



Stat Report 2021/28

In this issue of STAT Report we cover:

- Vaccine mandate and Victorian CHO Orders
- Changes in Leadership Roles
- Union Round Up
- RVMHS Workforce Consultation
- Public Holiday Pay
- COVID-19 Vaccinations
- Save the Date: MSAV/HSU #4 Annual General Meetings
- Panel Discussion on Climate Change and Health
- VPA Professional Development
- Contacting the Union
- Membership Issues – Experiencing hardship?
- Campaign Corner
- Worth Reading
- Member Benefits

Vaccine mandate and Victorian CHO Orders

The Union supports COVID vaccination, a position that we have held since earlier this year when various vaccinations were approved for use. As a Union firstly, we believe in science and the science that stands behind the vaccines, and secondly, we believe that vaccinations will make our workplaces safer. For these reasons the Union strongly encourages members to get a COVID-19 vaccine.

We continue to witness misinformation being spread about the COVID-19 vaccines, their efficacy and safety.

Importantly, this week we reached the intersection between COVID misinformation and the Chief Health Officer's mandatory vaccination directives, which potentially creates serious risk for a member who relies on such information to refuse a vaccination. Health sector employers either have, or shortly will, advise members of the requirement to be vaccinated against COVID to continue access to the workplace.

On 29 September the Chief Health Officer (CHO), issued mandatory vaccination directives requiring healthcare workers to be vaccinated in order to continue working in the Victorian healthcare system. Members will need to have had at least one dose of any of the available vaccines by 15 October.

The issue of what action can be taken against a healthcare worker who refuses to be vaccinated is obviously critically important. In the first instance the CHO directions requires an employer to deny entry of an unvaccinated healthcare worker into the workplace. although a continued refusal to be vaccinated will likely result in termination of employment.

The only workers exempted from mandatory vaccination are those with medical contraindication to a vaccination.

We will distribute more detailed advice in relation to circumstances where action is taken against a healthcare worker for refusing to comply with the CHO directions shortly. It is however important to note that a Full Bench of the Fair Work Commission this week ruled that an employer that terminated the employment of an employee in an aged care facility in NSW after she refused to be vaccinated did not act unfairly or unreasonably. This sets a strong precedent in relation to the rights and obligations of workers and employers in the context of mandatory vaccinations.

While each case will be judged on its individual merits, it is clear to the Union that in the absence of a medical exemption in the form of certification from a medical practitioner, healthcare workers will be required to be vaccinated. We are monitoring the development of various matters regarding the requirements to be vaccinated and will provide members with more information.

There are special leave provisions available to help you get the COVID-19 vaccine. This special leave was won because Victorian unions, including us, fought hard for it to ensure that you can get the vaccine. There are details about the special leave provisions in the *Union Round Up*.

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

We know that without you working, Victorians won't be able to access the world class healthcare we are used to receiving. We are dedicated to ensuring that your rights at work are protected.

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

In solidarity
Paul Elliott
Secretary

Changes in Leadership Roles

At the VPA's Annual General Meeting last week, members elected a new secretary. Congratulations to Lisa Alcock for being elected as the new secretary of the Victorian Psychologists Association.

We are also excited to announce that Matt Hammond has been appointed as Vice President of the Medical Scientists Association of Victoria and Assistant Secretary of the HSU #4 Victoria Branch.



Union Round Up

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

Monash Health – Change Impact Statement on UKG Dimensions

The Union has been forwarded a Change Impact Statement from Monash Health regarding UKG Dimensions.

We have been assured that the reassured the proposed change is all to do with the back end of Kronos and that the software is out of date and needs upgrading and it does not involve any Biometrics at all.

There will be some training for allied health staff, but this has nothing to do with any type of finger scanning.

If you have any questions please contact Heidi at heidib@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.

RCVMHS Workforce Consultation

Recommendation 57 of the Mental Health Royal Commission proposed development of a Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Strategy to be released by the end of 2021. The Strategy will help build the workforce we need for sustainable delivery of mental health reforms and will focus on strategies to address key challenges over the immediate, medium and longer term.

Consultation activities to date

The consultation process for the Strategy has built on previous and ongoing engagement with a wide range of mental health stakeholders. This includes the extensive consultation that informed the Royal Commission's final report and the Department of Health acknowledges the valued contributions of experts and stakeholders including people with lived experience.

In addition, stakeholder consultation has occurred through a Mental Health Workforce Forum held in July with over 130 stakeholders from across the mental health system to discuss the four key focus areas for inclusion in the Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Strategy – workforce supply, wellbeing, capability and rural and regional workforce development.

To build on the Forum, a series of workshops that cover these key areas are being held across August-October. Sector representatives and those with lived experience have been carefully selected to participate in this process to ensure cross-cutting representation and to enable meaningful engagement in a small group setting.

