



Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand

Roster Writing and Leave Management

Guide for Registrars

Table of Contents

Overview	3
General Responsibilities	3
Privacy of information	3
Desk Files	4
Service and RMO Unit Expectations	4
General Tips	4
Other Resources	4
Roster Writing	5
General Overview	5
Publication Timelines	5
Escalation Pathway for Late Publication of Rosters	5
Example Roster Preparation Process	5
Leave Entitlements and Decision-Making Process	10
Leave Entitlements	10
Timeframe for Leave Decision	10
Registrars' Responsibility within the Leave Decision Process	10
Leave Management	11
Key Challenges	11
Communications	12
Transparency in relief availability:	12
Active management of leave prioritisation	12
Relief Models	13
Relief Models without Designated Relief Positions (for example SET Trainees/Senior Registrars)	13
Relief Models with Designated Relief Positions	13
After Hours Cover	13
Cover for vacant shifts	13
Shift Swaps	14
Other General Tips	14
Run Reviews	14
Changes to run descriptions and/or roster templates	14
Stressed or Fatigued RMO	14
Appendix 1 – Example Desk File	15
Appendix 2 – Leave Entitlements	17

Overview

The following document has been developed as a guide to support Registrars who have the role of writing rosters and/or managing leave for other RMOs. This document also includes expectations for services to ensure the required clarity and support for the Registrar in the roster writing/leave management role is in place.

If you are reading this, you are probably in the position of writing the roster for your direct colleagues and of course yourself - thank you for taking on this role. The role of writing the roster comes with benefits and challenges. When the roster is done well your colleagues will benefit from an even spread of the workload and the department should run smoothly which can be very rewarding. There are however challenges associated with this role including the need to manage conflicting priorities/requests from your colleagues and senior team members.

We hope this guide will help Registrars to navigate the role and support successful outcomes for RMOs, services, and patients.

To provide feedback or suggested amendments to the document please send to: stonzmanual@tas.health.nz

General Responsibilities

The responsibilities delegated to the Registrar in the roster writing/leave management role may vary across different services. For example, in some services, the Registrar may have input into the leave decision-making process while for other services the Registrar may only be involved in writing the roster.

It is important that responsibilities and expectations are clearly explained at the commencement of your role. This should be covered in the desk file (see [appendix 1](#)), however, if you have any questions you should seek clarity from the service early on.

For Registrars responsible for writing, managing, and publishing rosters who are covered by the STONZ MECA 2021 – 2023 terms and conditions, there is an entitlement to payment of 1 hour of additional duties per week at the relevant Registrar or Senior Registrar rate. Management of the roster for the purposes of this clause is more than writing the roster, it also includes responsibility for such things as determining appropriate cover and changes to the roster, etc. This applies only where there is no other form of recognition already in place i.e. other forms of remuneration and/or time away from other duties which DHBs may facilitate instead of the additional duties payment.

Privacy of information

The roster writing/leave management role provides Registrars with the opportunity to develop management skills that will be useful within your career. Due to the nature of the role, you may have access to privileged/sensitive personal information

This may include personal contact details, terms and conditions of employment, reasons for leave, and possibly occupational and health information. It is important that RMO privacy is upheld and this information is treated in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020 requirements.

The Privacy Act 2020 governs how organisations and businesses can collect, store, use and share information. Under the Act, there are several principles that must be followed when handling personal information. Consideration must be made to the following;

- Only collecting information necessary to carry out your role
- Ensuring that information collected is stored securely
- Ensuring if information is shared, there is permission to do so, and the person receiving the information only receives information necessary to carry out their role

You will be required to comply with DHB policies in relation to privacy of information and the requirements of the Privacy Act. Prior to undertaking your roster writing role, it is important that you understand your obligations in this respect. You need to ensure that you liaise with the service for specific details on Information Privacy and Security as set out in DHB policy.

Desk Files

It is strongly recommended that for any services where Registrars are responsible for writing rosters/managing leave, a desk file is developed and maintained jointly by both the Registrar in the role and the service. This will ensure important information is not lost when there are staff changes and will provide the Registrar with the information required to successfully complete the role.

[Appendix 1](#) provides an example of the information that would be expected in the desk file. At a minimum this should include:

- Roles/responsibilities and key contacts
- Information regarding the roster template/structure
- Information on the relief model, number of RMOs that can be away at any given time
- Details on the leave approval/delegation levels.
- Run description for the roles covered by the roster

Service and RMO Unit Expectations

While services may delegate various levels of responsibility for roster writing and leave management to a nominated Registrar, ultimate responsibility sits with the service as the employer. To ensure success for the Registrar in the roster writing role it is important that:

- a) The service clearly outlines what level of responsibility is delegated to the Registrar
- b) There are regular meetings or check-in points between the Registrar and service
- c) The Registrar is clear on who to escalate to should they have any concerns

It is important that RMO unit staff are available to provide support to the Registrar. This may include:

- a) Provision of information that the Registrar needs to write the roster noting obligations under the privacy act and ensuring consent to share information is first obtained. It is recommended that the RMO unit staff contact the Registrar writing the roster a minimum of 8-10 weeks prior to changeover with any required information.
- b) Roster audit support as required
- c) Support with MECA queries as required

RMO unit staff are encouraged to contact Registrars writing rosters at the start of their new role and ensure ongoing communication and support as required.

