

Pressed for time? Consider these suggestions

November 24, 2019

Our desire for a balanced life — where we are able to enjoy work, personal interests, family, social and leisure activities — can be put out of kilter by our obligations.

Federation Professional Support Officer Jenny Moes said that when commitments squeeze out time for enjoyable activities and sleep it can have negative consequences for your wellbeing, so it's worth recouping opportunities to ease your time burdens when you can.

If you are constrained by your commitments outside of work, for example caring for an elderly parent, your leave entitlements may provide some respite to help meet your responsibilities. Note that entitlements may differ between permanent, temporary and casual teachers.

Teachers can apply for family and community service (FACS) leave to meet a range of family activities and community service responsibilities that could include a need to respond to an emergency situation or planned absences for family and community service responsibilities where some advance notice is given.

When FACS leave has been exhausted and a teacher has responsibilities to a person who needs the teacher's care and support, the teacher is entitled to personal carer's leave — using their existing balance of annual sick leave and/or cumulative sick leave accrued from the past three years. This type of leave can only be accessed if the relationship between the carer and dependant meets certain criteria. In exceptional circumstances the Secretary of the Department of Education may grant additional sick leave.

Special leave covers activities that are not regarded as being on duty and are not covered by another form of leave. Various annual limits are placed on each reason for this type of leave. Eligible reasons include pre-examination leave, examination leave, bone marrow donation, graduation ceremony, jury service, National Aboriginal Day, Torres Strait Islander Day, being subpoenaed or called as a witness and Trade Union Training courses.

Teachers may qualify for maternity, adoption, altruistic surrogacy, parental or permanent out-of-home care leave, paid or unpaid.

Long service leave may also assist your situation, if eligible.

For more details on these leave types, log in to the Member area of Federation's website and read the relevant information leaflet or contact Professional Support on 1300 654 367.

Bring something you love to your work



With teachers sometimes being time-poor, it's great when you can achieve two things at once.

Jenny Moes points out there are many activities that teachers undertake, such as coaching Little Athletics, leading a youth group or participating in professional Teacher Associations that could potentially assist in meeting some of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

"[Standard 7.4.2] includes a reference to participating in professional and community networks and forums to broaden knowledge and improve practice," Jenny said. "You could consider using this element in the development of a Performance and Development Plan goals."

Many activities performed outside of the classroom may assist teachers in working towards or meeting a variety of standards.

Jenny Moes presented a workshop entitled "The juggle is the struggle" at Women's Conference.

— Kerri Carr