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4 October 2017

Welcome to our October Newsletter

Welcome to the last quarter of 2017. Spring has arrived!

For some of you it is back to work after the school holidays and we hope you all had enjoyed the break and are now all refreshed and ready to tackle the last quarter of the year.

As we are get ready for summer and with Christmas just around the corner now would be a great time to start planning and preparing for what's ahead.

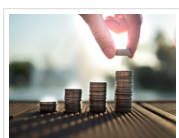
- Have you organised additional staff for when staff take leave over the Christmas period?
- Are you up to date with your staff leave entitlements?
- Have you checked your accounts system is calculating staff accruals correctly?
- Are you prepared for any close down periods over Christmas and New Year's?
- Do you have plans in place for any storms or cyclones?
- Are you prepared for end of financial year and AGM's fast approaching?

Remember the CMSolutions team can assist you with all of the above plus more so please do not hesitate to contact us, we are here to help you.

Enjoy October and we will speak to you next month.

Attention all P&C Associations - 2017 Queensland State Wage Increase

The Queensland Industrial Relations Commission has handed down its decision in relation to the State Wage Increase for 2017.



The decision allows for the following increase in **State Awards for employers / employees** still under the Queensland State Industrial Relations system.

Effective from the 1st September 2017, all Award wages and monetary allowances have increased by 3.3% per week.

All P&C Association members have been emailed their relevant pay rates sheets however if you still have not received an email please contact the office on 07 3852 5177 to check we have the most up to date details for your organisation. Pay rate sheets are also available on the CMSolutions website under the member portal.

If you are unsure what classification your employees should be under, you should refer to the Position Descriptors located within the Parents and Citizens Associations Award – State 2016. You can access this through the Members Portal on the CMSolutions website.

If you need any assistance with applying this increase or help working out back pay please do not hesitate to contact the office or email info@cmsolutions.org.au

Keep everyone on the same page

Attract the best committee/board members by having up to date systems that promote good practice, make reporting easy for you as the employer and keep your committee/board engaged and informed.

ProcessPA is a cloud based software that automates association procedures and paperwork, saving committee members from administration time. New office bearers are guided through their role and compliance requirements through simple yet effective handovers, ensuring committee processes are maintained. Agenda templates, automatic notifications, online members, motions and action registers. Everything is taken care of.

All CMSolutions members can receive a 10% off the annual subscription when they enter the discount code **cmsmemberdiscount** at the checkout. Visit the website for more information.

"It is a massive time saver and simplifies everything. There is never any question about what was said as minutes are recorded on the night, on a screen for all to see and with all reports available. It is brilliant." – Carol Ramsay, Elanora State High School



What is Flexible Work Arrangements?

An employee may request flexible work arrangements if they have completed at least 12 months of continuous service with your organisation.

The worker is entitled to a flexible work arrangements if they meet the following criteria:

- Is a parent;
- Is responsible for the care of child who is of school age or younger;
- Has a disability;
- Is 55 years or older;
- Is experiencing family violence;
- Is a carer (within the meaning of the Carer Recognition Act 2010); or
- Is providing care or support to a member of their immediate family or household because they are experiencing violence from a family member.

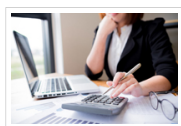
If an employee requests flexible work arrangements, the employee should put their request in writing. The employer has 21 days to respond to the employee's request. If the employer agrees to the request they need to respond in writing to the employee. If the employer refuses the request they must have reasonable business grounds for doing so.

The employer should properly document their grounds and support them with evidence.

If you need further assistance please contact CMSolutions.

BAS Reporting Model

From 1 July 2017 the ATO is introducing a simpler Business Activity Statement (BAS) reporting model – to date all our P&Cs and Kindys have been included under this new system.



The same work will need to be done to prepare and check all of your GST information to ensure it is complete and correct but you will need to report much less to the ATO on your BAS.

Below is a link to the ATO's information on this new system.

[https://www.ato.gov.au/business/business-activity-statement-s-\(bas\)/goods-and-services-tax-\(gst\)/simpler-bas/](https://www.ato.gov.au/business/business-activity-statement-s-(bas)/goods-and-services-tax-(gst)/simpler-bas/)

If you have any questions or concerns about this new system please do not hesitate to contact our Finance Team on 1300 007 110.

Make the car dealers work for you!



