

UNION WELCOMES TELSTRA JOB SECURITY COMMITMENTS, EXTENDED WORKING FROM HOME ARRANGEMENTS

Dear Members,

Your Union has continued to seek further protections for members as we navigate through uncharted territory in relation to the emerging worldwide Novel Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. These conversations between your Union and all major employer groups who employ our members are ongoing.

As the crisis continues to emerge, the destructive force of this virus is being felt throughout the health of our nation, and also by our economy. Anxiety is heightened in our communities with fears for our health, but also with fears for jobs as we witness massive employers standing down thousands across the country.

Through the conversations we're having regularly with major employers of our members, we are determined in our pursuit of minimising your exposure to the virus at work, whilst seeking to protect your take-home pay.

We're fighting two different fronts; against an enemy we can't see. It is unprecedented, and like nothing our generation has ever witnessed.

JOB SECURITY

Following significant ongoing discussions with Telstra, your Union is proud to support an initiative which has just been announced to the Stock Market.

All T22 job reductions planned for the next six months will no longer proceed.

This is significant. Whilst the nation grapples with this crisis, and our members are focussed on the health and wellbeing of their families, they do not need to worry if their name would be one of thousands who would be the next to be called, through the ongoing T22 cull.

However, in making this commitment, and in addition to the pandemic concessional leave policy we've secured, Telstra has sought to relieve significant pressures on their costs – particularly in growing leave balances.

Therefore, in order to curb some of these costs, Telstra will shutdown all non-critical operations for five days, from 9 to 17 April, around the Easter long weekend. This means all office-based workers who are currently working from home will be required to take paid leave during this period. As an incentive, those who want to take two weeks leave during this period, including the Easter shutdown period, will be afforded an additional day of discretionary paid leave on the working day immediately following the period.

Telstra is also seeking for employees to lock in a further week of leave between now and 30 September to assist them in managing this growing liability whilst jobs and additional pandemic leave is safeguarded through the period.

For those who don't have enough accrued leave to cover these periods, you'll need to use the leave you actually do have, but no one will be forced to take unpaid leave or fall into a negative leave balance. Those on workers' compensation, long-term sick leave, unpaid leave or parental leave over this period will be

exempt. Those who have an annual leave balance of zero hours as of 1 April will also be exempt, however if you have long service leave you will be encouraged to take it, but not directed to. Members with extenuating personal circumstances seeking to work through this period, can seek approval through their Group manager.

EXTENSION TO WORK AT HOME ARRANGEMENTS

All eligible employees who are currently working from home, will continue to work from home through to a new date of at least 20 April. This is subject to change and members will be informed immediately, if it does.

We are continuing to engage with management at the most senior levels, regularly, and will ensure you have access to relevant information as soon as possible.

In closing – what we are experiencing right now is something unique. None of us have seen anything like it before, and will probably not see anything like it again, in our lifetimes.

Whilst we are pulling out all stops to reach the critical balance between ensuring the health and safety of our members, and protecting your take-home pay, decisions such as these need to be made decisively and with clear thinking.

This is a continuously evolving situation, and is something your Union is determined to tackle head-on to achieve the best possible outcomes for you and your families.

Whilst we understand the leave arrangements that form part of this commitment may not be ideal for many, it is critical that we all understand that they are absolutely necessary to ensuring our members and their families have certainty. Certainty around your rent, your mortgages and your family's personal financial obligations.

We are confident that the majority of you will share our views.

As always, should members require any further assistance or additional information in relation to anything we've mentioned above, please contact your State Branch Official for advice.

Yours faithfully,

Graham Lorrain
BRANCH PRESIDENT

20 March 2020



Connecting
our community

communication workers union
CWUnion