# VPS Enterprise Agreement

## FAQs for employees – Ballot Arrangements

### What is an enterprise agreement?

Enterprise agreements are collective agreements made at an enterprise level between employers and employees about terms and conditions of employment.

They must be approved by the Fair Work Commission. The Fair Work Commission will only approve the enterprise agreement if it satisfied that each employee would be better off overall under the enterprise agreement when compared to the relevant modern award.

### Who will be covered by the proposed *Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 2024* (‘the proposed Agreement’)?

The proposed Agreement will cover full-time, part-time and casual employees employed in the Victorian Public Service except:

* An employee eligible to be a member of the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) who is employed under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic).
* An employee eligible to be a member of the Health Services Union.
* An employee eligible to be a member of the CPSU who is employed pursuant to the *Emergency Services Superannuation Act 1986* (Vic).
* An employee eligible to be a member of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation or the CPSU who is employed as a nursing professional in a position requiring mandatory qualifications within the Maternal and Child Health Line (or any successor functional area).
* A locally engaged employee in an overseas office/work location.
* A Principal Scientist, a Senior Medical Adviser or a Senior Regulatory Analyst in respect of clause 28, 29, 31 and 32 but not otherwise
* An employee eligible to be a member of the Australian Workers’ Union.
	+ whose terms and conditions are determined by reference to the Field Staff Agreement 2019, or any successor to this agreement, or
	+ employed in a Roads Occupation.

These employees are covered by separate enterprise agreements.

### Can contract / agency / labour hire staff vote on the proposed Agreement?

No, employees who are employed by a contract agency (for example, Hays) are not eligible to vote on the proposed Agreement.

### I am an eligible VPS employee on a fixed term contract, can I vote on the proposed Agreement?

Yes, assuming the fixed term contract is in place and has not expired prior to the voting period. Eligible VPS Employees on fixed-term contracts directly engaged with a Department or Agency covered by the proposed Agreement are eligible to vote on the proposed Agreement and will be provided with personalised voting credentials.

### I’m not a member of a union. Does the proposed Agreement apply to me? Can I still vote?

The proposed Agreement if approved will cover about 55,000 employees in the Victorian Public Service, both union and non-union members. You do not need to be a member of a union to cast a vote on the proposed Agreement – all eligible employees will be provided voting credentials to enable them to cast a ballot.

### What changes are proposed to be made to my terms and conditions of employment?

The proposed changes to your terms and conditions of employment are detailed in the explanatory materials which have been distributed by your employer. Two versions have been provided, a high-level summary focussing on the proposed key changes to your terms and conditions of employment and a more detailed summary of all proposed changes. Please refer to these documents to understand the proposed changes to your terms and conditions of employment.

### I am an employee from a non-English speaking background, a young employee or an employee who didn’t have a bargaining representative. How do I understand the proposed changes to my employment?

The explanatory materials distributed with a copy of the proposed Agreement seeks to explain all the proposed changes to the terms and conditions of employment. If you have difficulty understanding the proposed amendments to your terms and conditions of employment please contact your employer’s human resources area or email vpsagreement2024@dtf.vic.gov.au.

### What information is available to employees so they can understand the proposed changes to the terms and conditions of their employment?

The *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) requires that for at least seven days prior to being asked to vote on a proposed agreement (this is known as the access period), employees to be covered by the proposed agreement must have access to a copy of the agreement, information on how, when and where they can vote and an explanation of the proposed changes to the terms and conditions of employment. This information will be distributed by your employer.

### Accessibility issues

If you have any accessibility issues with the proposed agreement or explanatory documents, please email Industrial Relations Victoria at vpsagreement2024@dtf.vic.gov.au or call the Victorian Government Contact Centre on 1300 366 356. (The National Relay Service is available as a phone solution for people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment, please visit <https://www.accesshub.gov.au/>

### When will we get our pay increase?

If employees vote to accept the proposed Agreement, the first increase of 3% will apply from 1 May 2024.

A further three pay increases are proposed after that to occur on:

* 1 May 2025 – 3%
* 1 May 2026 – 3%
* 1 May 2027 – 3%

Salary and allowance increases payable under the proposed Agreement for the period between 1 May 2024 and the commencement of the proposed Agreement will be made as soon as reasonably practicable after the proposed Agreement is approved by the Fair Work Commission.

### When will we get our once off lump sum payment?

The proposed Agreement provides that the once off lump sum payment will be paid to eligible employees, regardless of their classification, who are employed on 28 June 2024. The payment is pro-rata for eligible part-time and casual employees.

Like the salary increases, if employees vote to accept the proposed Agreement, the once off lump sum payment will be made as soon as reasonably practicable after the proposed Agreement is approved by the Fair Work Commission and commences operation.

