



Public Sector Labour Relations

Shaping a contemporary public sector workforce

Circular

Circular 3/2020 – Novel coronavirus and absence from work

Background

1. The State Government is monitoring the situation in relation to novel coronavirus and responding accordingly.
2. The current response includes a recommendation that people at risk of infection be isolated at home for 14 days following possible exposure, whether or not they display any symptoms.
3. As at 1 February 2020, the 'at-risk' group includes people who have been:
 - a. in contact with any confirmed novel coronavirus cases, or
 - b. in mainland China.
4. The at-risk group may change over time. Employers should monitor advice issued by the Australian Government, and be mindful of the importance of ensuring health and safety in the workplace.

Absence from work

5. A public sector employee in the at-risk group, who is required to remain at home but is otherwise well, is to be paid his or her normal salary for the duration of the absence. Working from home arrangements can be accommodated consistent with agency policies and procedures.
6. An at-risk employee who is required to remain at home and is ill can access existing personal or sick leave credits. Such leave can be accessed in advance if permitted under applicable industrial instruments.
7. A public sector employee caring for a person required to remain at home because they are in an at-risk group can access existing personal or carers leave credits.
8. Employers may request reasonable evidence that an employee is in the at-risk group or caring for a person in that group.
9. Employers should take a pragmatic approach to supporting at-risk employees remaining at home and contact PSLR to discuss individual circumstances as needed.

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