A separate workforce census survey has recently been undertaken to gather data about the workforce that will inform the Strategy. In October personnel working across the mental health sector will be invited to participate in a survey that provides insights into mental health workforce including worker wellbeing and the Capability Framework.

The development of the Strategy will be a starting point – it will set some important priorities, and provide a platform for the department to continue to work closely with our stakeholders and the community in the implementation of the Strategy following its release.

Share your views

The Department of Health wants to provide further opportunity for input, in addition to the Royal Commission consultations, recent Forum, workshops and workforce surveys. [Please visit the Engage Victoria website here to provide your input on the Strategy by 25 October 2021.](#)

Public Holiday Pay

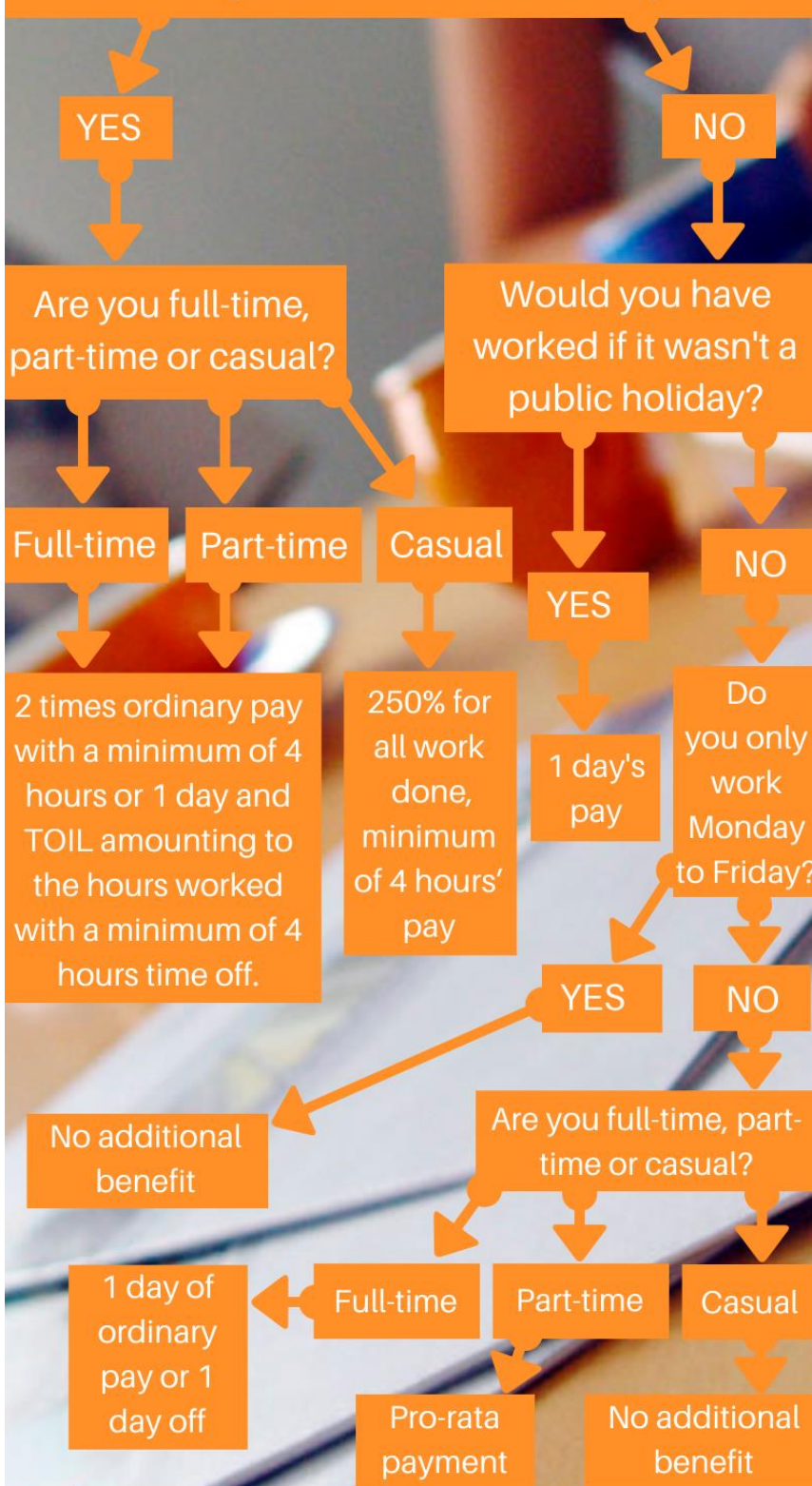
Last Friday was a public holiday, which means public holiday pay.

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

Public Holiday 2021 Payments

Did you work that day?



