



# Working 12 hour shifts

**Know  
YOUR  
Rights!**



Exercise your rights under the *Public Health System Nurses' and Midwives' (State) Award*.



## How do 12 hour rosters work?

Where wards or units have rostered 12 hour shifts in place, an employee's hours of work can be balanced across either a four or six week roster cycle.

### Where a six week roster cycle is used

- Full time employees will work 228 hours balanced over the six week period, working 19 x 12 hour shifts over the cycle.
- Part time employees' contracted hours will be balanced over the six week period and can be worked as 12, 10 or eight hour shifts as agreed between you and your employer.

### Where a four week roster cycle is used

- Full time employees will work 152 hours balanced over the four week period, working 12 x 12 hour shifts and one eight hour shift over the cycle.
- Part time employees' contracted hours will be balanced over the four week period and can be worked as 12, 10 or eight hour shifts as agreed between you and your employer.



## What breaks should I get on a 12 hour shift?

When you work a 12 hour **day** shift (spanning 12.5 hours) you are entitled to 1 x 30 minute unpaid meal break and 2 x 20 minute paid tea breaks.

When you work a 12 hour **night** shift (spanning 12.5 hours) you are entitled to 1 x 30 minute unpaid meal break and either 1 x 1 hour paid meal break or 2 x 30 minute paid breaks.

If you aren't provided with your paid breaks on a shift and your employer is aware of this, you should be compensated by an early finish or overtime once the total ordinary work time for the shift has elapsed. (Award Clause 5(v)).



## How much time should I have off between shifts?

You must have a minimum of an 11.5 hour break between shifts (Award Clause 5(h)).



## Can I work overtime after a 12 hour rostered shift?

No overtime can be worked in conjunction with a 12 hour shift (Award Clause 5(j)).



## How many 12 hour shifts can I work in a row?

You can work a maximum of three consecutive 12 hour shifts in a row, except once in a six week cycle you can work four consecutive shifts if you request this (Award Clause 5(f)).



## Can I be rostered for a single day off between 12 hour shifts?

You should not be rostered for a single day off unless you request this from your employer (Award Clause 5(g)).



## Can my roster be all 12 hour days, nights, or just weekend shifts?

No. Rosters must reflect an equal distribution of shifts amongst employees.

No more than 50% of your shifts should be night shifts, unless agreed between you and your NUM (Award Clause 5(i)).



## Am I entitled to an ADO?

If you are a full time employee working under a 12 hour roster, you are only entitled to an ADO where you work a mixture of 12, 10 and eight hour shifts. If this is the case, ADOs will be accrued pro rata based on the number of 10 and eight hour shifts worked. If you are a full time employee and work 12 hour shifts only, you will not be entitled to ADOs.



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## What happens when management want to introduce 12 hour shifts at my workplace?

Before an employer introduces 12 hour shifts, they must advise the Association of the plan to introduce these shifts. This ensures you are aware of what the changes mean.

Your employer must give the Association office at least four weeks' notice of their intention to change to a 12 hour roster system before the planned new rosters commence.

Your employer must consider any concerns members raise about the proposed 12 hour shifts.



## Can management change our 12 hour rosters?

Management must consult with staff prior to removing a 12 hour roster system.

After consulting with staff, your employer must give you three months' notice before the change is implemented.



## My employer is introducing a 12 hour roster. Do I have to participate?

No. Your participation in a 12 hour shift system is voluntary. Your employer is required to ensure alternative shifts are available for staff who do not want to work 12 hour shifts.



## My 12 hour roster no longer suits me. What can I do?

You can withdraw from a 12 hour shift system at any time by providing a period of notice equal to the roster period. For example, if you have a four week roster at your workplace, four weeks' notice must be given. In the case of demonstrated pressing necessity, the period of notice can be reduced to 2 weeks or less if agreed by your employer. We can help you with this.

**If you are working under a 12 hour roster and you are concerned you are not getting your Award entitlements, contact the Association for advice on 1300 367 962.**

**NOT A MEMBER  
OF THE NSWNMA?**

[www.nswnma.asn.au](http://www.nswnma.asn.au)

Being part of the Association means we have more collective power to deliver positive change on pay and conditions at your work.

**Join us today and together, we can make our future stronger.**

Authorised by S. Candish, General Secretary, NSWNMA | August 2022 | 1.3