General Tips

- Begin your relationship with your colleagues with clear communication and some ground rules regarding your role in writing the roster
 - It is useful to first introduce yourself to your colleagues as the roster writer, your jurisdiction with regard to leave acceptance, and what RMOs can expect from you.
 - Also, be clear about how they are to communicate with you – it can be useful to set up a new email account separate from all others to purely manage roster/leave issues and not allow requests to come on multiple channels i.e. verbal, text, other emails, etc.
- Understand the layers of decision-making for staffing numbers and accepting leave
- Seek clarity on your role
 - You should not be required to rework the roster daily – the process for on the day changes (i.e. sick leave on the day) should be clear and not impact your clinical practice
- Compartmentalise the role and be organised
- It is your role to flag common barriers to timely roster publication i.e.
 - Late commitment/variation to clinic/theatre schedules
 - Disorganisation of adjacent rosters – HO or SMO
 - Timely processing of communication of resignation/recruitment/on-boarding processes

Other Resources

In addition to this document, Registrars who write rosters and/or manage leave are encouraged to review the following resources:

1. [STONZ and DHBs National Manual](#)
2. [RMO Roster and Relief Review and Improvement Framework](#)
3. [STONZ Best Practice Leave Guidelines](#)

Roster Writing

General Overview

Registrars writing rosters may be responsible for one or both aspects of the roster writing role. This includes:

1. After-hours roster (including long days, weekends, and nights). At a minimum, the after-hours roster must be published 28 days in advance (see further detail below) and must be published for a minimum three-month period.
2. Day-to-day roster with different clinical roles. This may be written as close to the week before and are commonly changeable – this can be due to late publication of clinic/theatre schedules etc.

Publication Timelines

At a minimum, under the NZRDA and STONZ MECAs, rosters must be published no less than 28 days prior to the commencement of the run, provided that less notice may be given for services where unpredictable changes in service demands make this impracticable. The notice provision for relievers is different where Schedule 2/Appendix 2 relief management is in operation.

While the 28-day notice period is the minimum requirement under the MECAs, an earlier publication date will provide RMOs with more certainty and an ability to plan for outside of work commitments. For some services, it may be possible to publish the roster with up to 3 months' notice and this is recommended where timelines allow and the service approves. However, for other services, there may be changes that prevent this – for example changing allocations.

The roster writing process can take some time to complete therefore it is recommended that you allow a minimum of 1 month to prepare the roster.

Ideally, rosters will be published for the duration of the run, however, at a minimum rosters will be published for a 3-month period.

Escalation Pathway for Late Publication of Rosters

Under the STONZ MECA specifically, there is a reporting process for any instances where the 28-day notice period is not met. If the Registrar writing the roster has any concern with ability to meet the 28-day notice period it is important that this is escalated to the service manager, clinical director, RMO Unit Manager, or another appropriate service representative.

If the information required to write the roster is not available or provided to you, you will need to seek this out, or flag it to your service manager as early as possible to avoid delays in publishing the roster. See roster preparation process steps below.

Example Roster Preparation Process

Step	Description
1.	Contact RMOs Regarding Leave + Team Preferences <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is important that RMOs are encouraged to submit leave applications as early as possible and to consider spacing out their annual leave entitlements across the year.• To support this, Registrars who write rosters/manage leave should contact RMOs 10-12 weeks prior to changeover to ensure they are considering leave plans. Communication should include information on dates where demand for leave is likely to be high such as college exams or study courses and school holidays. See leave management section below for further detail.• In addition, where the roster includes a team structure, RMOs should be provided with the opportunity to submit a team request.
2.	Collate Roster Inputs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Before writing the roster, there are several pieces of information you will require• The desk file should detail the names of people you will need to contact to collate this information, however, if you have any challenges with obtaining the required information or if this is not detailed in the desk file, it is important that you escalate this to the service.• Key pieces of information required include:

Allocations and RMO details

- You will need to be provided with the names of the RMOs allocated to the service for the roster period. Noting the obligations in relation to privacy of personal information as set out on [page 3](#) above, you will need information on the RMOs:
 - Terms and conditions for rostering
 - Year level and training stage (i.e. SET vs Non-SET)
 - Contact details
 - Any details regarding hours of work for part-time or job share arrangements
 - Any RMOs commencing the rotation late or leaving the rotation early

Last duties

- To ensure the roster remains compliant when moving from one rotation to the next you will need to collate information on the RMOs roster for the last 2-3 weeks of the current rotation. This is often referred to as the RMOs “last duties”
- For example, if an RMO ends the current rotation on night shifts, you will need to ensure sufficient sleep days at the commencement of the upcoming run. Likewise, if the RMO has worked the last weekend of the current run, you will need to ensure they are not rostered to the first weekend of the upcoming run exception those rosters where two weekends in a row can be rostered.

Leave

- It is important to collate any leave that has already been approved for the upcoming run + any RMO leave preferences provided to you at process step 1.

Past Experience

- For some services, it may be helpful to collate information on the RMOs prior experience, for example, whether they have worked in the service before, or whether they have worked in the DHB before.

3. Draft Roster

Once the initial puzzle pieces are available you can begin writing the roster. The following points need to be considered as part of the roster writing process:

1. General Rostering Considerations

Equitable distribution of after-hours shifts and public holidays

- After-hours shifts (nights, weekends, long days) should be distributed as evenly as possible while acknowledging that a completely even distribution can often not be achieved due to the number of RMOs on the roster and the run length. This can however be mitigated somewhat, for example, if one RMO has an extra set of nights compared to others on the roster there should be consideration to a lower distribution of weekends or long days for this RMO.
- When considering after-hours distribution, it is helpful to consider the number of Friday long days, separate from the total rostered long days given these are attached to a weekend. It is also important to ensure an equitable distribution of public holidays/long weekends across the roster.
- It is recommended that a shift count is included on the roster to provide transparency on the shifts rostered.

