

# GLOSSARY

**Adoption leave:** Available to adopting parents, provisions for adoption leave are the same as parental leave but the age of the child being adopted may affect the length of time the parent can be on leave.

**After hours dependent care:** Applies when an employer requires an employee to attend work, training or a meeting outside of the employee's normal hours. The employer reimburses the additional expenses incurred by the employee for the care of a dependent.

**Antenatal (pre-natal) leave:** Enables pregnant women and, in many cases, their partners, to attend routine medical appointments associated with pregnancy. The leave is separate from, and in addition to, parental and personal leave.

**Banking rostered days:** Enables employees, by agreement, to accumulate their rostered days off to use at some time in the future. Often there is a limit regarding how many rostered days can be banked.

**Bereavement leave:** *see Compassionate leave*

**Career break:** A negotiated leave without pay arrangement that enables the employee to obtain a break from their usual duties to pursue personal development or carry out family commitments. Employees will have the expectation of returning to their substantive job once the career break is over.

**Carer's leave:** Carer's leave is granted to an employee to enable him or her to care for an ill or injured family member or with consent of employer provide caring supervision.

**Carers' room, also known as a family room:** A room or work area set aside in the workplace where employees can continue to work while also caring for family members when normal care arrangements break down, or when children are unable to attend child care or school due to a minor illness.

**Casual work:** Includes temporary work or work with changeable hours, which does not offer the protection of a permanent job. Casual employees are usually not entitled to the benefits associated with continuous employment although they are often entitled to a casual loading in lieu of these other benefits, such as sick leave.

**Ceremonial leave:** Often interchangeable with cultural leave, in some instances, this leave can only be accessed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in order to enable these employees to meet cultural obligations and to participate in ceremonial activities.

**Compassionate or bereavement leave:** Paid leave from work after the death or a serious or sudden incapacity of a family member.

**Cultural Leave:** Either paid or unpaid leave that enables an employee who, for religious or cultural reasons, needs to be absent from work in order to be involved in such community activities as Yom Kippur, Greek Easter or Orthodox Christmas.

**Dependent:** A person who requires the care of another (an employee for the sake of this resource manual) to manage their health and general wellbeing, for example a child or a frail parent. A person does not have to be totally incapacitated to be defined as dependent for the purpose of family and work life balance provisions but they must require the assistance of others to manage some aspects of daily living, for example attending medical appointments.

**Direct discrimination:** Occurs when someone is treated unfairly or less favourably in the same or similar circumstances because, for example, of their gender or parental status.

**Early closing:** Prior to significant community events, such as Christmas or at the end of the week, staff members are able to leave work early in order to be with family or manage other commitments, such as shopping or cooking.

**Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** A program aimed at assisting employees and their immediate families with personal or work related problems and concerns.

**Exceptional circumstances leave (miscellaneous/extraordinary leave):** This leave, usually unpaid, may be granted to employees to assist them to cope with an extraordinary circumstance or event in their family life. This leave covers circumstances not covered in scope or length of time by any other type of leave. This leave is often used to extend bereavement leave or carer's leave when a family member becomes seriously ill or incapacitated. It is also used to cover one-off significant events like a house fire.

**Family:** Defined within its broadest sense and inclusive of the wide range of lifestyles of employees. "Family" includes any person dependent on the employee for care or support such as a relation by blood (child, sibling, grandparents), marriage (including de facto relationships), adoption, fostering or traditional kinship without discrimination in interpretation as to race or sexual preference.<sup>6</sup>

**Family friendly provisions/policies:** Designed to support staff to balance work and family responsibilities, including dependent children, family members who have disabilities and elders.

**Family leave:** *see Carer's leave.*

**Family room:** *See Carers' Room*

**Flexi time:** Flexible working hours allow employees to start and finish work between a flexible range of agreed hours as long as they work a set number of hours each day or week. For example, an employee may be required to work an eight hour day with a half-hour lunch break, in which case they could start work at any time after 7 am and finish between 3.30 and 6.00 pm.

**Foster parent leave:** Applicable to foster parents in the process of settling a child into their home. The length of leave may vary depending on the age of the child.

**Full-time work:** Usually a working week of 35 hours or more. (Under the SACS Award, full time work is 38 hours per week)

**Home based work:** *See telecommuting*

**Indirect discrimination:** Occurs when there is a rule, policy, practice or procedure that is the same for everyone, but has an unequal or disproportionate impact on a specific group of people and the rule, policy, practice or procedure is not reasonable.

**In Vitro Fertilisation leave (IVF leave):** Paid leave enabling eligible employees to attend routine medical appointments associated with IVF treatment.

**Job share:** A form of permanent part-time work in which two, or possibly more, people share the responsibilities, hours, salary and benefits of one full-time job.

<sup>6</sup> The Australian Film Commission agreement

The performance of job share partners is evaluated separately even though they share the duties of the job.

