

## NSW Health Service Allied Health Assistants (State) Award

**Summary** The Industrial Relations Commission made a new award with a new classification structure and salaries for Allied Health Assistants, and varied some specific conditions of their employment.

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**Distributed to** Ministry of Health, Public Health System, Health Associations Unions

**Audience** Administration, Allied Health

## NSW HEALTH SERVICE ALLIED HEALTH ASSISTANTS (STATE) AWARD

### PURPOSE

This Information Bulletin advises of a new *NSW Health Service Allied Health Assistants (State) Award* made by the Industrial Relations Commission on 20 December 2018. The Industrial Relations Commission also made variations to the *Health Employees Conditions of Employment (State) Award* in respect of Allied Health Assistants on 20 December 2018.

### KEY INFORMATION

The *NSW Health Service Allied Health Assistants (State) Award* applies retrospectively, and commences on 19 April 2018. The new pay rates are effective from the first pay period commencing on or after 19 April 2018. The two specific variations (outlined in point 2 below) to the *Health Employees Conditions of Employment (State) Award* are also effective on 19 April 2018.

The new provisions replace the existing arrangements for:

- Technical Assistant Grade 1 – *Health Employees (State) Award*
- Diversional Therapist Without Diploma – paid by Determination at the equivalent rate as a Technical Assistant Grade 1.
- Technical Assistant (Orthotics/Prosthetics) – *Health Employees Technical (State) Award*

#### 1. NSW Health Service Allied Health Assistants (State) Award

The new award contains a new classification structure and rates of pay. Your attention is drawn to *Clause 10 Transitional Arrangements* and *Table 2 Transitional Salary Arrangements to Allied Health Assistant* which guide the reclassification of existing employees into the new structure. The Award can be found at <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/careers/conditions/Awards/allied-health-assistants.pdf>.

#### 2. Classification Structure and Qualifications

Schedule B *Classifications and Qualifications for Allied Health Assistant Positions Structure and Qualifications*, details the structure, qualifications and progression arrangements of the new award.

A number of questions have been raised by Health Agencies over the interpretation of the qualification provisions awarded by the Commission. The award provisions refer to progression *based upon having completed a relevant Certificate III or Certificate IV qualification or other qualification deemed equivalent by the employer or where they have been successfully assessed as possessing the competencies required for a Certificate III or Certificate IV by way of RPL*. The following information is provided to assist:

- Relevancy of qualifications is determined by the Health Agency with reference to the requirements of the position. A relevant qualification is one that equips the Allied Health Assistant to undertake the scope of practice as outlined in their position description. There may be circumstances where a qualification in one discipline is relevant to a position in another discipline.
- RPL is formal process of recognition of prior learning undertaken by a Registered Training Organisation.

### 3. Health Employees Conditions of Employment (State) Award – specific provisions for Allied Health Assistants

There are two variations to this Award that are specific to Allied Health Assistants and arise from the decision of the Industrial Relations Commission and savings offered by the Health Services Union. The varied Award can be found at <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/careers/conditions/Awards/hsu-he-conditions.pdf>.

The particular clauses are:

#### 3.1 Clause 3 Hours Subclause (xiii) Tea Break.

Allied Health Assistants have their tea break entitlement reduced to 10 minutes per day. Although the decision is effective 19 April 2018, there will be no action taken to retrieve the 10 minutes of paid time. Immediate steps are to be taken to implement the reduced entitlement.

#### 3.2 Clause 12 Special Working Conditions Subclause (vii) ‘Handling Monies Allowance’.

Effective from 19 April 2018, Allied Health Assistants are not entitled to payment of the ‘Handling Monies Allowance’ even though they may be required to perform such duties. Health Agencies should take appropriate action to address as an overpayment any payments that have occurred since 19 April 2018. This can be through the normal overpayment recovery process or, following discussion, affected employees may choose to offset the overpayment against the backdated payment of the new salary rates.

### 4. Specialty Coding in StaffLink

Speciality coding supports the identification of specific disciplines within the Allied Health Workforce including training pathways in the NSW Health System and supporting workforce planning initiatives.

The speciality coding is based on the new award Schedule A – *Disciplines Which Utilise Allied Health Assistants*. All Allied Health Assistant positions in StaffLink are to be coded using the primary function of “Allied Health Assistant” and relevant speciality field as per the table below.

Speciality Code
Audiology
Dietetics
Diversional Therapy

Exercise Physiology
Mental Health
Occupational Therapy
Orthotics/Prosthetics
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Radiography
Social Work
Speech Pathology
Multidisciplinary/Other

The codes for the old classifications should no longer be used.

## 5. Administrative Arrangements

Prior to actioning any movement of employees in the payroll and roster systems regard should be had to the following:

- Evaluation of grading of employees in accordance with the new award classification structure, qualification requirements and the transition table.
- Relevant job descriptions.
- Stafflink Establishment time frames.
- Stafflink Position Hierarchy reporting lines.
- Stafflink Position budgeting.
- Impacts to recruitment processes.
- Changes to HealthRoster demand templates.

## 6. Implementation of the New Award

Health Agencies are requested to implement the new provisions expeditiously. It should be noted that there will be no additional funding provided for the new Award.