



AWU UPDATE

17th March 2020

AWU UPDATE | QLD HEALTH – COVID-19

With more and more cases of COVID-19 (coronavirus) developing across Queensland, your AWU has been hard at work making sure Queensland Health is providing safe and fair workplaces during this tough time.

We're extremely proud of the work AWU members in Queensland Health are doing to keep the community safe, and we've been fighting hard to make sure you are kept safe at work.

After weeks of lobbying by the AWU, the Queensland Government have released a directive providing special terms and conditions of employment.

Queensland Health has also committed to making an effort to keep workplaces safe, and consulting with the AWU and its workers.

AWU Officials will continue meeting with Queensland Health on a regular basis to raise safety issues and hold them to account.

If you have a safety issue at your workplace or are worried you're not being treated safely make sure you contact your AWU Delegate or Organiser.

We've prepared the following FAQ's so that you know exactly where you stand.

CAN I ACCESS SPECIAL LEAVE DURING THIS TIME?

To support employees during this time, Queensland Health has made 20 days paid special pandemic leave available to all permanent and long-term casual employee (more than one years employment). This leave can be used for most circumstances relating to COVID-19, including:

1. If a worker is diagnosed with COVID-19,
2. If a worker is required to care for a family member who has or suspects they may have COVID-19
3. If a worker is required to care for children as a result of school or childcare closures.

This leave will only become available once workers have exhausted their sick leave balance.

WHAT IF I'M NOT COVERED BY THE ABOVE?

If you are required to self-isolate but haven't been diagnosed with COVID-19, or are a casual with less than one year's employment, you can still apply for Special Pandemic Leave if you have exhausted your personal leave.

The AWU will be fighting hard to make sure nobody misses out - If you need any assistance with this, make sure you speak to your AWU Delegate or Organiser straight away.

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WHAT SAFETY MEASURES ARE BEING PUT IN PLACE?

While safety measures vary from hospital to hospital the AWU has made it clear that we expect every effort to be made to keep AWU members away from any potential COVID-19 exposure.

AWU Organisers are constantly on the ground making sure appropriate safety measures are in place - if you don't think Queensland Health is doing enough make sure you speak to your AWU Organiser.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I GET SICK AT WORK?

While the AWU is doing everything we can to limit the risk of infection for members working in Queensland Health, if you do contract COVID-19 there is help available.

Queensland Health workers can apply for assistance from Workcover if they contract COVID-19 at work.

If you need assistance with this make sure you contact your AWU Organiser straight away.

CAN I REFUSE TO WORK?

AWU members can refuse to work – but only if there is an imminent risk to their health and safety.

Simply not feeling comfortable or not wanting to work is not enough – you need to be able to prove your health and safety is at immediate risk.

AWU Officials are working around the clock to keep workplaces safe - if you have a safety matter at your workplace make sure you contact your AWU Organiser immediately.

There has never been a more important time to be a member of the AWU.

AWU Officials are doing everything they can to make sure our members are kept safe and treated fairly at work. If you need any assistance or help during this time – make sure you speak to your AWU Delegate or Organiser straight away.

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