

20DHB FRAMEWORK FOR PAYMENT OF CASUAL WORKERS DURING COVID-19 RESPONSE

The following sets out the proposed framework for the DHBs to operationalise the SSC guidance on entitlements of their casual workers during the Covid-19 response.

The framework recognises the importance of casual workers to the regular operation of DHB services, the uncertainty created by the disruption to services as part of the Covid-19 preparations, and the potential need for casual workers to contribute to the Covid-19 response.

Who is covered?

All directly DHB-employed casual workers who worked in the four weeks prior to the Level 4 Covid-19 Alert coming into effect (11:59pm, Wednesday, 26 March)

Who is not covered?

Any individual not directly employed by a DHB. This includes locum staff who are engaged directly on their own account or through a third-party (i.e. locum agency, nursing bureau).

Permanent DHB staff who undertake occasional additional casual work for their DHB or for other DHBs are also excluded.

What is paid?

The payment will be based on the average weekly earnings of the individual casual worker over the last four weeks (two pay periods) prior to the country moving to the Level 4 Covid 19 Alert.

This will initially be paid as a lump sum amount, and thereafter as a regular payment each pay run until the payment ceases.

The lump sum or the regular payment will be offset by the amount paid to the employee for shifts they are engaged and paid for, including any booked shifts that were paid but the individual was not required to work or was on approved paid leave for.

The payment is taxable.

How long will the payment continue?

The payment will continue for the duration of Alert Level 4.

It will be reviewed when the Alert Level is reduced.

It will not be paid where the individual casual worker is engaged and paid for DHB work and earns at least the equivalent of their average weekly earnings amount.

What is the casual worker required to do?

It is a condition of the payment that the casual worker agrees their DHB employer may require them to undertake appropriate duties for their expertise at either their usual workplace or another related workplace, to at least the extent reflected by the payment (i.e. their average hours in the four weeks prior to 'lockdown') during the period it is made.

The DHB may stop or suspend the payment if the employee unreasonably refuses to accept shifts offered by the DHB.

Any work undertaken beyond these average hours will be by agreement and be paid at their appropriate contractual rate. This will not affect the level of the payment in subsequent weeks.

What is the implication for the casual worker's future employment relationship with the DHB?

The payment arrangement is in recognition of the exceptional circumstances impacting on the health sector and the country. It does not change the nature of the employment relationship between the DHB and the casual worker.