

Casual employees

A “casual employee” is an employee who works on an ‘as and when required’ basis where the employer has no obligation to provide ongoing work.

“Casual employee” as defined in the DHB MECA means an employee who has no set hours or days of work and who is asked to work as and when required. A casual employee may choose not to work when it is offered, or only work in areas of their choosing. Casual employment should not be used to replace genuine permanent or temporary positions except to meet business requirements when no other alternative is available.

A definition of ‘casual’ employee for those working outside the DHB sector may be found in the relevant employment agreement.

Sometimes what starts as a casual employment relationship can change over time to become a permanent employment relationship if there is sufficiently regular pattern of hours and days of work and other outward indicators of permanent employment. If you have concerns in this regard please contact NZNO for clarification/assistance.

Casual employees do not have the same rights and entitlements normally provided to permanent employees, in particular:

- casual staff are entitled to receive a loading in their wages for annual leave;
- casuals are not entitled to paid annual leave;
- casual employees have no right to guaranteed hours of work;
- for employees covered by the DHB MECA there is no guarantee that casual employees’ service will be recognised for movement through the salary scale.

However, casual staff are entitled to sick leave if they have been employed over 6 months for at least an average of 10 hours a week and no less than 1 hour in every week, or no less than 40 hours in every month during that period.

Doing casual work while on parental leave may affect your parental leave entitlement. Please see the parental leave fact sheet for further information.

Members requiring support or further information should contact a workplace delegate or the NZNO Member Support Centre on 0800 28 38 48.

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Mission statement

NZNO is committed to the representation of members and the promotion of nursing and midwifery. NZNO embraces Te Tiriti o Waitangi and works to improve the health status of all peoples of Aotearoa/ New Zealand through participation in health and social policy development.

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