

memo

memo no: 825
to: All Staff and Volunteers
from: Bronwyn Mitchell, CEO
date: 27 August 2021
subject: COVID-19 Response Update – 27th August 2021

To all Lifebridge Staff and Volunteers,

As per NSW Public Health Orders the current lockdown has been extended until at least midnight on Friday 10th September 2021.

As a result, all groups, community based and social activities have been cancelled for a further fortnight and customers offered additional 1:1 services.

Loss of Working Hours/Wages

Many support workers will experience a loss of working hours and income during this time. As Lifebridge is subject to Public Health Orders and restrictions imposed by NSW and QLD governments, the ability to provide work and meet contract hours is not within Lifebridge's control.

As per the provisions of Fair Work and the SCHCADS Award, Lifebridge is not responsible for "makeup pay" for lost wages or contract hours during lock down restrictions.

Staff experiencing a reduction in working hours and wages are encouraged to contact Services NSW/Centrelink and apply for the Covid-19 Disaster Payment. Unlike JobKeeper, the current scheme must be accessed by individual workers. Lifebridge understands this is a fairly simple process, completed online, and benefits may include:

- Loss of between 8-20 hours per week, a benefit of \$450 per week. *
- Loss of 20 hours + per week, a benefit of \$750 per week. *

* Subject to any other Centrelink payments being received.

Alternatively, staff experiencing loss of hours or income during this period may apply for the following:

- Unpaid Pandemic Leave,
- Accrued Annual Leave,
- Accrued Personal Leave (where the staff member is the primary carer of young children being home schooled).

Please contact your Departmental Manager to advise whether you want to take leave entitlements as detailed above.

Staff experiencing any short-term financial stress (prior to receiving entitlements under the COVID-19 Disaster Payment Scheme) should contact Amanda Chadwick, Business Services Manager on 0436 664 408.

Stand Down Provisions

In response to the loss of service hours and income to Lifebridge, the Executive Team has made the decision to “tighten its belt” and reduce overheads by 20% across the organisation. Non-essential spend is being reviewed and hours of work for all non-customer facing staff will temporarily be reduced by eight (8) hours per week.

The reduction in overhead aims at maintaining the ongoing viability of Lifebridge, enable us to continue providing services to our vulnerable community members and place us in the position of returning to business as usual as soon as possible.

Stand down provisions will take effect on Monday 30th August and will be reviewed on Friday 10th September pending further advice regarding any extension to Public Health Orders or easing of restrictions.

All office-based staff will continue to work from home wherever possible and practical.

Accessing Kingscliff – PPE

The Kingscliff Office will remain open during office hours – 8.30am to 4.30pm – to provide staff with PPE. We are fully stocked and encourage support staff to take enough items to last a couple of weeks including masks for customers who are encouraged to “mask up” when receiving in-home services.

Border Restrictions

NSW/QLD border rules remain complex and restrictive.

Current border restrictions include:

- Anyone crossing the NSW/QLD border must provide evidence of being an “essential worker”.
- Queenslanders who have crossed into NSW for essential work and return to their place of residence in QLD must isolate in their home until returning to their next shift in NSW.
- There is a requirement for some people crossing the border into QLD to have evidence of at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

For further information regarding the QLD Border restrictions visit the Queensland Health website:

<https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19/current-status/urgent-covid-19-update>

Whilst Lifebridge will endeavour to keep you updated on the latest advice, it is important that all staff regularly access the NSW and QLD Departments of Health and COVID-19 Advice Sites to understand current restrictions and identify any close or casual contact locations.

Please contact your Manager if you are unable to attend work during this period.

Important Reminders

- Staff are encouraged to receive the COVID-19 vaccination to provide an additional line of defence against the virus. Please keep us informed of your COVID vaccination status by emailing human.resources@lifebridge.org.au if you have commenced the vaccination process. Please include date of vaccination, vaccine type and whether you have received a first and/or second dose.

- Please maintain all health and hygiene protocols ensuring social distancing, use of PPE, mandatory mask wearing, regular hand washing, use of QR codes and by following the advice and orders of the NSW Department of Health
- Staff are encouraged to access Lifebridge's on-line training modules via our learning management system ELMO.
- Lifebridge is requesting all staff re-do the Infection Control Modules offered by the Department of Health as a way of keeping our skills and knowledge up to date during this critical period. Please send Certificates of Completion to human.resources@lifebridge.org.au
- Please continue to monitor your Lifebridge emails for further updates released throughout next week. Please contact your Department Manager if you have any questions or concerns regarding this communication.

Thank you for your co-operation in following the Health Order rules in situations that aren't always easy. Please remember your good actions are having a positive impact on another person's life. You are doing such important work.

On behalf of our customers, on behalf of Lifebridge I thank you.

Go well and stay safe.

Kind regards



Bronwyn Mitchell
CEO