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

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.](#)

Panel Discussion on Climate Change and Health

Join a stimulating panel discussion on climate change and mental health on 6 October from 5:30pm to 7pm.

The panel will share their knowledge about the issues surrounding the topic, as well as the solutions that exist.

Register here: https://www.caha.org.au/mental_health

The event will be facilitated by CAHA President Dr Rebecca Patrick, a Senior Lecturer in the School of Health and Social Development, Deakin University.

Panellists include:

Dr Cybele Dey - Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist

Associate Professor Fiona Charlson - NHMRC Research Fellow at the Queensland Centre of Mental Health Research and School of Public Health, University of Queensland

Professor Alan Rosen - Professorial Fellow, Illawarra Institute of Mental Health, University of Wollongong

Carol Ride - Founder and Acting Executive Director, Psychology for a Safe Climate

Please register here to receive the Zoom link and reminders: https://www.caha.org.au/mental_health

This event is being hosted by the Climate and Health Alliance with event partners Psychology for a Safe Climate, Doctors for the Environment Australia, Australian Psychological Society, and Health Nature Sustainability Research Group (Deakin University).

VPA Professional Development

Thank you to everyone who joined the VPA's Professional Development session last week. We had a fantastic turnout of over 45 psychologists dialling in to the virtual session from across the state. Our presenters Dr Suzie Dean, Sarina Smale and Dr Rosemary Kelly have kindly made their slides available to members, linked below:

- Workforce implications of the Royal Commission – as presented by Dr Rosemary Kelly – [RCVMH Workforce Sept 2021 Slides](#)
- Royal Commission – Recommendations, Reform and Opportunities for Psychology – [as presented by Dr Suzie Dean and Sarina Smale](#)

In order to support the VPA's work advocating on behalf of psychologists, Suzie, Sarina and Rosemary have prepared a strategic analysis of the Royal Commission's report and recommendations for the VPA.

A copy of this report is available for all members on our website and [is linked here](#). Other resources are also available, including details of the proposed structural reform and workforce implications. These resources are all available to members [on our website here](#).

If you need a certificate to confirm your attendance for registration, please get in touch. If you have any feedback following the session or suggestions for future topics, please email this through to lisaa@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>

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: Climate change is harming children's mental health – and this is just the start

"With record-breaking heat waves, wildfires and floods, 2021 may be the year we finally wake up to climate change. According to the most recent assessment of the International Panel on Climate Change, the effects are now "widespread, rapid, and intensifying." Many impacts are irreversible and changes to oceans, ice sheets and sea levels will persist for thousands of years.

In August, the United Nations Children's Fund reported that half the world's 2.2 billion children are at "extremely high risk" from the impacts of climate change. More than 230 health-care journals have since published a joint editorial calling for urgent action to address the "catastrophic harm to health" from climate change.

Despite these warnings, surprisingly little has been written about the mental health consequences of climate change for children."

Read the entire article by Francis Vergunst and Helen Louise Berry in The Conversation at:

<https://theconversation.com/climate-change-is-harming-childrens-mental-health-and-this-is-just-the-start-168070>

Worth Reading: Celebrating K'gari: why the renaming of Fraser Island is about so much more than a name

"On the 19th of September, Butchulla dancers and community representatives came together at Kingfisher Bay Resort to celebrate the renaming of Fraser Island to the K'gari (Fraser Island) World Heritage Area.

The renaming was the result of a decades-long campaign by Butchulla Elders and community members and was endorsed by the Queensland government and adopted by the World Heritage Committee.

This event is the latest in a growing number of Indigenous name repatriations across the nation. As a Butchulla person, and a researcher of the representation of Indigenous peoples in archives and historical narratives, I can appreciate the significance of something as seemingly small as a name change."

Read the entire article by Rose Barrowcliffe in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/celebrating-kgari-why-the-renaming-of-fraser-island-is-about-so-much-more-than-a-name-168378>

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).

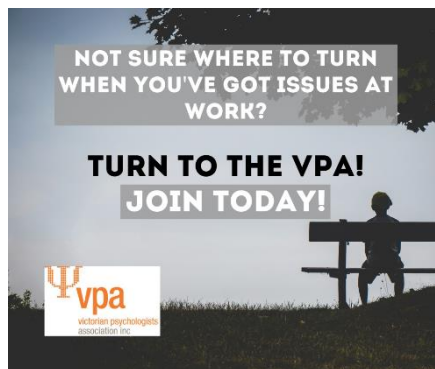
Obsessed with controlling the daily theatre of politics, managing perceptions rather than considering what must be done, Morrison is ill-prepared for the big challenges. When they arrive, there is hesitancy, inadequate planning and eventually a backlash from a disheartened public."

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.](#)



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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.