



Work Arrangements on Public Holidays for Nursing Staff

Human Resources Policy

Effective Date: May 2008

1 PURPOSE

To outline the work arrangements for nursing staff on public holidays whilst ensuring appropriate clinical and service delivery.

2 APPLICATION

This policy applies to all nursing and midwifery staff in Health Service Districts.

3 GUIDELINES

Guidelines may be developed to facilitate implementation of this policy. The guidelines must be consistent with this policy.

4 DELEGATION

The “delegate” is as listed in the Queensland Health Human Resource Delegations Manual as amended from time to time.

5 REFERENCES

- Nurses (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (EB6) 2006
- Nurses (Queensland Health) Section 170MX Award 2003
- Nurses (Queensland Public Sector) Award 2004
- Nurses (Queensland Public Hospitals) Award 2004
- IRM 2.5-4 Compulsory Christmas/New Year Closure
- Recreation Leave HR Policy
- Public Holidays HR Policy

6 SUPERSEDES

- IRM 2.5-34 Work Arrangements on Public Holidays for Nursing Staff

7 POLICY

7.1 Principles

- Many nurses are rostered to work on public holidays and are paid a public holiday shift loading for such work in accordance with the relevant nursing award or agreement.
- Where nursing staff needs can be predicted prior to the public holiday, nurses should be notified whether they will be required to work at the earliest possible opportunity.

- Individual districts or facilities are to consider staffing needs based on clinical and service delivery requirements prior to deploying or standing down (not required) nursing staff on public holidays.
- Where nursing staff are stood down (not required) by their supervisor on a public holiday they are entitled to the day off the same as any other employee who is not required to attend work.
- Roster patterns should not be varied to avoid meeting public holiday entitlements, particularly in relation to part time nursing staff.

These general principles do not apply in the case of Christmas closure arrangements (refer to IRM 2.5-4 - Compulsory Christmas/New Year Closure). Nursing staff not subject to Christmas closure arrangements can be subject to these principles for public holidays which fall during the Christmas to New Year period.

8 APPLYING THE POLICY

Given the broad scope of services provided by Queensland Health, it is not possible to apply a single arrangement to all nurses in relation to working on public holidays.

Staff not wanting to participate in working arrangements on public holidays are to apply for a leave of absence, utilising either recreation leave/time off in lieu (TOIL) or unpaid leave, for the public holiday in question. Such leave arrangements should not be used by districts or facilities to avoid the principles set out in section 7 of this policy.

Accrued Days Off (ADO) **are** to be arranged so they do not coincide with a public holiday.

Districts/facilities are to establish a timeframe for giving the earliest possible advice to nurses as to their requirement to work, or not, on each public holiday. If not required to work, staff are to be provided with reasonable notice prior to the commencement of their rostered shift.

Where a nurse is stood down by their supervisor on a public holiday, they are entitled to the day off, as is any other employee who is not required to attend work. Nurse(s) stood down from duty on a public holiday by their supervisor but are required to be on-call shall be paid the on-call allowance in accordance with the on-call provisions of the relevant nursing award or agreement.

It is recommended that Districts adopt the following steps to enable forward planning of resources, ensuring a sufficient nursing workforce is available to work on public holidays:

- Maintain a register of both full time and part time nursing staff based on an annual or public holiday cluster which should include information such as:
 - preference for work arrangements on a public holiday;
 - the individual's current skill set;
 - skill sets in which individuals may require further training; and
 - areas in which individuals are available/would be willing to work in.
- Undertake rotational rostering of staff working on public holidays, equitable access to working on a public holiday and allowing the ability to plan around other circumstances which may arise.

- Nursing staff are entitled to the same consideration as other Queensland Health employees not required to perform their normal duties on a public holiday. However, where staff work on a public holiday they may be deployed to areas where staffing and workload demands indicate nursing staff are required to meet patient needs. Such deployment should only occur to clinical areas where the nurse is able to safely practise.

Any movement of nurses between wards or units will be done in accordance with current deployment processes which provide for matching the nurses' skills, knowledge and abilities to the position and deployment at the same classification level, unless otherwise agreed. Prior to being deployed, nursing staff should receive appropriate training and consultation including but not limited to:

- reasons for deployment
 - area of deployment
 - personal preferences
 - physical ability
 - clinical competence
 - orientation
 - previous history of deployment.
- If minimum staffing is required, each ward/unit should establish a 'short list' of nurses who are required to work.

This 'short list' exercise should be undertaken for each public holiday as it falls and nurses should be rotated so that all staff are treated equitably in relation to whether a nurse is required to work on the particular public holiday or not. The 'short list' should, as far as possible, take consideration of the individual preferences for a leave of absence.

9 DEFINITIONS

Stand-down (not required) means being released from a rostered shift on a public holiday with pay.

10 HISTORY

May 2008	Policy reformatted into the HR Policy template.
November 2007	Developed to clarify the provisions of stand down processes for nursing staff on public holidays