

## Health Services Union fights for paid pandemic leave

The Health Services Union (HSU) has called for additional paid pandemic leave entitlements for health, aged and community care workers in an application to the Fair Work Commission.

The HSU, in conjunction with other sector unions, is proposing two additional measures during the COVID-19 pandemic. These apply to workers in health, aged care and social and community services, including casual, part-time and full-time staff:

- 'Paid pandemic leave' – a worker receives two weeks paid leave each time they are required by the government, their employer or a doctor to self-isolate for the mandatory 14-day period due to exposure to COVID-19.
- 'Special leave where an employee contracts COVID-19' – a worker is absent from work without loss of pay, until the worker has medical clearance to return to work.

These additional measures are to be applied to all nine health and social care awards:

- Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services
- Aged Care
- Ambulance and Patient Transport Industry
- Health Professionals and Support Services
- Medical Practitioners
- Nurses
- Pharmacy Industry
- Social Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry
- Supported Employment Services

### *Quotes attributable to Lloyd Williams, National Secretary, Health Services Union*

"Health, aged and community care workers are more likely to be exposed to COVID-19, and therefore more likely to be required to self-isolate and on more than one occasion."

"The additional measures we are seeking will assist to maintain the living standards of these critical workers in the event they are required to self-isolate or seek treatment due to the COVID-19."

"This is the least we can do for our workforce, who are running head-on into the crisis and are risking their own health throughout this pandemic."

"HSU will continue to fight to support our workers, to protect them and the communities they serve."

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