

ANMF COVID-19 Newsflash: Family Planning Tasmania

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) wrote to Family Planning Tasmania (FPT) to seek an update in relation to the current Omicron COVID-19 situation. Specifically, the ANMF has asked of your employer the following questions: *in italics*, and response from your employer in **bold**. Please note that this is the information that your employer has provided us.

If the answers below are contradictory to what you are experiencing, please advise the ANMF via our member support team so we can take further action with your employer.

1. *Could you please provide details on the strategies implemented to reduce transmission of the Omicron strain in your facility/facilities? Or alternatively, please feel free to provide a copy of your outbreak management plan.*

FPT are operating with a number of strategies to ensure the safety of our staff and patients. These include additional cleaning, appointments via Telehealth where suitable, PPE for staff and patients, increased infection control and increased screening of patients. Patients who are unwell, recovering from Covid or who are isolating are rebooked appointments for a minimum of 14 days time or referred elsewhere if the issue is urgent.

2. *Can you confirm that you have sufficient PPE and hand sanitizer to allow staff, and patients, to be kept safe during this pandemic (particularly if there were to be an outbreak at your facility)?*

We have sufficient PPE and hand sanitiser.

3. *Have staff been fit tested for N95 masks? If no, when is this to occur and what are the interim safety measures that will be established while staff are waiting for fit testing?*

Staff have been offered fit testing.

4. *What payments or access to special leave will be granted for staff who are required to isolate pending getting access to a COVID test and obtaining the subsequent result? Noting that access to testing is now significantly delayed.*

They may access their available leave. No staff have reported waiting for testing recently. Staff have also been advised of possible Government payments.

5. *In the instance that staff are required to receive a third COVID booster dose, will there be access to additional special paid leave/time to attend a booster appointment? If a staff member has an adverse reaction to the booster, will paid leave cover this time as well?*
No, many have already received a third booster dose. They may access paid leave.
6. *Are there any additional leave (over and above personal leave) arrangements available to staff who, not being unwell themselves, need to self-isolate or care for someone (e.g., child) with COVID-19 that will be provided?*
No.
7. *Will you be providing Rapid Antigen Testing for staff members? If so, what will the process be for access to these tests?*
Not at this time.
8. *Are you willing to commit to presumptive workers compensation if a staff member becomes unwell, after a workplace exposure, with COVID-19?*
This would be up to our insurer.
9. *If a number of staff become unwell (or are not unwell but are required to isolate pending test results) with COVID-19, what plan is in existence to maintain safe staffing levels?*
If staff are not unwell, we have ability for some to work from home. We are flexible with staffing and have no minimum staffing level. If we need to close a site for a day or more we could.
10. *Are you employing additional administration staff to deal with access and entry to your facility and any extra record keeping that is required?*
No, we have ability to lock doors and begin appointments via phone to reduce time for staff face-to-face with patients. We are capable of operating with reduced staffing. Non urgent appointments are deferred until staffing is available.
11. *Confirmation of your support for additional 15-minute hydration and comfort break due to workloads and working while in PPE.* **No response given.**
12. *Could you please provide a copy of your staffing strategy and any staffing contingency plans*
No response given.

The ANMF Tasmanian Branch is 8000 plus members strong! Supporting nurses, midwives, and care workers as the only union in Tasmania employing nurses and care workers to represent members. This is why our Organisers and Member Support Team are uniquely positioned to understand your experiences, represent you in your workplace, and offer industrial advice that's relevant to you.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact our Member Support Team via email on membersupport@anmftas.org.au. Email is the preferred and fastest way of contacting the team. Alternatively, you can phone (03) 6223 6777 or 1800 001 241 if outside Hobart.

Authorised by Emily Shepherd, ANMF Tasmanian Branch Secretary
4 February 2022