Overall after-hours placement.

- MECA rostering limits are in place to help manage RMO fatigue and wellbeing. In addition to the MECA limits, there should be general consideration to aspects of the roster that although compliant may result in periods of higher fatigue.
- For example, where possible it is helpful not to roster a long day shift directly after returning to work from nights. It can also be helpful to ensure night sets or weekend sets are not rostered too close together and that RMOs are not rostered to a Friday and Monday long day on either side of the weekend.

RMO experience levels

- When writing rosters, it is important to consider the RMOs experience level and how this correlates to the roster being written. There will be variation on the requirements for different rosters/services however, consideration may include:
 - Rostering the first set of nights to someone who has worked at the hospital and/or service in the past.
 - Rostering the more senior/experienced RMOs to the first set of after-hours shifts to enable those who are more junior to be familiarised with the service/hospital.
 - Pair more experienced RMOs with those who have less experience where the roster includes an after-hours roster pairing.

Roster alignment

- Rosters may include a requirement to align particular elements, for example, alignment of team on-call/take days or alignment between House Officer and Registrar rosters to ensure both the HO and the Reg from the same team are not on nights/sleep days/RDOs at the same time.
- For rosters with these requirements, it is important to make changes where possible to maximise continuity of care, however, it is important that roster compliance is maintained.
- Where possible, RMOs should be allocated to the team they have requested noting prioritisation will need to occur where several RMOs have requested the same team or where there is a specific training need. Consultation with the Clinical Director, Supervisor of Training, or similar may be required before confirming team allocations.

2. MECA compliance

- When writing rosters, it is important that the roster remains compliant with RMO terms and conditions. These rostering limits are in place to protect RMO fatigue and wellbeing. There are some limits that are specific to a particular type of roster, for example, there are different limits for a Schedule 10 roster vs. non Schedule 10 roster, call back rosters vs. on-duty rosters, and shift vs. non-shift rosters.
- The [STONZ and DHBs National Manual](#) outlines the relevant clauses in relation to roster limits and includes a comparison between STONZ and NZRDA MECAs, information on the application of clauses, and frequently asked questions. The key clauses within the [STONZ and DHBs National Manual](#) that relate to rostering are:
 - Clause 4 = Hours of work
 - Clause 17 = Limits on Hours and Appendix 4 Guidelines on Seven Night Rostering
 - Clause 18 = On Call

3. Service-specific roster requirements

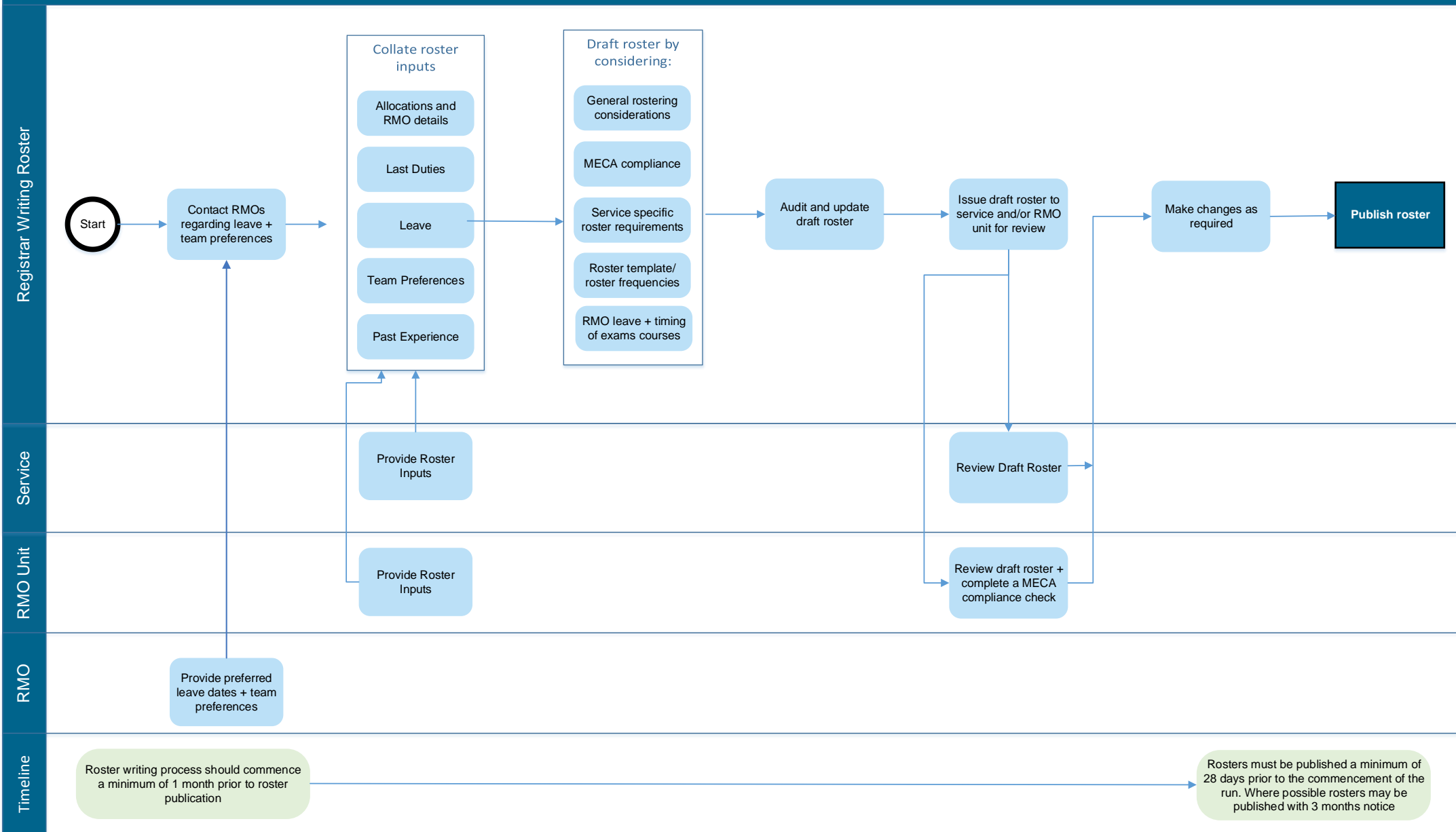
- The desk file will detail any service-specific requirements that need to be taken into account when writing the roster. For example, placement of long days with the team on take day, minimum staffing levels, roster frequencies, information regarding teams, etc.

