



Collective bargaining position statement

1. Purpose

This position statement sets out the rights of nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing in relation to collective bargaining and representation by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) in the collective bargaining process. It also sets out the key provisions the ANMF works to include on their behalf.¹

2. Definitions

Collective bargaining refers to a process for negotiating employment terms and conditions between employers or their representatives and employees and their representatives. In Australia, collective bargaining is the main way workers achieve fair wages and conditions.

3. Context

The ANMF represents its members in the collective bargaining process, always acting to achieve the best possible outcomes for them and their professions.

4. Position

Member rights

It is the position of the ANMF that:

1. All nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing have the right to be protected by a collective agreement negotiated by the state and territory branches of the ANMF or by the ANMF Federal Office in collaboration with the relevant branches.
2. In all workplaces where ANMF members are employed, those members have the right to a collective agreement negotiated by the ANMF.
3. ANMF members have the right to be involved in all aspects of collective bargaining.

Collective agreements

Professional advancement

It is the position of the ANMF that collective agreements should:

4. cover all levels of nursing and midwifery and apply to incorporated or unincorporated organisations across all sectors, including not for profit organisations
5. recognise the professional obligations of nurses and midwives as registered health practitioners
6. define nursing and midwifery skills, responsibilities, and educational qualifications
7. enhance and promote the role of nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing as integral to the provision of quality health, aged and community care.

¹ Assistants in nursing includes all care workers however titled.



Recognition and reward

It is the position of the ANMF that collective agreements should:

8. provide fair and equitable remuneration and conditions of employment that:
 - enable nursing and midwifery employees to enjoy a comfortable and dignified standard of living
 - promote secure work
 - enable employers to attract and retain the required levels of nursing and midwifery staff.

Union membership

It is the position of the ANMF that collective agreements should include provisions that:

9. support union membership, enable union representation and facilitate and encourage union involvement in all consultative processes by:
 - recognising and facilitating participation by local union representatives in the workplace and providing access to training and reasonable paid time to perform their role
 - enabling unions to engage with new employees about the benefits of union membership.

Workplace health and safety

It is the position of the ANMF that collective agreements should include provisions that:

10. safeguard workplace health and safety by:
 - supporting work health and safety (WHS) laws
 - recognising the role of health and safety representatives and the right of the ANMF to represent members in WHS matters
 - promoting safe workloads and establishing minimum staffing arrangements
 - encouraging worker control over safe staffing practices and ensuring workers can report unsafe practices to their employer without fear of intimidation.

Work life balance

It is the position of the ANMF that collective agreements should include provisions that:

11. support employees in achieving work life balance and managing caring and other responsibilities through:
 - paid family and domestic violence leave
 - the right to flexible work arrangements to accommodate carer responsibilities and short-term personal circumstances, such as moving to retirement or further study
 - achieving gender equality, through equal access to parental leave entitlements and improving access to superannuation benefits – this includes using gender neutral language in agreements.

5. Position statement management

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