

Fair Allocation of Shifts Policy

For Australian Small & Medium Enterprises

Template Version 1.0 | December 2024

Important Notice

This template provides general guidance on fair shift allocation. It should be customised to your workplace and comply with anti-discrimination laws and relevant awards.

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the principles for equitable distribution of shifts at [Company Name]. It ensures shifts are allocated fairly while meeting operational requirements and balancing employee preferences.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All rostered employees
- All shift types and locations
- All employment types

3. Fair Allocation Principles

[Company Name] is committed to:

- Transparent and consistent allocation practices
- Non-discriminatory shift allocation
- Balancing business needs with employee preferences
- Equitable distribution of desirable and less desirable shifts
- Considering personal circumstances where possible

4. Factors in Shift Allocation

4.1 Primary Factors

- Operational requirements and coverage needs
- Employee skills and qualifications
- Contractual hours and employment type
- Availability submitted by employees

4.2 Secondary Factors

- Employee preferences
- Seniority (where relevant)
- Fair distribution of shift types
- Work-life balance considerations

5. Types of Shifts

5.1 Desirable Shifts

Shifts often preferred by employees:

- Day shifts
- Weekend penalty rate shifts
- Longer shifts (more hours)
- Preferred locations

5.2 Less Desirable Shifts

Shifts that may be less preferred:

- Early morning or late night shifts
- Split shifts
- Short shifts
- Public holiday shifts (for some)

5.3 Fair Distribution

Both desirable and less desirable shifts should be:

- Distributed equitably among available staff
- Rotated where appropriate
- Not concentrated with certain employees

6. Seniority

6.1 When Seniority Applies

- May be considered for preferred shifts
- Not the sole determining factor
- Balanced with other allocation factors

6.2 Seniority Limitations

- Cannot override skill requirements
- Must not result in unfair outcomes for others
- Subject to operational needs

7. Weekend and Public Holiday Shifts

7.1 Fair Rotation

- Weekend shifts rotated among available staff
- Public holiday shifts distributed fairly
- Consider employee preferences where possible

7.2 Refusal Rights

- Employees may have refusal rights under awards
- Reasonable refusals respected
- Repeated refusals may affect future allocation

8. Part-Time and Casual Employees

8.1 Part-Time Employees

- Entitled to shifts within contracted hours
- Additional shifts offered fairly
- Cannot be disadvantaged in allocation

8.2 Casual Employees

- Shifts offered based on availability
- Regular casuals considered for regular shifts
- Fair opportunities for available shifts

9. Skills and Training

- Some shifts require specific skills
- Training opportunities provided equitably
- Skill-based allocation is not discrimination
- Employees encouraged to develop skills

10. Addressing Concerns

Employees who believe shift allocation is unfair may:

- Raise concerns with their manager
- Request explanation of allocation decisions
- Escalate through rostering disputes policy
- Contact HR for persistent concerns

11. Non-Discrimination

Shift allocation must not discriminate based on:

- Age, gender, race, religion

- Family or carer responsibilities
- Disability
- Any other protected attribute

12. Responsibilities

12.1 Managers

- Apply allocation principles consistently
- Consider all relevant factors
- Document allocation decisions when queried
- Address concerns promptly

12.2 Employees

- Submit accurate availability
- Raise concerns through appropriate channels
- Accept fair allocation of less desirable shifts

13. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or when allocation practices change.

Employee Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read and understood [Company Name]'s Fair Allocation of Shifts Policy.

Employee Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____