4. Roster template / roster frequencies

- Rosters will include an agreed roster template or an agreed after-hours roster frequency. The roster frequency is determined by the number of RMOs that contribute to the roster and the number of shifts within the roster including nights, long days, weekends, etc.
- Some rosters may include more than one group of RMOs that contribute to a shared after-hours roster. For example, several surgical specialties might contribute to one shared surgical after-hours roster and each group of RMOs may contribute differently to the after-hours roster.
- Under both STONZ and NZRDA MECAs, rosters will not be re-written unless there is a permanent change in RMO FTE as this would result in a change to the agreed after-hours frequency. For example:
 - If the roster template is a 1:8 and there is a temporary 9th RMO allocated to the service, the roster will not be changed to a 1:9 for that run (unless by agreement)
 - If the roster template is a 1:8 and there is a temporary vacancy, the roster will not be changed to a 1:7 (unless by agreement)
- Further information on the agreement or consultation process is detailed in the "[Changes to run descriptions and/or roster templates](#)" section below.

	<p>5. RMO leave and timing of exams/courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For rosters where there are not designated relief positions i.e. where leave is embedded within the roster, it is important that any already submitted leave requests/preferences are considered when drafting the roster as this may impact on placement of after-hours shifts. • It is important to ensure all RMOs have an equal opportunity to apply for leave across the roster. It is also important to ensure some RMOs do not pick up a higher after-hours frequency across the run due to longer periods of leave for other RMOs. • It is also important to consider any periods where high leave requests are expected such as the timing of exams or compulsory courses
4.	<p>Audit and update draft roster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once you have written your draft roster you will need to complete an audit to ensure there are no errors with MECA compliance or changes that are required when taking into account the roster considerations. • It is helpful to have a checklist of things that you need to audit against.
5.	<p>Issue draft roster to service and/or RMO unit for review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that the draft roster is sent to the service to review. In addition, it is recommended that the roster is sent to the RMO unit to audit for MECA compliance.
6.	<p>Make changes as required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the audit completed by the service and/or RMO unit staff, the draft roster can be updated to correct any changes identified.
7.	<p>Publish roster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the roster has been finalised it can be published to the RMOs. This must occur a minimum of 28 days prior to the commencement of the run.

Example Roster Preparation Process



Leave Entitlements and Decision-Making Process

Leave Entitlements

A summary of the leave clauses and entitlements is included in [Appendix 2](#). It is important to note when reviewing this table that the MECA clauses can not necessarily be viewed in isolation. Review of the [STONZ National Manual](#) which details the full MECA clause, application of clauses, and frequently asked questions is therefore recommended.

Timeframe for Leave Decision

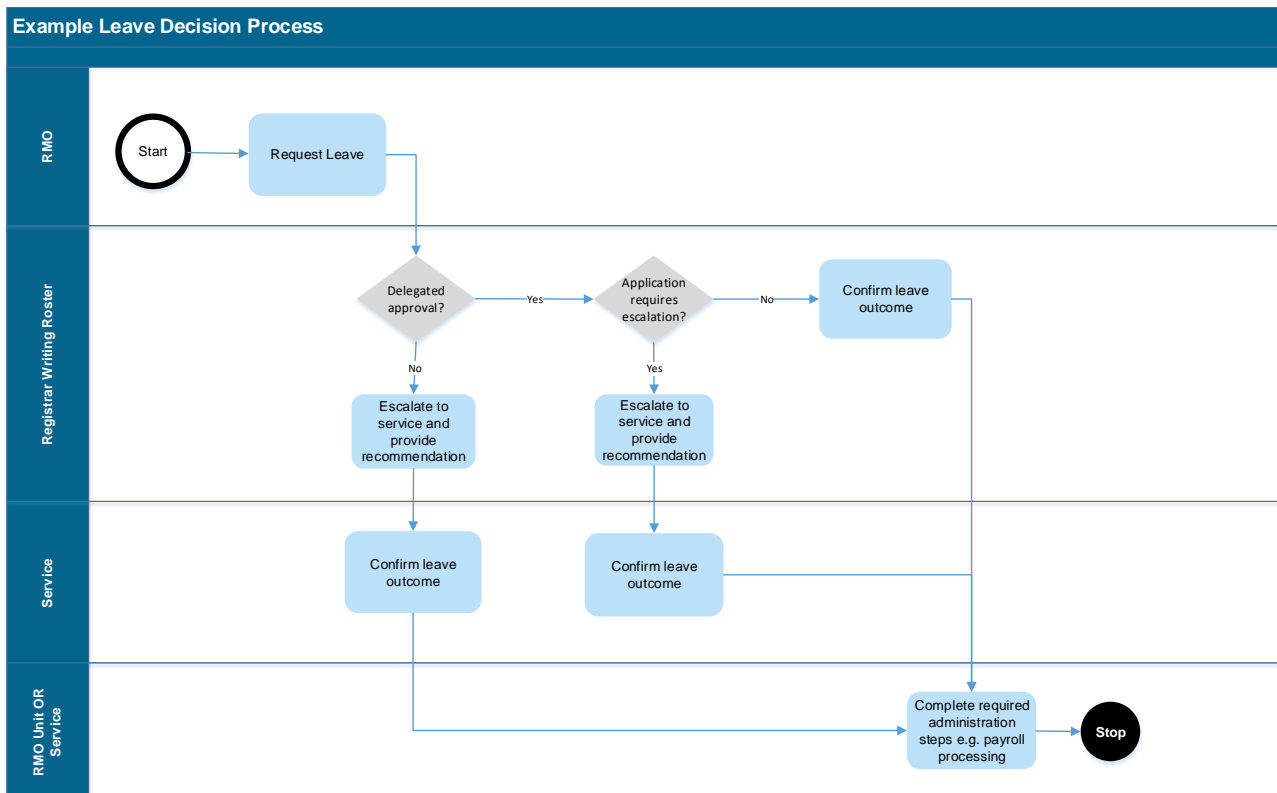
Under the STONZ and NZRDA MECAs, all annual leave requests must be responded to within 14 days of the application being submitted. It is important that these timeframes are met to ensure timely leave outcomes for RMOs. In addition, under the STONZ MECA, Medical Education Leave should also be responded to within 14 days. Where a specific request may require a longer timeframe for consideration and decision, this will be communicated to the RMO and any specific issues or concerns flagged by the DHB.