Autotender is giving all CMSolutions members, staff and families FREE access to their vehicle tendering system! Forget searching around for the best deal, let AutoTender do it for you! Simply submit your request and pick the offer you like best. It's that easy!

<https://www.autotender.com.au/cms/>

Creating Mentally Safe Workplaces

It seems like almost every organization has an employee that is at work from the crack of dawn, and is the last to leave the office on a regular basis. They're even at work when they're sick!



This has become increasingly common and has now been coined "presenteeism". Along with presenteeism becoming more and more common, more people have started to open up about mental health, a previously taboo subject that people failed to understand because it cannot be seen.

Research has shown that 1 in 4 people experience a mental health problem at some point in their life. It can cause human suffering, isolation and a drop in productivity. Thankfully, awareness about mental health is increasing, and **October 10th is the internationally recognised World Mental Health Day.**

Queensland Mental Health Week is also being celebrated from the 8-14 October 2017. WorkSafe QLD is holding two free events during the week and encouraging employers to talk to workers about positive mental health practices in their workplace.

So why should you be concerned about mental health?

There are financial benefits such as:

- lowering medical costs;
- increasing productivity;
- decreasing the number of sick days;
- decreasing disability costs; and
- better financial performance, which means an enhanced reputation and the added benefit of a happier, more motivated and engaged workforce

There are many things that can be done to ensure that staff feel like they are in a mentally safe workplace. For example within the work environment, you can look at:

- increasing the available natural light;
- increasing fresh air;
- bringing in plants;
- discuss mental health;
- implement Employee Assistance Programs; and
- Educate yourself and managers on the signs of potential problems.

Further, if working in an office environment, it might be worth introducing standing desks or treadmill desks. The nature and outlook of a workplace can be shifted by social meeting spaces, healthy food options on site, proper lunch break areas and discounted sports facilities on site or nearby, combined with flexible work arrangements to encourage their use.



Employers could even turn to pet therapy interventions. Today's research has shown that spending time watching, patting or walking a cheerful puppy or dog can significantly bring stress levels down. Other strategies bigger companies do include making a public pledge to address mental health issues, as well as taking part in national mental health campaigns.

<https://theconversation.com/how-to-build-a-mentally-healthy-workplace-step-by-step-65826>

Win one of five \$50 Officeworks Vouchers



Simply pay your 2018 CMSolutions membership renewal by Friday, 1st December 2017 and your organisation will go in the draw.

For most of our members their CMSolutions membership will expire on the 31st December 2017. Membership Renewals for 2018 have just been mailed out to those members so keep an eye out for the postman.

If you are a new committee member and are unsure about what your membership provides we thought we would provide you with a brief overview.

Your CMSolutions membership ensures:

- Unlimited phone and email support in employment and staffing matters;
- Work Health and Safety advice;
- Assistance interpreting Awards, Enterprise Agreements and pay rates;
- Governance advice;
- Monthly newsletters and updates;
- Access to online resources including things like draft position descriptions, employment contracts and fact sheets.

PLUS you get access to discounted rates to additional services such as:

- Representation in disputes with employees and unions;
- Assistance in staff performance matters;
- Bookkeeping and payroll services;
- WH&S, HR and IR audits;
- Seminars and in house training;
- Workplace investigations;
- Employees wage claims and leave calculations;
- Financial audits;
- Guides and toolkits AND MORE!

To ensure your organisation operates effectively and profitably make sure you remember to renew your 2018 membership.

For information or to talk to our membership team call 1300 007 110 or visit the link below.

<http://www.cmsolutions.org.au>

REMINDER TO ALL MEMBERS

Could you please ensure you have our correct bank account details in your accounting system before processing payment of your 2018 membership renewal to avoid your payment bouncing.

The correct bank account details are as follows:

Account Name: Community Management Solutions

Handover Checklist for the Outgoing Executive

As the end of the year is fast approaching, outgoing committees should ensure that all their hard work is not lost. You can do this by making sure the handover process is performed correctly. **Use our Handover Checklist located under Forms & Documents on the side bar of this newsletter** to ensure all relevant information has been provided to the new executive committee. It is also recommended that the prospective committee member shadow the outgoing committee, attend committee meetings and work together on all tasks remaining for their term.

If you need assistance with your handover contact the CMSolutions team on 1300 007 110.

Late payment and 'centre hopping': enough is enough!

Through research with our child care members, we know that **being paid late (or not at all)** is one of the biggest contributors to cash-flow stress in their centres.

