



Stat Report 2021/32

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Ramping up Public Sector negotiations

This week we held a series of meetings for Public Sector members to discuss the fact that agreement negotiations have taken a gigantic step backwards with an expected offer of no more than 2.0% per year wage increases, and being effectively blackmailed to get the wage increase by abandoning a number of agreed matters.

Unfortunately, the Victorian Government still hasn't answered our calls to treat members with respect and continue to refuse to rectify the complete betrayal we reported in the last STAT Report.

There's been no progress fixing the problems we are now experiencing; the official line continues to be that we will have to 'trade' conditions agreed by your employers for a 2.0% wage increase.

Five months of discussions with the Department have been fruitless in terms of a formal wages offer, and worse, have set us back on positions agreed by your negotiations on some key claims earlier this year.

We won't agree to walk away from the matters we have spent more than a year negotiating.

It is also becoming clear that the government will not fix this situation unless we take action to make sure your voice is heard and the work you do is valued and respected.

The government has been told they have until 12 November to resolve the current situation and failure to do so will result in the Union vigorously pursuing every avenue available to us, including taking protected industrial action.

It is unacceptable that the Victorian Government doesn't value you and refuses to treat you with respect despite the last 21 months of responding to a global pandemic. The Victorian Government is engaging in unprecedented and unconscionable behaviour.

We will send a survey to Public Sector members early next week asking for your thoughts and feelings on taking protected industrial action. Please do the survey when you receive it.

As always, I want to remind members to contact us with your workplace concerns by calling on 9623 9623 or emailing us at enquiry@msav.org.au

In solidarity
Paul Elliott
Secretary



Union Round Up

Higher Qualification Payments at Eastern Health

Eastern Health has advised the Union that the higher qualifications matter has now been fixed in the payroll system, which also addressed any under payments that may have occurred as a result of the under payment of Higher Qualifications Allowance.

Back payments have now been finalised and will be made in the last pay period, ending 31/10/2021. Staff impacted by this should have been advised via email.

Please contact Heidi Brown at heidib@msav.org.au if you have any queries

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.

Public Holiday Pay

Tuesday was Melbourne Cup Day, a public holiday for metropolitan Melbourne.

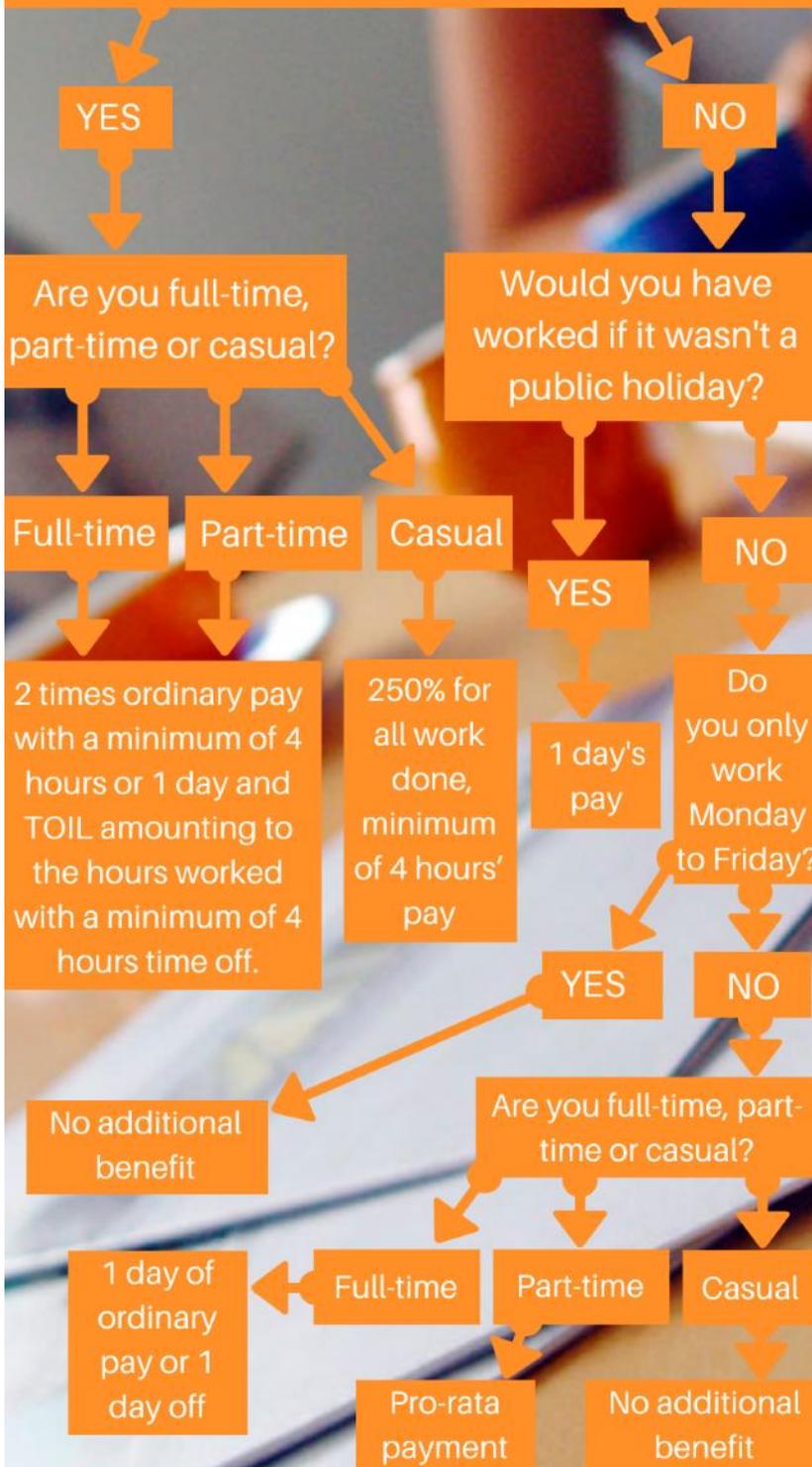
A public holiday means public holiday pay so it's important to know if you've been properly paid for the public holiday.