Registrars' Responsibility within the Leave Decision Process

Overall responsibility for RMO leave sits with the service as the employer, however, some services may delegate this responsibility or aspects of this responsibility to the Registrar in the roster writing/leave management role. As outlined in earlier areas of the document it is important that the expectations and responsibilities for leave decision-making are clearly set out.

Where this responsibility sits with the Registrar it is important that there are regular meetings with the service manager/clinical director to discuss leave priority and decisions. Examples of leave applications that would likely require service discussion/escalation include:

- Leave requests that will result in impacts on service delivery
- Leave requests that will result in the need for locum cover with associated cost
- Multiple requests for the same period where insufficient cover is available
- Requests for annual leave during periods where high medical education leave is expected
- Leave requests that sit outside of the Registrars' delegated authority levels i.e. Registrars may have authority to approve up to 50% leave capacity for example



While leave approval decisions may sit with the Registrar, it is recommended that the administration that follows the leave outcome should sit with the RMO unit and/or service. Administration tasks may include approval of leave within electronic systems, communication of leave to payroll, provision of written responses regarding leave outcomes, etc.

For services that include a shared after-hours roster, it is important that there is discussion across services relating to leave approval to ensure impacts of leave are assessed both by the service where the Registrar works during the day as well as the after-hours roster that the RMO contributes to.

Timeframe for Leave Applications

RMOs are encouraged to submit annual leave applications at least four weeks in advance of the requested leave or greater dependant on DHB policy. Applications for Medical Education leave should aim to be submitted as far in advance as possible.

For time off in lieu of public holidays (Alternative Holiday)

- Under the NZRDA MECA Where the alternate holiday will fall on a day where the RMO is rostered to a night or weekend duty, the RMO must provide 28 days' notice when applying for the leave. In all other cases, the notice period is 14 days.
- Under the STONZ MECA Where the alternate holiday will fall on a day where the RMO is rostered to a long day, night, or weekend duty the RMO must provide 28 days' notice when applying for the leave. In all other cases the notice period is 14 days.

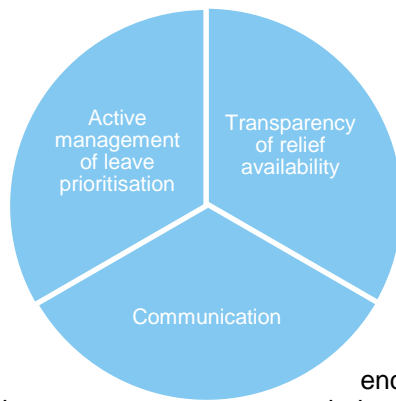
Leave Management

Access to leave for all RMOs is important to ensure rest and recuperation. There are several key challenges that have been identified by RMOs regarding leave management. The following section outlines some of the key issues and provides guidelines to mitigate some of the challenges identified.

Key Challenges

1. Lack of transparency, specifically:
 - How are leave decisions made and by who (prioritisation/clinical staff involvement)?
 - How/when are leave applications escalated and to who?
 - What is incorporated in salary (e.g. number of after-hours shifts per run) and what is payable in addition?
 - How much leave should and can be taken per run (Min + Max) and how does the service ensure this is fair across the workgroup?
2. Varied levels of communication regarding process & timeframes
3. Any period of reduced staffing (unfilled position/maternity leave/extended leave/etc.) has a significant negative impact on ability to take leave for those remaining on the roster.
4. Leave required to be applied for a long time in advance – limited to no flexibility after roster publication as the service is unlikely to be able to cover.

[Appendix 3](#) of the STONZ MECA includes a set of best practice guidelines to follow when assessing leave. Key aspects to consider to ensure a supportive leave management process that encourages RMOs to access leave entitlements are covered below and fall into 3 key areas.



