





**Australian Foundation
for Disability**

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Private & confidential

Mr Emmett Gray
Health Services Union
Level 2, 109 Pitt St
Sydney NSW 2000
By email: Emmett.gray@hsu.asn.au

11 October 2023

Dear Mr Gray

Australian Foundation for Disability (Afford): Major workplace change.

As you are aware the Federal and State Governments have made recommendations and policy changes about how organisations should employ supported employees.

There have been changes to the Supported Employment Services Award (SESA), which governs pay for supported employees. The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability has made explicit recommendations for ending segregation in employment and enabling people with disability to live, learn, work, play, create and engage alongside people living without disability.

Afford supports all of these changes. Accordingly, we need to make changes to how we manage supported employment.

Afford wants to improve workplaces and outcomes for supported employees. We will be enlarging and improving our Ingleburn site to accommodate more employees, to upgrade equipment and increase our productivity to ensure we are operating as a commercially viable operation. We will also be looking for a new site in Western Sydney that will allow us to do the same. Once we locate an appropriate site in Western Sydney, we will close our current site at Minchinbury. We anticipate this will occur within the next 12 months.

We will also be investing in learning and development programs and further vocational training for our supported employees to provide the opportunity and choice for open employment.

In order to finance these workplace improvements, we need to consolidate where we operate in New South Wales. Therefore, Afford will be closing its Marrickville site on 22 December 2023 and our Prestons site on 28 March 2024.



The dates indicated for these closures precede regular shutdown periods for festive holidays – Christmas and Easter – and allow a clean transition for all of our employees, supported and non-supported, who are willing to relocate to the Ingleburn site.

We notified all impacted employees of the workplace change on 10 October 2023. We have commenced individual consultation immediately with our impacted employees at Marrickville to ensure they have the opportunity to digest the information and, if they choose, consult their family, support people or representatives. This will ensure our employees have the time to understand and consider the options available to them (redeployment or redundancy) and to provide feedback.

We will convene further meetings with the impacted employees at our other sites as their cessation date gets closer.

Our goal is always to try to redeploy any impacted employees. We can accommodate all of the impacted employees from our Marrickville site at our Ingleburn site. As we continue to expand and modernise our Ingleburn site, we will also be able to accommodate impacted employees from Preston's in 2024. Once we acquire a new Western Sydney site, we will be able to accommodate all of our impacted Minchinbury employees.

We have strongly encouraged impacted employees to explore all of the available vacant positions within the organisation. We will ensure that all opportunities are made available to affected employees for their consideration.

For any employees who are impacted but unwilling and/or unable to be redeployed to another Afford site, we will provide a redundancy package, as well as support with their search for another role. Afford will provide assistance with preparing resumes and provide coaching to help prepare people for job interviews.

We have also made AccessEAP services available to all impacted employees, their families and support people.

Afford will do everything we reasonably can to address any concerns the Australian Services Union may hold on behalf of its members and in its own right.

Should you require any additional information, please contact me directly on 0414 611 371 or via email: Anne.Ivanson@afford.com.au.

Yours sincerely,

Anne Ivanson
**A/Executive Director, People & Organisational Development
Australian Foundation for Disability (Afford)**