

## **Parramatta Linen Service: An impromptu show of hands isn't consultation**

Dear Member,

Union members at Parramatta Linen Service have raised concerns in relation to recent changes to the ways in which overtime is allocated, as well as the way in which the employer implemented these changes. After HSU intervention the employer has withdrawn the offending meme, which was in breach of the Award. The HSU is awaiting confirmation the retraction has been communicated to affected employees. In the meantime, it's important to know your rostering rights, as well as allocation of overtime and personal leave requirements.

### **Rostering**

Rosters are created to promote transparent access to shifts, with a requirement for employers to provide adequate notification. There are instances when last minute roster changes are needed and the Award notes employers can ask employees to perform overtime, as long as it's reasonable. Overtime that is excessive indicates inadequate staffing levels and this needs to be addressed to ensure there are safe work practices in place.

### **Leave**

There are also instances where employees need to take unexpected leave. This is where most overtime shifts are introduced to ensure appropriate coverage. It is not acceptable to modify or remove shifts, already included on the roster, because an employee takes unplanned leave. Doing so financially disadvantages the person who is unable to work earlier in the week. More importantly, it creates a penalisation system that doesn't promote a positive workplace culture.

### **Documentation required**

There are instances where employees are required to provide a medical certificate. This requirement is based on the number of prior absences, patterns of leave and various other factors. It's unacceptable for an employer to impose this requirement on all employees. Specific circumstances are dealt with directly and union members affected can seek advice on their individual matter by calling our Member Services Division on 1300 478 679. Otherwise, it's assumed documentation is not required after one day's absence from work.

### **Consultation**

Most importantly, workplace changes such as these require consultation. Examples of consultation include formal meetings and prior notification provided to affected employees. Providing an agenda, following up with minutes and opportunities to comment are all signposts of best-practice consultation. Anything less creates misinformation and unnecessary stress for those affected by the proposed changes at

work. It is clear there has been no official consultation in relation to the way in which overtime is allocated, the documentation requirements for personal leave and the ways rosters are changed week by week.

### **Where to next?**

Speak to others in your workplace and let them know their rights at work. Those who are not yet members of the HSU are encouraged to join and support others in creating a positive workplace culture that adheres to the legislation that underpins your rights at work. Encourage your workmates to join online at [www.hsu.asn.au/join](http://www.hsu.asn.au/join) or phone 1300 478 679.

In unity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerard Hayes', with a long, sweeping underline.

Gerard Hayes  
Secretary, HSU NSW/ACT/QLD