Communications

It is important that RMOs are encouraged to submit leave applications as early as possible and consider spacing out their annual leave entitlements across the year. To support this, Registrars who write rosters/manage leave should provide timely advice and reminders including prior to rosters being published to ensure RMOs are considering leave plans. Communication should include information on key dates where demand for leave is likely to be high such as college exams or study courses and school holidays.

Key points identified where communication regarding leave is particularly important include:

1. Communications 10-12 weeks before the run start/changeover date including a prompt for those RMOs who will be rotating to contact their next DHB employer.
2. Follow-up communication six weeks before the run start/changeover date to support rostering

It is important to identify RMOs with limited leave booked for the upcoming run and those with a high leave balance to ensure conversations with these RMOs to encourage leave requests to be submitted.

Transparency in relief availability:

Where practicable, communications should indicate the current availability of leave cover. This will help to ensure RMOs are applying for leave during periods where leave capacity is available. Where there is unallocated planned relief capacity, this should be communicated to RMOs so they can consider taking leave; in particular, those with limited leave scheduled or a high existing leave balance.

It may be helpful to identify all upcoming courses, exams, conferences, and other events for the upcoming training year in advance to ensure any leave during this period is prioritised for medical education leave and that RMOs are aware of high medical education leave periods.

Leave may not always be granted for reasons such as relief cover not being available, service delivery requirements being unable to be met, application for annual leave during periods where medical education leave is given priority, or leave requests for a lengthy period that might impact others access to leave. Where leave is declined it is important that alternate dates are provided as an alternate option. These dates should be for a period where greater leave capacity is available.

Active management of leave prioritisation

Best practice would be that leave applications are generally considered on the basis of individuals with a high leave balance being prioritised over individuals with a low leave balance and both groups are prioritised over individuals with a negative leave balance.

In circumstances where a service receives a number of applications for leave at the same time, and where insufficient cover is available, and/or the impact on the operation of the service could not be managed, prioritisation of leave applications may be required. At times of key examinations and training courses, medical education leave will take priority. At other times, annual leave applications will be given priority.

Relief Models

There are a number of different relief models for the provision of RMO leave cover. The identified models are outlined in the [RMO Roster and Relief Review and Improvement framework](#). It is important that the Registrar responsible for writing the roster / managing leave understands the relief model that the service operates and the number of RMOs that can be away at any given time. The relief model should be outlined in the run description for the roster.

Relief Models without Designated Relief Positions (for example SET Trainees/Senior Registrars).

While some models include relief cover provided by designated relief positions, other models include provision of relief cover in alternate ways. This is common across senior registrar rosters where implementation of designated relief positions is not possible due to college requirements and appointment numbers by the college.

Although designated relief positions are not possible within all services, it is important that leave is still accessed due to the importance of leave for rest and recuperation. For services without designated relief positions the following points are important to ensure leave access is maximised:

- It is important that the Registrar managing leave understands the number of RMOs that can be away at any given time to maintain baseline staffing
- It is particularly important that pro-active communication on leave planning occurs for services where there are no designated relief positions to enable the roster to be written to maximise leave approval
- Where leave requests may not be able to be approved on initial review based on cover or baseline staffing at that period, it is important that there is a process in place or regular meetings between the service and Registrar managing the leave to ensure all options for leave approval are considered by the service. Possible options for consideration may include:
 - Cancellation of service i.e., clinics or theatre lists
 - Cover for leave by another workforce

Relief Models with Designated Relief Positions

For other relief models, there are designated relief positions. These models are more common at House Officer level and in some services at Registrar level such as General Medicine, O&G, Paediatrics, and Junior Surgical Registrars.

For rosters with designated relief FTE the following considerations are important when writing relief rosters:

- It is important that relief rosters are planned in advance with periods where there is expected to be higher leave requests blocked out. This includes periods where required courses/conferences and exams are scheduled.
- When writing relief rosters it is important to ensure maximum continuity for those within the relief run. For example, it is important to maximise time covering a particular service/team for as long as possible and minimise relievers moving across different teams/services within 1 week.
- It is also important to discuss service preferences with relievers and to align relieving RMOs to work in these services where possible. This will help to improve relief experience and satisfaction.
- When writing relief rosters it is important to ensure the relief roster remains as equitable as possible. It is also important to ensure those working in relief positions do not work different patterns or have a higher after-hours contribution than those in team positions.

After Hours Cover

Cover for vacant shifts

Staffing for the after-hours roster is a service responsibility, however as with the roster writing and leave management, aspects of this role may be delegated to the Registrar writing the roster. This can often be an effective system as the Registrar has relationships and is working in close proximity to their RMO colleagues and therefore able to discuss possible options for cover. It is however important to ensure:

1. There is a clear pathway and expectation's on when to escalate to the service leads if cover cannot be confirmed to enable contingency plans to be put in place.
2. Expectations are set on the amount of time the Registrar should be spending on sourcing cover for any vacant shifts to ensure this does not take too much time away from the Registrar's clinical responsibilities.

Where an RMO agrees to pick up a vacant after-hours shift they will be paid the relevant additional duties rate. While the Registrar writing the roster can confirm RMOs willing to cover shifts, the administration and budget approval (in line with the DHB process) behind the payment of the additional duties claim will sit with the service and/or RMO unit.

Shift Swaps

RMOs may request to swap shifts due to personal or other commitments. Where a shift swap is requested it is important to assess overall fatigue levels, i.e. whether the swap will result in the RMO working excess hours.

For rosters where there are no designated relief positions and where rosters are written around leave, shift swaps may occur to enable leave to be approved after the roster is published. This should be minimised wherever possible.

