

ANMF NEWSFLASH

COVID-19 Bonus Update

Following the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Tasmanian Branch (ANMF) member consultation last week, the ANMF confirms that a majority (almost 75% of respondents) supported acceptance of the Tasmanian Government's COVID-19 Bonus of \$2,000 (pro rata) as outlined in response to members State-wide Strike Action.

Following this result, the ANMF on behalf of members has advised in-principle agreement to the Tasmanian Premier, provided the drafting of the Frontline Health COVID-19 Agreement 2022 is completed and agreed upon.

The ANMF understands that there are, and will be, several questions in relation to this agreement and the below frequently asked questions fact sheet has been prepared with information that is currently known about the draft.

COVID-19 Bonus – Frequently Asked Questions

What timeframe will the pro rata bonus be based on?

The proposed pro-rata payment will be based on hours worked from 15 December 2021, which is when borders were first opened, COVID-19 re-entered the State and there were significant workload and workforce challenges as a result.

How will the payment be split to reduce the tax burden?

The proposed payment plan involves payments being made in instalments leading up to 31 December 2022, rather than in a lump sum to avoid significant taxation impacts.

Are there any areas that will not receive the bonus?

The Department of Health has indicated that it is not their intention to make the bonus payment to Public Health Emergency Operation Centre staff in the Department of Health or Vaccination Clinic staff. These groups were not included in the original COVID-19 allowance escalation agreement due to its relationship to the escalation levels of clinical areas due to COVID-19. The ANMF is seeking further information on this matter.

Will testing clinic staff get the bonus?

Testing clinic members will be covered.

Will members outside of hospitals receive the bonus?

Yes, those who are working in community health services such as mental health, community nursing, child health and parenting, etc will also receive the payment as they involve direct and indirect clinical care.

What if I have been on leave will I receive the payment?

The ANMF has been advised that any member who has been on leave such as personal leave e.g., sick leave or maternity leave, would be paid pro rata. The ANMF is awaiting advice as to whether those members who have been on workers compensation will receive this allowance.

When will the Agreement be registered with the Tasmanian Industrial Commission?

The State Service Management Office (SSMO) advised on Friday 19 August 2022 that their intention is to retire the *Tasmanian Health Service COVID-19 Escalation Agreement 2022* within 30 days. SSMO will then seek to register the Frontline Health COVID-19 Agreement 2022 (currently in draft) immediately thereafter.

Will this prevent the ANMF and ANMF members from taking industrial action?

The ceasing of industrial action relates only to the current strike action, which has now taken place across the State. There is no agreement to not take further industrial action in the future e.g., for instance if Enterprise Agreement Negotiations reach an impasse.

This won't fix workloads, will it?

The \$2,000 pro rata bonus will not fix workloads. However, as we are now able to work with Government on workforce modelling, State-wide Transition to Practice Programs (350 additional graduates) and clinical

Support (clinical coaches) we will be able to get some tangible outcomes to assist. We will also be starting out Enterprise Agreement (EA) Negotiations where we can negotiate the base salary increase required to aid in recruitment.

What if there is another wave or variant of COVID-19, is this the only allowance will get?

No, the proposed agreement end date is 31 December 2022, the ANMF will continue to advocate for members for additional allowances or incentives from 1 January 2023 if required. In addition, the ANMF will add to the log of claims a Personal Protective Equipment Allowance (PPE) for nurses, midwives and AINs who are required to wear full PPE (such as those required when adhering to airborne precautions) irrespective of whether it relates to COVID-19, Tuberculosis, etc.

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
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