

Selena Uibo
Minister for Education



Media Statement

Supporting Workers: Territory Labor Government Guarantees 1700 Casual School Jobs

4 April 2020

The Territory Labor Government is providing job certainty to more than 1700 casual staff employed directly by NT government schools, in the event schools are forced to close due to the spread of COVID-19.

School councils across the Territory directly employ more than 1800 support staff, which includes cleaners, grounds and maintenance personnel, canteen staff and critical classroom support staff. More than 1700 of these employees, or 90 per cent, are employed on a casual basis.

As they are employed by school councils, these workers are not regarded as NT public servants. Consequently, the guidelines issued by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment relating to coronavirus do not apply.

To provide casual school council employees with certainty throughout the coronavirus pandemic, the Territory Labor Government is providing a safety net for this important workforce.

This means that in the event that schools were to temporarily close, other than for standard scheduled stand down periods, all School Council staff would continue to be paid.

This includes instances where the employee would not ordinarily be entitled to be paid.

It is estimated this would cost schools \$1.5 million every two weeks. Schools already have this annual funding available for these casual positions through the NT Global School Budget Funding Model.

The National Cabinet will continue to take advice from health authorities in relation to school closures.

The current advice remains that schools are safe and education delivery will continue in Term 2, with flexible learning options available for parents and schools should the need arise.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education, Selena Uibo.

“We know that many Territorians are nervous about how this unprecedented global pandemic will affect them and their families, so this decision gives certainty to our casual school employees.

“We are all in this together and we have got to work together to help each other as much as we can.

“The decision to guarantee casual school council employees the payment they were expecting throughout this pandemic will not cost our schools any more than they had budgeted for before the impacts of coronavirus hit.

“Along with our hardworking, dedicated teachers, our school support staff are the people who help our children thrive and we want to provide some certainty for them through what is already an uncertain time.”

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