Other General Tips

Run Reviews

The purpose of a run review is to confirm the unrostered hours of work and therefore the run category. A run review can be initiated by the service, the union, or an RMO. For further information on the run review process please see the [STONZ National Manual](#) clause 12.

Where a run review is requested it is important that this is escalated to the service and RMO unit to enable a response to be provided within 7 days. The service and/or RMO unit will be responsible for communication to the NZRDA and STONZ regarding the run review and communication to RMOs to confirm the run review dates. The Registrar writing the roster may be asked to help with the collation of timesheets which can then be sent to the RMO unit or service for review and calculation.

Changes to run descriptions and/or roster templates

Roster templates and run descriptions can only be changed by agreement with the RMOs through a consultation process. Where there are changes identified that the RMO cohort would like to consider this must be discussed with the service and/or RMO unit to ensure the appropriate change process is followed.

Part of this consultation process will include seeking agreement from the RMOs who are affected at the time the change is implemented. For further information please see the [STONZ National Manual](#) clause 14.

Stressed or Fatigued RMO

The Registrar who has the role of writing rosters or managing leave may be someone that other RMOs come to if they are feeling stressed or burnt out. While the Registrar in the roster writing role may be able to support the facilitation of leave, these concerns must be escalated to the service (service manager/business manager/clinical director) to ensure the appropriate support is provided.

Appendix 1 – Example Desk File

The following template provides an example of the type of information that should be included within the roster writing/leave management desk file. It is recommended that information is reviewed regularly to ensure information remains up to date and can be easily passed to incoming Registrars.

Section 1 – Responsibilities and Key Contacts

Contact	Detail
Service Contact	<p>In this section, the service contacts will be listed including relevant phone numbers and email addresses.</p> <p>This section should detail who the RMO should contact for any relevant issues. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For after-hours vacancies – Service Clinical Director • For leave escalation - Service Manager / Business Manager
RMO Unit Contact	An RMO unit contact should be established for the Registrar writing rosters to provide any support with MECA queries or to provide information that the Registrar may require when writing rosters. This should include the relevant phone number and email address

Task	Detail on responsibilities and who to escalate to when required
Roster Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on the Registrars roster writing responsibilities. For example, whether the Registrar is responsible for the in-hours or after-hours roster
Leave Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on the Registrars leave management responsibilities / delegated authority • Information on when escalation for leave decision is required and who to escalate to • Responsibilities of any other individuals within the leave management process, for example, who is responsible for communicating leave approval with payroll. • Information on any service processes regarding leave
Cover for vacant shifts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities that the Registrar has for sourcing cover for vacant after-hours shifts • Who and when to escalate vacant after-hours shifts that cannot be covered to
Meeting frequency/date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any established/regular meetings with the service should be outlined in this section. Meetings should at a minimum be once per fortnight to ensure leave can be discussed and responded to within the required timeframe.

Section 2 – Roster Template and Relief/Leave structure

In addition to the information within the table below, a standard roster template should be provided which includes the number of FTE within the roster and the after-hours roster pattern

Roster Area	Detail
Roster Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FTE within roster template • After hours' staffing i.e. number of nights, long days weekends each day • After hours' frequency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nights ○ Weekends ○ Long Days ○ Evenings

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any relevant information on the type of roster i.e. whether the roster has sets of 7 nights or split nights, the agreed number of sleep days on the roster template, whether the roster includes rostered days off, etc. • Any relevant information on the roster structure, i.e. on take days, continuity within the roster, alignment with other rosters, etc.
Relief model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of relief model in operation and any impact this has on staffing levels. For example, a roster with embedded relief may include 10 RMOs on the roster template, however, only 8 RMOs are required during the day to maintain minimum staffing levels • Any information on the number of relievers on the roster or detail on the services covered by a relief pool.
Roster Writing Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail on when to start writing the roster, any important steps to consider when writing the roster, etc. • Who will provide the information required to enable the Registrar to write the roster. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allocations ○ Union membership ○ Prior run history/experience ○ Year level • Who to send the roster to for review/audit before publication
Leave assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail on the number of RMOs that can be on leave at any given time • How leave is covered within the roster • Any tips and tricks to maximise leave i.e. areas of the roster where there is additional capacity and can go uncovered • How to maximise continuity for the reliever

Appendix 2 – Leave Entitlements

NB: This information has been taken from the STONZ National Manual which is a living document. It is recommended you check the version notes in the Manual to be sure the information in the table is not out of date.

