

Special Leave – Floods, Cyclones & Storms

Frequently Asked Questions

The following information has been developed to support Metro North Health employees who may be adversely affected by flood events or severe storms.

[HR Policy C7 Special Leave](#) (the Policy) and [Directive 05/17 Special Leave](#) (the Directive) outline the leave entitlements and conditions for Metro North Health (MNH) employees in relation to floods, cyclonic disturbances, or severe storms.

What is Flood / Cyclone / Storm Leave?

Flood leave is an entitlement under the Special Leave provisions, for employees who may be prevented from attending their normal place of employment because of floods, cyclonic disturbances, or severe storms. Employees may be granted leave on full pay not deducted from any leave account in accordance with the Directive.

Who can apply for Special (Flood/Storm) Leave?

The Policy/Directive applies to eligible permanent, temporary, full-time and part-time employees who are prevented from attending work due to flooding, cyclonic disturbances or severe storms.

What are the eligibility requirements for Special (Flood/Storm) Leave?

An employee is eligible for leave because of floods, cyclonic disturbances, or severe storms when an employee is:

- prevented from attending their normal place of employment and it is not practicable for them to attend for duty at another Government office or work from home
- absent from their usual place of residence on approved leave or during a weekend and are unable to return in sufficient time to attend the normal place of employment, or it is not practicable to attend duty at another Government office
- required to return home before their usual ceasing time to ensure personal safety, the protection of their family and property or the availability of transport facilities which may be disrupted or discontinued because of weather or environmental conditions
- required, out of necessity, to remain at home to safeguard their family or property
- remaining at home to have temporary repairs effected, restore belongings, clean up etc.
- travelling on transfer and unavoidably delayed from arriving at the destination. (An employee may also be allowed reasonable expenses necessarily incurred for accommodation and meals for the employee and their family).

What are the leave entitlements for Special (Flood/Storm) Leave?

In accordance with Clause 9.1 of the Policy, an eligible employee may be entitled to the following leave on full pay because of floods, cyclonic disturbances or severe storms:

- when an employee's absence from duty is less than one working day, necessary leave may be granted for the absence, at discretion of the Manager/Delegate.
- when absences from duty are taken as whole working days, up to a maximum of five (5) non-cumulative working days may be granted per calendar year per reason.
- the Health Service Chief Executive (HSCE) or Delegate may consider additional special leave on full pay in exceptional and deserving cases or when an employee is affected by more than one disaster in any one year.

How do I apply for Special (Flood/Storm) Leave?

Employees are required to contact their Line Manager to advise of their absence as per the usual business rules relating to reporting absences.

Approval of leave is subject to the relevant HR Delegate (refer section 15.9 of [MNH HR Sub-delegations Manual](#)) being satisfied that the absence was unavoidable or justified.

Can my application for Special (Flood/Storm) Leave be declined?

Approval of Special (Flood/Storm) leave is subject to the HSCE or Delegate (Band 5 or above) being satisfied that the absence is unavoidable or justified. When practicable, employees are to report for duty at another government office within the vicinity.

Where the Delegate is satisfied that the employee meets the requirements for paid Special (Flood/Storm) leave, a Leave Application is to be completed in [myHR](#) for each absence and recorded under Other leave specifying 'special leave – flood'. When absences are taken as whole working days, up to a maximum of five non-cumulative working days may be granted.

What if I am called out to assist with a flood/cyclone/storm emergency?

In accordance with the Directive, an employee may be granted leave on full pay as required (not debited from any leave account) where the employee:

- has been called out for emergencies, and
- can be released by the work unit, and
- is a member of the State Emergency Service (SES), voluntary member of a local fire fighting unit, member of a Rural Fire Brigade, auxiliary of a Fire Brigade, Honorary Ambulance Officer, St. John Ambulance volunteer or any other emergency service volunteer (e.g. Red Cross volunteer).

Employees are required to follow usual business rules relating to reporting their absence. Where the Delegate is satisfied that the employee meets the requirements for paid special leave, a Leave Application is to be completed in [myHR](#) for each absence and recorded under Other leave specifying 'special leave – PAID Emergency Attendance'.

Where can I seek further support during a flood/cyclone/storm event, if required?

The MNH Employee Assistance Program provides free professional, confidential coaching and support to employees and their immediate family for up to six (6) hours per calendar year. Counselling is provided by an external service provider, Benestar and can be accessed 24 hours a day, seven days a week by contacting Benestar directly on [1300 360 364](tel:1300360364).

Further questions

If you have further questions regarding Special (Flood/Storm) Leave or your specific circumstances, please contact the MNAsk HR team on 1800 275 275 or via email at MNAskHR@health.qld.gov.au.