**Keep in touch program:** A systematic way of keeping in contact with employees who are on extended leave, i.e. parental leave or extended sick leave. The program is aimed at enabling the employee to remain connected to their workplace and to assist them in reintegrating into the workplace when they return from extended leave.

**Lactation breaks:** Regular breaks during working hours to either breastfeed a baby if the child is nearby or for breast milk to be expressed and stored for a baby's later consumption. (Arrangements for time, place, paid/unpaid are negotiated in the workplace).

**Leave without pay:** By mutual agreement, an employee takes leave for an agreed and nominated time without pay.

**Long service leave:** Paid leave awarded to a permanent employee in recognition of a period of service to an employer. Length of service varies between awards and workplaces.

**Make up time:** An employee, with the consent of the employer, works a reduced number of hours and then makes up those hours at a later date during an agreed spread of hours without penalty rates being applied.

**Parental leave:** Parental leave is a collective term to describe maternity, paternity (partner) and adoption leave. Parental leave can be paid or unpaid leave. By law, 12 months unpaid must be made available to all parents (with at least 12 months continuous service or 12 months' regular and systematic employment as a casual employee), but only one parent can take the leave at any one time, except for the 'paternity leave' period in which both parents can be on leave.

**Part day absences:** Occurs when employees take a few hours leave, by agreement, to assist in balancing work and family responsibilities. The employee may take this as paid leave, for example carer's leave or sick leave, or they may use make up time to replace the hours lost.

**Part-time work:** Part-time workers are permanent employees who have a set number of weekly working hours less than those of a full-time employee. In the SACS industry, anyone who works less than 38 hours per week. Part-time workers receive the same entitlements as full-time workers but on a proportional or pro rata basis.

**Paternity (partner) leave:** Leave taken by the partner of the mother of the child when their child is new born.

**Personal/carer's leave:** Combines sick leave, carer's leave and bereavement leave into one entitlement.

**Pre-natal leave:** See *Ante-natal leave*

**Purchased leave:** Enables an employee to purchase an additional period of leave during the course of a year. For example, if working a 48/52 purchased leave arrangement, an employee will receive an additional 4 weeks leave per year, with his or her salary of 48 weeks paid over 52 weeks. Other variations of this leave include 46/52 or 50/52.

**Request Driven Rostering:** The roster takes into account the needs of individual employees. Employees are expected to inform their employer about

when they want to work and when it would be difficult for them to work and the employer will make genuine efforts to accommodate the individual needs of employees.

**Self-Rostering:** A system in which workers undertake the responsibility for the designation of shift arrangements and working days and days off.<sup>7</sup>

**Sick leave:** Paid authorised absence from work granted to employees when they are ill.

**Sick leave donation registry:** The Sick Leave Donation Registry enables employees to donate an amount of their accrued sick leave to a central registry. The sick leave can then be utilised to assist fellow employees who are experiencing hardship due to a catastrophic illness or injury being suffered by the employee or a member of their immediate family forcing the employee to be away from work after exhausting all of his/her accrued benefit of paid sick leave. The donation of sick leave to the registry is totally voluntary."

**Telecommuting/home based work:** An arrangement whereby employees can perform their usual work duties from home. An employee may telecommute for a few hours per week or nearly all their working week.

**Time off in lieu:** Enables an employee to elect not to be paid for overtime and to take an equivalent amount of time off by agreement with their employer.

**Work based child care:** Either a child care facility located onsite or a nearby child care facility that has a certain number of child care places paid for by the organisation.

**Work life balance:** Work life balance refers to achieving a balance between all of the aspects in an individual's life including work, family, friends, health, relaxation, community activities and socialisation. For instance, a work life strategy could include access to quit smoking activities in work time, or paid time off work to donate blood.

**Workplace agreements:** Official documents negotiated by employers and employees regarding the pay and condition of the employees. There are varying forms of workplace agreements but the following, with the exception of a common law agreement, are lodged with the Office of the Employment Advocate.

**Australian Workplace Agreement (AWA):** "An individual agreement between an employer and employee about the employee's terms and conditions of employment."<sup>9</sup>

**Non-union collective agreement:** A collective agreement is negotiated between an employer and the employees of the workplace who will be covered by the agreement.

**Union collective agreement:** Negotiated by the employer, which may be represented by its employer association and the union/s, which represent and negotiate on behalf of their members.

**Common law agreements:** An agreement between individual staff and an employer regarding pay and conditions. The contract is negotiated between the employer and employee and is not lodged with, or ratified by, any authority. Terms in common law agreements that undermine terms in a workplace agreement or award do not prevail over the terms of the workplace agreement or award.

<sup>7</sup> Definition of self-rostering adapted from the Australian Nursing Federation (Vic. Branch) *Self-rostering guidelines* August 2003. <sup>8</sup> Palliative Care Victoria and Creative Ministries Network, *Draft resources to support industry dealing with the impact of life threatening illness in the workplace*, 2005. <sup>9</sup> Wagenet glossary, [www.wagenet.gov.au](http://www.wagenet.gov.au)