Use the flowchart below to help you know what your entitlements are and whether you've been properly paid.

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

Public Holiday 2021 Payments

Did you work that day?



COVID-19 Vaccinations

The Union strongly supports members getting a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as 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 support 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

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

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>

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: Health care contributes 7% to Australia's carbon emissions – but health is missing from our COP26 plan

"Australia finally has a net zero plan at the Commonwealth level. But so far, health hasn't been factored into Australia's national climate response. The federal government has yet to announce plans specific to the sector or, more broadly, the health of Australians.

This is despite experts warning climate inaction is putting lives at risk and could overwhelm our health system, and Australia's health sector accounting for 7% of the country's carbon emissions.

Countries are expected to arrive in Glasgow for the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, known as COP26, with dramatically scaled up commitments to those they pledged in Paris in 2015.

And health is clearly on the agenda. The UK government has announced a COP26 Health Programme, calling on governments to commit to climate resilience and low-carbon health systems.

But when it comes to how the health sector is affected by, and contributes to, emissions, Australia's response is missing in action."

Read the entire article by Fiona Armstrong in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/health-care-contributes-7-to-australias-carbon-emissions-but-health-is-missing-from-our-cop26-plan-170624>

Worth Reading: How to avoid 'toxic positivity' and take the less direct route to happiness

"The term "toxic positivity" has received a good deal of attention lately. Coming off the back of the "positivity movement" we are beginning to recognise while feeling happy is a good thing, overemphasising the importance of a positive attitude can backfire, ironically leading to more unhappiness.

Yes, research shows happier people tend to live longer, be healthier and enjoy more successful lives. And "very happy people" have more of these benefits relative to only averagely happy people. But pursued in certain ways, happiness or positivity can become toxic.

Our research, published in The Journal of Positive Psychology and involving almost 500 people, was inspired by these apparently inconsistent findings – pursuing happiness may be both good and bad for our well-being. We aimed to uncover a key ingredient that turns positivity toxic."

Read the entire article by Brock Bastian and Ashley Humphrey in The Conversation at:

<https://theconversation.com/how-to-avoid-toxic-positivity-and-take-the-less-direct-route-to-happiness-170260>

Worth Reading: Voter ID is a bad idea. Here's why

"The Morrison government is pushing legislation to mandate voter ID at polling places. Contrary to some critics, what it proposes will not create US-style "voter suppression". But it is still an unnecessary idea at an inappropriate time.

Countries like Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom (until now at least) do not require electors to show ID to vote. Many other systems do.

Insecurity about security is a conservative trope. So it is natural for political conservatives, temperamentally, to favour voter ID, with the argument being it is an "integrity" measure. Social democrats, on the other hand, are more trusting and concerned to ensure everyone can and does vote.

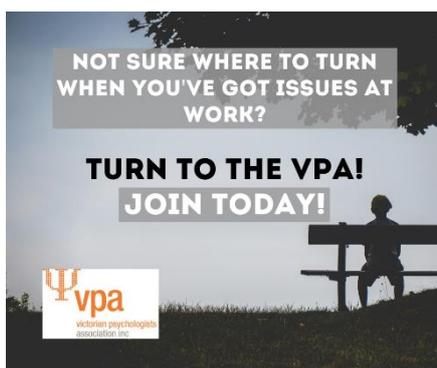
The Australian proposal lists an array of documents as acceptable ID. Photo ID such as a driver's licence is not mandatory; a credit card or utility bill would suffice. "Documents" in law now include electronic records, which is important given how few people receive paper utility bills.

Read the entire article by Graeme Orr in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/voter-id-is-a-bad-idea-heres-why-170777>

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.](#)



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