/>

## Worth Reading: Power without purpose?

"Much has been said about Scott Morrison's practice of leadership: both his strengths as a campaigner (witness the "miracle" 2019 election) and, increasingly, the worrying dysfunctionality of his government and its governance.

Anyone who watches him in action will see the evidence. He seems reactive rather than proactive, rarely thinking long-term, preoccupied with the immediate. He seldom anticipates emerging crises or imagines what his role in dealing with them should be. He appears unable to develop a significant policy agenda, instead pursuing a series of often-criticised measures designed to satisfy particular interests (of which the "gas-led" recovery — to ensure energy stability and mollify the Coalition base — is one example).

Obsessed with controlling the daily theatre of politics, managing perceptions rather than considering what must be done, Morrison is ill-prepared for the big challenges. When they arrive, there is hesitancy, inadequate planning and eventually a backlash from a disheartened public."

Read the entire article by James Walter in Inside Story at: <https://insidestory.org.au/power-without-purpose/>

## Join the Union

**Are your workloads increasing? Are your stress levels increasing? [Join the Union today!](#)**

To protect our professions, we must strengthen our collective voice by increasing our membership. You can help by sharing the image below on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Reddit or your favourite social media platform.



## Your Union is on Facebook

Keep up to date with what's happening by liking us on Facebook

[Medical Scientists Association of Victoria](#) | [Victorian Psychologists Association Inc](#) | [Association of Hospital Pharmacists](#)

## Australian Unions Member Benefits app

As a Union member you get access to exclusive Member Benefits. The program has expanded to include:

- Discounted movie tickets for Village, Hoyts, Palace and Event cinemas.
- Discounted electronic gift cards including major theme parks, zoos and aquariums.
- A discounted accommodation booking site.
- A new secure member only website and smart phone app.

All this is free to all members of affiliated unions – that means you! If you have not got a login and would like join in [register for Member Benefits now.](#)



## Share STAT Report

Is there a copy of STAT Report on your Union noticeboard or in your staff room?

If not print out a copy and leave it on the noticeboard or in the staff room for your colleagues.