Leave Type	STONZ MECA Clause	NZRDA MECA Clause
Annual Leave	STONZ MECA Clause 25.1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 weeks of leave per annum 	NZRDA MECA Clause 20.1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 days per annum
Sick Leave	STONZ MECA Clause 26 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 days per annum with ability to accumulate sick leave. Ability to apply for additional discretionary sick leave of up to 10 days per annum once entitlement exhausted. Can transfer up to 20 days between employers. Sick leave deducted for working days only. 	NZRDA MECA Clause 21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 30 days per annum in first 3 years 30-day entitlement in Year 4 of service. Additional 9 days in year 5 and year 6 and over. Sick leave deducted in consecutive days, including off duty days (e.g. weekends and week-day RDOs).
Conference Leave	STONZ MECA Clause 8.0 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Registrars who have passed Part 1 or equivalent get 10 days of conference leave 	NZRDA MECA Clause 26.10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registrars Year 5 or higher of the pay scale get 8 days of conference leave Earlier access to the provision is granted to Registrars who are 12 months' post completion of part 1 exam. <p>Additional days granted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eighth Year 1 day Ninth Year 2 days Tenth Year 2 days
Parental Leave	STONZ MECA Clause 28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 6 months (26 weeks) with less than 12 months' service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 26 weeks primary carers leave for primary caregiver Up to 12 months (52 weeks) with 12 months' service or more: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 26 weeks primary carers leave for primary caregiver Both primary and non-primary caregiver can share a total of up to 26 weeks extended leave 	NZRDA MECA Clause 23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both primary and non-primary caregiver can access up to 6 months' parental leave where length of service is less than 12 months Both primary and non-primary caregiver can access up to 12 months' parental leave where length of service is 12 months or more Discretion to extend up to a further 12 months where employer agrees
Union Leave	STONZ MECA Clause 9.1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 days of leave each calendar year for members of the STONZ National Executive to attend national executive meetings and attend other business agreed as appropriate by STONZ and the employing DHB. Further leave for the purposes of bargaining shall be granted on an "as needed" basis to allow negotiations to progress. 	NZRDA MECA Clause 27.2.1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of the NZRDA National Executive shall be allowed a reasonable amount of paid time off to attend national executive meetings, meetings with DHB management, consult with union members, and attend to other business agreed as appropriate by the RDA and affected DHB(s).
Delegate Leave	STONZ MECA Clause 9.4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enable STONZ delegates to effectively carry out their role, including maintaining the constructive model of engagement and resolution of workplace issues, sufficient time off should be available during working hours, subject to the employer's service requirements. Prior approval for such activity shall be obtained from the relevant service 	

	manager (which shall not be unreasonably withheld). STONZ in return acknowledges that adequate notice shall be provided to the employer wherever possible.	
Employment Relations Education Leave (EREL) Leave	<p>STONZ MECA Clause 9.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Relations Education Leave shall be provided in accordance with the Employment Relations Act (ERA). The calculation for determining the number of days is set out at part seven of the ERA. 	<p>NZRDA MECA Clause 27.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee education leave shall be granted in accordance with part seven of the Employment Relations Act 2000 except as provided below. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Otago 18 days per annum ○ Southland 10 days per annum ○ Whakatane, South Canterbury, Whanganui 5 days per annum • All other employees 1- 5 members = 3 days; 6-50 members = 5 days; 51280 members 1 day for every 8 FTE or part thereof; Over 281 members = 35 days plus 5 days for every 100 FTE or part thereof that exceeds 280.
Medical Education Leave	<p>STONZ MECA Clause 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House Officers that are PGY2 and above and Non-Training Registrars are entitled to the following medical education leave (MEL) for each full year of service; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5 days per year ○ An additional 2 weeks for the purposes of undertaking a diploma, subject to support from the appropriate Clinical Director or applicable clinical lead in regards to the timing of the Diploma relative to the RMOs broader medical education ○ The maximum MEL that can be taken in any one year is 4 weeks • In addition; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This group is entitled to a one-off 3 weeks (15 days) entitlement • Training registrars are entitled to the following MEL over the course of their training and during their employment as an RMO in New Zealand; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 12 weeks ○ This excludes any MEL accessed as a House Officer and Non-Training Registrar • The maximum MEL that can be taken in in any one year is 6 weeks 	<p>NZRDA MECA Clause 26.2, 26.4. and 26.5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House Officers PGY2 and above 5 days per year. • 2 Weeks per year if undertaking a diploma (inclusive of the 5 days at clause 26.2). • Total of 12 weeks per vocational training programme which includes MEL accessed as a House Officer and Non-Training Registrar. Example: Accessed 6 weeks as a House Officer / Non-Training Registrar remaining balance as a Training Registrar 6 weeks.
Bereavement – Tangihanga Leave	<p>STONZ MECA Clause 27 and NZRDA MECA Clause 22 (Bereavement/tangihanga leave is discretionary under both the STONZ MECA and NZRDA MECA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An employer shall approve special bereavement leave on pay for an employee to discharge any obligation and/or to pay respects to a deceased person with whom the employee has had a close association. • Bereavement shall include miscarriage or still-birth as per s.69(2)(c-d) of the Holidays Act 2003. • Such obligations may exist because of blood or family ties or because of particular cultural requirements such as attendance at all or part of a Tangihanga (or its equivalent) or attending hura kōhatu /unveiling. The length of time off shall be at the discretion of the employer. • For clarity, the STONZ MECA specifically notes that an RMO who has suffered a bereavement and considers they require further support to return to work should raise this with their service. Such support could include further paid or unpaid leave, and/or counselling/EAP support. 	
Jury Service	<p>STONZ MECA Clause 30 and NZRDA MECA Clause 25 (There is no difference between clause 30.0 in the STONZ MECA and clause 25.0 in the NZRDA MECA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees called on for jury service are required to serve. Where the need is urgent, the employing DHB may apply for postponement because of particular work needs, but this may be done only in exceptional circumstances. • An employee called on for jury service may elect to take annual leave, leave on pay, or leave without pay. Where annual leave or leave without pay is granted or where the service is performed during an employee's off-duty hours, the employee may retain the juror's fee (and expenses paid). • Where leave on pay is granted, a certificate is to be given to the employee by the employer to the effect that the employee has been granted leave on pay and requesting the court to complete details of juror's fees and expenses paid. The employee is to pay the fees received to the employing DHB but may retain expenses. 	

- Where leave on pay is granted, it is only in respect of time spent on jury service, including reasonable travelling time. Any time during normal working hours when the employee is not required by the court, the employee is to report back to work where this is reasonable and practicable