### Who is GoVote and why are they contacting me?

GoVote has been contracted by the Victorian Government to conduct a secure and independent ballot of employees who are covered by the proposed Agreement, to see whether they approve the changes to their terms and conditions of employment.

GoVote will contact you directly (via email or post) to provide you with your personalised voting credentials (PIN) and voting instructions on how to lodge your vote and will securely host the electronic, SMS and telephone voting systems independent of your Employer.

### How will the voting process work?

Eligible VPS employees have been contacted in writing wherever they might be working to be given a copy of the draft proposed Agreement and an explanation of the proposed changes to their terms and conditions of employment. Generally speaking, employees will be contacted through their usual work email address or intranet portal. Employees on long-term leave will be contacted by post or phone (or personal email if one has been provided to their employer).

Eligible VPS employees may cast their vote either electronically via a secure voting website, through SMS or the telephone voting service.

Employees will receive communication (by email to “at work” employees, and via post for “on long term leave” employees) prior to the ballot commencing from GoVote Pty Ltd (‘GoVote’). This correspondence will contain information on the upcoming ballot process. You will also be able to obtain more information relating to the ballot process by visiting the GoVote webpage at [https://secure.govote.com.au/code=2738](https://secure.govote.com.au/code%3D2738)

When the ballot period opens, GoVote will send (by email to “at work” employees, and via post to “on leave” employees) to eligible VPS employees, an Instruction Sheet/PIN advice advising that the ballot period has opened and will provide voting instructions on how to lodge your vote by internet, by SMS or by telephone.

The Instruction Sheet will contain a link to the internet voting website, it will also include the 1800 number for telephone voting, and the secure PIN to cast their ballot. In order to lodge your vote, you will be required to have the PIN provided by GoVote. Please contact GoVote via support@govote.com.au or 1800 919 553 if you do not receive this notification by Monday, 1 July 2024.

### When does voting commence and how long do I have to cast my ballot?

Voting opens at 12:01am (AEST) Monday, 1 July 2024 and will close at 11:59pm (AEST) Friday, 5 July 2024. Employees will only be able to vote within this period.

### What happens if I lose my personalised voting credentials?

If you have lost your personalised voting credentials (Instruction Sheet), please contact GoVote immediately at: support@govote.com.au or 1800 919 553.

### Why am I being asked to approve the proposed Agreement?

The *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) requires that before the terms and conditions of employees can be changed, those changes must be approved by employees.

For the changes in the proposed Agreement to take effect, a majority of employees who vote must vote in favour of the proposed Agreement.

### What privacy obligations has GoVote had to meet in order to become the ballot provider?

To be successfully chosen as the ballot provider, GoVote Pty. Ltd is compliant with ISO27001 Cyber Security Standard and has had to comply with the Information Privacy Principles as required by the *Privacy Act 1988.* Any personal employment information, for example, your work email address, provided to GoVote Pty Ltd in order to conduct the ballot will be destroyed shortly after the ballot ends.

### How will we know if the proposed Agreement is approved by employees?

Under the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth), the proposed Agreement is made when a majority of those employees who cast a valid vote approve the agreement.

After GoVote determines the results of the ballot, employees will be notified by their employer of the outcome.

### If the proposed Agreement is voted up by employees what happens next?

If a majority of the employees who cast a valid vote endorse the proposed Agreement, the proposed Agreement will be submitted to the Fair Work Commission for formal approval within 14 days.

The Fair Work Commission will assess the proposed Agreement for compliance with relevant legislation and to ensure employees are better off overall compared with the underlying award. If they are satisfied that this is the case, the agreement will be approved by the Fair Work Commission and will commence operation seven days after approval.

Salary and allowance increases payable under the proposed Agreement for the period between 1 May 2024 and the commencement of the Agreement will be made as soon as reasonably practicable after the Agreement is approved by the Fair Work Commission and the Agreement commences operation.

### What happens if the proposed Agreement is not voted up?

If the proposed Agreement is not supported by the majority of employees who vote, the agreement cannot be submitted to the Fair Work Commission for approval.

The salary increases, once off lump sum payments and other improvements to terms and conditions in the proposed Agreement will not take effect, the operative dates will be vacated and negotiations will recommence. There will be no changes to your existing terms and conditions until another agreement is made and approved by the Fair Work Commission.

### I have been on a secondment/temporary internal assignment in another role, will the proposed Agreement still cover me, and will I be able to vote?

Regardless of whether you are on a secondment/temporary internal assignment in another role you are still covered by the VPS Agreement. Where employees are working in different roles and these roles are still covered by the VPS Agreement then you remain entitled to vote on the proposed Agreement.

VPS employees will be contacted in writing wherever they might be working to ensure they are aware of the proposed Agreement and the proposed changes to their terms and conditions of employment.