Member Assist Hot Topics

Welcome to the first of a regular series on our web site where we address issues that are currently being raised by members.

Remember, when you need detailed advice, the first step is to speak to your local union rep for advice. Many issues can be settled at local level as an individual matter or a branch matter. Informing and consulting your union rep as a protocol is strongly encouraged.

If you need further assistance then your Member Assist team is available to offer prompt, professional industrial advice. You can contact Member Assist by calling 9210 6060 or 1800 106 683 or by sending an email to enquiries@sstuwa.org.au

1. Can I use carers leave to look after my mother?

Clause 31 of the Teachers (Public Sector Primary and Secondary Education) Award 1993 states that Carers Leave can be accessed up to a maximum of 12.5 days paid leave to care for a sick family member, provided the days used are accrued sick leave entitlements.

The definition of “family” means the definition contained in the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 for “relative”. That is a person who is related to the employee by blood, marriage, affinity or adoption and includes a person who is wholly or mainly dependant on, or is a member of the household of, the employee.

2. What is meant by evidence when submitting a sick leave form?

Clause 41 of the Teachers (Public Sector Primary and Secondary Education) Award 1993 states: The reference to “evidence” means the provision of evidence to the employer that would satisfy a reasonable person of the sick leave. Such evidence must be in writing and include the following:

• The nature of the illness and/or disability of the employee.
• The period the employee is unfit for duty.

3. What matters can I take Short Leave for?

Clause 40 of the Teachers (Public Sector Primary and Secondary Education) Award 1993 states Short Leave can be granted on full pay not exceeding three working days per calendar year, subject to the following matters:

• Of a personal and pressing nature.
• Which arise with little or no notice.
• Which require immediate attention.
• That cannot reasonably be conducted outside normal business hours.

4. What is Trade Union Training leave and how do I access it?

Under our Award all members (schools and TAFE) are eligible to five paid trade union training leave days per year.

To comply with TUT leave requirements applicants must:

• Submit applications to DOE/Principal four weeks prior to the event.
• Provide DoE/Principal the course details. (To do this, provide a copy of the course program as attached to all course registration forms.)
• Be nominated by the union (refer to the target audience and/or who is invited)

This TUT Leave provision covers teacher relief for SSTUWA TUT courses.

To assist school administration with TUT Leave applications the following process information needs to be provided:

• When completing an Application for Leave form, indicate that the leave is Miscellaneous Paid Leave.

• Trade Union Training – project code 1471, should be written under Leave Type.

The granting of TUT Leave is subject to the operation of the school or college not being unduly affected and at the convenience of the employer.

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
ABN 54 478 094 635 © 2026