With parents leaving fees unpaid or 'centre hopping' (leaving a trail of unpaid fees behind them), operators are being left with growing amounts of money outstanding. This worrying trend is not a new phenomenon in our industry and is one that does not appear to be slowing.

Unfortunately, there's no 'silver bullet' when it comes to improving on-time payment. Like all of us, parents are faced with multiple living expenses, and child care fees may be considered just another bill in the pile. Unsurprisingly, feedback suggests that single parents or parents in casual employment appear most often on the outstanding account report as the cost of living adds increasing pressure on already 'cash-strapped' parents.

What centres can do, however, is start the relationship with the parents off on the right foot, so that payment expectations are crystal clear.

The easiest way to do this is through a solid set of **terms and conditions**. Much like a contract that you would sign when applying for a new credit card, your terms and conditions spell out what is expected from both parties that are entering into an agreement.

As well as ensuring parents understand their responsibilities, your 'Ts & Cs' provide your centre with a set of enforceable rights that are designed to reduce your centre's exposure to risk when things don't go according to plan.

Your enrolment forms will already have a series of agreements and consents when it comes to health matters and other roles and responsibilities. For most centres, by simply adding in

some additional clauses, you'll be better equipped to know who you are dealing with up-front. You'll also be empowered to swiftly recover late or unpaid fees with less fuss.

With the right contract wording on your side, you'll be able to take actions such as:

- Conduct pre-placement credit checking
- Have the Child Care Benefit paid direct to the centre
- Pass on collection costs to the parent should it become necessary to engage a collection agency, and
- List a default against the parent if necessary so that it shows on their credit record. The listing can be amended to "Paid" when the parent attends to the account.

Another essential in your toolkit: a properly worded **reminder letter** that can be swiftly issued to parents who are overdue. This is an essential step in the fee recovery process.

Sometimes, there's no way around it, and you'll just need to **'make that call'** to request payment. Many businesses find this challenging, time consuming and awkward, and have limited success (even more so in the not for profit sector). On top of that, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has a strict set of guidelines that outline when, how often, and on what grounds you are able to contact someone who owes you money.

Our trusted and experienced debt management partner Optimum Recoveries is ready to assist CMS members with:

- Water-tight credit policies and legally binding terms and conditions tailored specifically to meet the needs of CMS members in the child care industry
- Sample reminder letter templates, and
- Assistance with recovering overdue debts.

As a registered and experienced debt collection agency, Optimum Recoveries are experts in securing outstanding payments in a respectful, timely, and professional manner (as well as ensuring everything is done 'by the book').

To get in touch with Optimum Recoveries, members can call 1300 556 937 or email them at orqld@optimumrecoveries.com.au. Don't forget to mention you are a CMS member to secure your discount.



A hidden threat to any business

Someone breaking into your premise or stealing goods at knife point is an obvious threat to any business. But as claims reported to Guild Insurance show, they're not the only crimes occurring, click the below link to read more.

How to get that Grant!

CMSolutions is hosting a workshop on the 31st October 2017 that will walk you through the process of applying for the next Gambling Community Benefit Fund (GCBF) grant. The grant (up to a maximum of \$35K) is great for upgrades to your organisation. If you need a facility or equipment upgrade then applying for a grant may be an opportunity for your Not For Profit business.



Initially, writing grants can be daunting. Bring your laptop and you can make a start on the day. We will offer guidance on what you will have most success with in obtaining your grant.

This workshop can help take the scariness out of attempting a grant for first time grant writers and may even start you off on the funding submission path!

Jocelyn Ashcroft from Canteens.com.au will be presenting this workshop. Canteens.com.au has long been offering a "No win, No fee" Grant Writing Service to our valued members. Jocelyn has successfully written multiple grants in the last six years for schools and other non-profit organisations such as sporting clubs, gardening clubs, volunteer marine rescue squadrons and more.

Some grant writers can charge up to 20%, so save thousands and get started by registering today!

Join us on...

Tuesday, 31st October 2017
10.00am Registration, 10.15am Start – 1.30pm Finish
Northside Meetings, 110 Windsor Road, Red Hill, Brisbane

Cost

CMSolutions Members - \$65 (Inc GST) Per Person
Non Members - \$99 (Inc GST) Per Person

Contact our Member Services Coordinator, Rebecca White on 07 3852 5177 or email rebeccaw@cmsolutions.org.au to register.

