

Media Release

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RECORD WORKFORCE INVESTMENT TO STRENGTHEN FRONTLINE SERVICES

The NSW Government has announced a record investment into frontline workers in the 2022-23 Budget, supporting the workforce to deliver the best services in the nation.

The NSW Government has announced a new public sector wages policy to provide increased pay and leave entitlements for public sector employees including nurses, teachers and paramedics.

Treasurer Matt Kean said the increase in wages was fair and sustainable in the current economic climate.

"New South Wales is enjoying record low unemployment levels, and it is important to maintain competitive wages to attract and retain the best talent. In the context of a strong and growing economy, this two-year increase to wages is an affordable and sensible policy," Mr Kean said.

The new two-year policy provides the highest public-sector wages growth in the country with employees offered a 3.0 per cent remuneration increase a year in 2022-23 and 2023-24, with a possible further 0.5 per cent on offer in 2023-24 for employees who make a substantial contribution to productivity-enhancing reforms. This provides for remuneration increases of up to 6.5 per cent over two years under the new policy.

The Budget also provides for a one-off payment of \$3,000 to be provided to employees in NSW Health in recognition of their work on the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Minister for Finance and Employee Relations Damien Tudehope said a strong public service was essential to delivering what matters to make daily life better.

"We have incredible people working in the public sector who are providing outstanding help, support and service to the people of New South Wales every day," Mr Tudehope said.

"To support those workers and to better enable them to continue to provide for the people of our State, we have delivered a Budget that provides record investment into hospital and health service staff, rural and regional healthcare positions, paramedics, and public sector wages and parental leave."

Public sector workers will also have more equal access to parental leave with an overhaul of the system that allows both parents employed in the public sector to be entitled to at least 14 weeks of paid parental leave.

Through investment in public sector parental leave, the NSW Government will no longer differentiate between primary or secondary carers, making it easier for either parent to access leave.

The new scheme also provides for parents to access an additional two weeks of bonus leave if paid parental leave entitlements are more equally shared between partners.

The window in which public servants can take paid parental leave has also been expanded from one year to two years after birth, and paid parental leave access has been extended to long-term or permanent foster carers.

“This is an incredible budget that delivers for the public sector and all of us who access the services those workers provide every day,” Mr Tudehope said.

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