

CORONAVIRUS — PUBLIC SECTOR — LEAVE

**106. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Public Sector Management:**

- (1) Can the minister confirm that Western Australian public servants have received an additional 20 days' sick leave and 10 days' carer's leave; and, if so, is this leave a COVID measure?
- (2) How many public servants are eligible for the additional leave and in what departments and occupations?
- (3) What are the start and end dates for the additional leave entitlements?
- (4) What is the cost of this measure to the wages budget?
- (5) Will this leave entitlement accrue or be retained if unused after the end date, and can it be cashed out by public servants?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) Public sector employees have not received an additional 20 days' sick leave and 10 days' carer's leave. Under Public Sector Labour Relations Circular 6/2020, public sector employees may access up to 20 days paid COVID-19 leave if they test positive to COVID-19; are experiencing an adverse vaccine reaction; are presenting for COVID-19 tests and isolating, awaiting test results; are subject to a government requirement to isolate or quarantine; or are required to care for someone else in particular circumstances.
- (2) All public sector employees, including casuals, can access COVID-19 leave.
- (3) The 20 days of COVID-19 leave was introduced on 23 March 2020. On 5 February 2022, COVID-19 leave was reset to 20 days for every public sector employee irrespective of the number of days taken by an employee before that date. There is no end date for COVID-19 leave.
- (4) No additional funding has been provided to agencies for COVID-19 leave. Agencies are expected in the first instance to accommodate this leave from within their existing approved salary budgets. Additional funding for individual agencies may be considered at a later date, depending on the actual take-up of this leave.
- (5) COVID-19 leave is not accruable and cannot be cashed out.