



Personal Impact Days – Public Sector Union Wages Agreement (PSUWA) - What's New

Introduction

Personal Impact Days are a new entitlement.

This entitlement provides employees, who due to the nature of their duties are exposed on a cumulative and/or regular basis to vicarious trauma and may need time away from the workplace to assist in managing those impacts.

The nature of the duties undertaken by employees who may access Personal Impact Days includes but is not limited to exposure to deceased persons, animal neglect or cruelty, violent offenders, traumatised children and families, and related material and/or case notes.

Personal Impact days are accessed by application following discussion with the employee's manager and are considered on a case-by-case basis subject to operational requirements, and once it is established the nature of your duties are such that there is cumulative/regular exposure to vicarious trauma, then any application will not be unreasonably refused. Personal Impact Days are paid at the employee's normal salary rate.

What this means in practice

Eligible employees may access up to 5 Personal Impact Days per year (pro rata for part-time employees). The entitlement is non-cumulative and is intended to support employees in managing the risk and impacts of vicarious trauma on the employee's health and wellbeing.

Who do Personal Impact Days apply to?

Employees covered by the *Public Sector Union Wage Agreement* who undertake duties in an environment where they have cumulative and regular exposure to vicarious trauma including:

- Exposure to deceased persons,
- Exposure to animal neglect or cruelty,
- Exposure to violent situations,
- Exposure to traumatised children and people,



- Exposure to graphic and/or traumatic material such as evidentiary material and case notes.

It is suggested that workplaces proactively discuss whether Personal Impact Days are likely available for certain roles, so employees are clear where this is an available support option, alongside other systemic, and/or proactive workplace measures.

Accessing Personal Impact Days

Evidence Requirements

There are no formal evidence requirements.

Personal Impact Days may be accessed in either a planned or unplanned way, recognising that each employee's self-care needs are unique to them and may change over time. This is why the entitlement can be accessed flexibly, recognising that the time taken will vary depending on the employee's circumstances and self-care requirements.

Manager Discussion and Support

To access the Personal Impact Days, an employee is to have a discussion with their Manager about their application and whether there are any other appropriate and available workplace supports that may be able to be accessed by the employee.

The discussion should focus on the employee's wellbeing and the potential impact of the exposure to vicarious trauma associated with their duties. Whilst the employee can access the personal impact days to assist manage these impacts, this is an important opportunity to check in with the employee, consider any potential impacts arising from the duties undertaken and any other support or wellbeing measures that may assist the employee.

Where requested by the employee, a nominated HR representative may liaise with the employee's Supervisor or Manager regarding the application, and any appropriate workplace supports.

It is noted that this discussion may not be practical where the day is accessed in an unplanned way and in those circumstances this discussion should occur as soon as practicable after the personal impact day has been accessed.

Planned and Unplanned Access

An example of a planned Personal Impact Day could be where an employee accesses their Personal Impact Days to participate in a scheduled wellbeing activity over the course of a year (i.e this may be a yoga class or bushwalk). Or it could be



that they request access to a Personal Impact Day in two weeks, to spend time with a close friend.

Given there are no evidence requirements, it is not the role of the Manager to evaluate the value of the activity and if they consider if it is appropriate self-care or not – as this will be unique to each employee.

Where Personal Impact Days are planned, the employee should meet with their manager, and a discussion should occur before the days are accessed. The employee should provide notice to their manager as soon as reasonably possible of their plans to access Personal Impact Days.

An example of an unplanned Personal Impact Day could be where an employee contacts their manager on the day that they need to access a Personal Impact Day and requests approval at that time.

Where unplanned, this should be considered in the same way as other unplanned absences, where it is usually reasonable to approve the absence.

Applications and Operational Requirements

Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis, subject to the ongoing provision of services and operational requirements but, will not be unreasonably refused.

It is noted that there may be examples where it is reasonable to consider the operational requirements of the workplace. For example, an employee may request a Personal Impact Day several weeks in advance to participate in a pre-planned wellbeing or self-care activity that forms part of their ongoing wellbeing strategy. If the requested day coincides with a training day, or where several employees are also on planned leave, which would have a significant impact on service delivery, it would be reasonable to discuss the operational requirements with the employee and seek to agree to an alternative day.

When does this change apply?

The introduction of Personal Impact Days is effective 11 May 2026. For existing employees, this means from the 11 May 2026 employees have an entitlement to access up to five Personal Impact Days.

At the start of each new personal leave year, five Personal Impact Days will again become available for each eligible employee. Noting Personal Impact Days are not cumulative, are not paid out on separation of employment, and are pro-rata for part-time employees.