Announcement of a new Member Benefit - Make it Cheaper

make it cheaper

CMSolutions is proud to introduce Make it Cheaper as our official energy partner.

Make it Cheaper is one of Australia's leading energy comparison services for businesses, dedicated to saving time and money and making lives easier when it comes to energy bills.

By working with a panel of energy retailers, Make it Cheaper can remain completely independent and focus wholly on getting you the best outcome according to your interests and energy needs.

Make it Cheaper saved Australians \$10million last year on gas and electricity - with average business savings of \$50 per annum¹.

Our own CMSolutions office will be saving about \$300 a year on its regular electricity bill after utilising Make it Cheaper to get a better deal.

This offer is also open to you and your staff's personal electricity needs and even families who use your services.

Call (02) 8077 0189 for a free bill comparison or click [HERE](#) to upload a copy of your bill.

Note: This service is only available for members in the Energex network (not ERGON).

¹ Based on customer database from 1 Jan 2016 to 31 Dec 2016

Give us a 'Like'

Have you visited the CMSolutions Facebook page recently? To ensure you are kept up to date with all the information you need when it comes to recruitment, staff management, governance, finance and work health and safety and our latest products and services make sure you jump onto our Facebook page and give us a 'Like'.



What is included in an Employee's Final Pay

An employee should be paid the following in their final pay.

- Any outstanding wages for hours they have worked, including penalty rates and allowances;
- Any outstanding annual leave and leave loading; and
- Accrued or pro rata long service leave (if eligible).

An employee's final pay should be paid on their last day or as soon as practicable.

Please Note: Sick and carer's leave is not paid out when employment ends.

Avoiding trouble with social media

Social media is a great way to connect with friends and colleagues but it can easily go wrong if you don't carefully think through the risks. Guild Insurance share an article on avoiding trouble with social media, click the below link to read more.

Our last Roadshow for 2017

The CMSolutions team have loved the opportunity to meet with so many of you and have a chance to chat through some of the issues that you're currently facing. We hope we were able to solve some you maybe didn't even know you had!

We have one last stop before we park the car for this year so **if you are in the Brisbane South area** and would like to schedule an appointment to meet with one of our Employment Relation Advisors on **Tuesday, 17th October 2017** contact our Member Services Coordinator, Rebecca White on 07 3852 5177 or email rebeccaw@cmsolutions.org.au and Rebecca will book in a time for you.

Do you facilitate meetings, workshops, seminars and events?

Develop your facilitation skills at this two day workshop with Viv McWaters.

Monday 9th and Tuesday 10th October, 9.00am – 4.30pm
Northside Meetings, 110 Windsor Road, Red Hill
Tickets from \$750

Join Viv McWaters for a workshop that will help you find the 'aliveness' that lurks under the surface of dull meetings. You'll develop skills to transform the way you facilitate meetings and learn to make the best use of people's time and energy.

Creative facilitation is designed for anyone responsible for organising and facilitating meetings. The two-day workshop covers:

- Beyond the traditional 'facilitator' – how to lead meetings in workplaces.
- Participatory approaches to sharing information, gathering ideas, making decisions and working together.
- Creating environments of open-ness and trust.
- Moving beyond words by using photos, action and story.
- Bravo! You as performer – tips and tools to manage yourself in a group, especially when things go wrong.

Creative facilitation will help you to:

- Get more out of every meeting.
- Learn new techniques for creating engagement.
- Build your presence and performance as a facilitator.

Viv McWaters specialises in facilitation and participatory evaluation. She helps groups to discover new approaches to work and designs workshops and training to bring ideas to life. Viv has worked in journalism, communication, community education, training and strategy development. She is co-author of the book *A Guide to Creative Facilitation* (with Johnnie Moore).



For more information visit the Northside Meetings website

<http://www.northsidemeetings.com.au>

Register at Northside Meeting or via Eventbrite or refer to the attached flyer for more information.

Schoolzine



Schoolzine is proud to be a digital partner and supporter of Community Management Solutions.

Schoolzine has been an industry leader in digital school communications for 10 years. They are dedicated to customer service, product development and understanding the school landscape that keeps them at the top of the industry. Schoolzine's Parent Engagement Platform consists of 3 packages, an eNewsletter, Mobile App and Website offering. Purchased separately or together, they guarantee each package will make engaging with parents easy and even enjoyable for a school of any size. Schoolzine addresses the need for media-rich, interactive content that engages parents.