



It's your EA

April 2025

FAQs

This document provides general information in the form of frequently asked questions. It can be read in conjunction with the proposed Enterprise Agreement which is available on the IRT intranet, lunch rooms and via a link which has been messaged to you by email and SMS. It can also be read in conjunction with the Employee Quick Reference Sheet, also distributed with this document.

What is an Enterprise Agreement (EA)?

The majority of IRT employees are covered by the existing EA which sets out the conditions of your employment, including your wage and wage increases, and was negotiated and finalised in 2018.

An EA prescribes wages and conditions to ensure employees and organisations comply with them and is formally approved by the Fair Work Commission. This includes commitments to when wage increases are applied and certainty that conditions will be delivered for the term of the agreement which is usually 3 years from the date it is approved. The details of the EA are negotiated by representatives of staff and the employer and when a final draft is determined, all staff are invited to vote in favour of the draft.

Employees not covered by the EA have an individual employment contract with IRT. If you aren't sure which one applies to you, please ask your Manager.

When did the current 2018 IRT Enterprise Agreement expire?

The existing 2018 IRT Enterprise Agreement expired in February 2021. Each January since then IRT has provided an increase in pay equivalent to or greater than to the annual increase outlined in the EA and conditions have remained the same.

Why didn't IRT renew the EA in 2018?

The EA expired during the COVID-19 pandemic so in consultation with employee representatives it was decided that it was best to instead focus our energies on the increased associated workload.



Why was it decided that we needed to negotiate a new one?

An enterprise agreement gives employees and employers the ability to negotiate and agree on the set of guaranteed wages and conditions for a period of time that are above and beyond the modern award.

In agreement with employee representatives (including the relevant unions) the decision was made to negotiate a new agreement which will then be up to date with current and future expectations.

What are the steps involved in negotiating EA?

The process involves four main steps as outlined below.

Step	When
1. Notifying staff that the process is about to start and providing information about your representational rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete
2. Negotiating with your nominated representatives to draft the renewed EA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete
3. Access period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Now
4. Inviting all employees to vote on the new draft EA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 May – 14 May
5. Seek approval from the Fair Work Commission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date based on result of step 4

If the EA is approved when will it come into effect?

We propose a change with this EA, bringing it in line with the financial year with any changes to pay to be applied in July each year.

When the final votes are counted and the outcome confirmed in favour of the EA, it will be provided to the Fair Work Commission for ratification. This can take up to 20 working days. When ratified, it will formally come into effect 7 days later.

What is the access period?

The access period is the official time in which the entire proposed EA is made available to you to read before you are asked to vote on it. We are in that period now.



About this EA

Where can I find a copy?

You have been sent a link to the document today by email and you will also receive it via SMS. It can also be found on the home page of the Intranet and this week hard copies will be made available in staff lunch rooms. The current EA can also be found on the intranet alongside the proposed 2025 EA. If you would like a hard copy of the previous EA please speak with your P & C Business Partner.

Is IRT proposing to take any existing benefits away from the existing EA?

No. We are proposing additional provisions and benefits.

What's the difference between this EA and the old one? What are the additional provisions and benefits?

There are many attractive features in the proposed renewed EA and we have added some new terms or changed the wording of some clauses to improve clarity for all.

! Please see the Employee Quick Reference Sheet for all the details.

Is it true that that nurses at Estia will end up getting higher wages than nurses at IRT?

No. IRT's wage rates are higher than those offered by Estia. Comparisons with Estia are misleading as they don't take into account the higher wage rates already offered by IRT. Estia may have applied higher one-off increases, but this is to much lower wage rates, so our wage rates are still higher.

For example Registered Nurses in their 3rd, 4th and 5th year will be paid 8.5% and 12.3% higher than Estia. With the FastTrack progression offered by IRT this is achievable for all RNs.

Why should I work for IRT? What are the other benefits?

In addition to what is proposed in your renewed EA, the following benefits are available to all employees:

- Fitness Passport – discounted gym memberships
- ITeC Academy and professional development – free learning opportunities and career development courses and cadetships (in FY24 this represented an investment of \$1 million in our employee career development)
- Salary packaging – opportunities to reduce the tax you pay
- My rewards – discount and reward program
- EAP – free service to all staff including counselling and mental and physical health advice via an app.
- Career opportunities and career development pathways.



Are conditions in the proposed EA better or worse than those in the relevant awards?

Conditions in our proposed renewed Enterprise Agreement are better than or equal to the minimum requirements outlined in a modern award.

The unions say IRT has not listened and just said no to everything. Is that true?

This is not true. We genuinely considered all items put forward to us by the unions. Some we have agreed to include; some we agree are important but not for inclusion in the EA because they're covered in our policies; and others are simply not viable. See the table below for an overall breakdown and check out the EA document and the Employee Quick Reference Sheet for more details.

Union's log of claims	Number of claims	Percentage
Accepted by IRT or already included in the EA	30	39%
Already captured in policy, procedure or covered by other legislation	22	29%
Not accepted	24	32%
Total claims factored into the EA or covered by our policies and other legislation	52	68%

Has IRT rushed this EA negotiation?

No. We began meeting in October last year, and have been committed to continuing to meet with your representatives to finalise the best outcome for our staff so that we can start delivering all the new provisions to you in July.

The 2018 EA outlined pay increases to be applied in January of each year - what period will the renewed EA apply to?

We propose a change with this EA, bringing the pay increases in line with the financial year. When ratified, the dates for application of annual pay increase associated with the renewed EA are proposed to be applied in July each year, with our expectation that this will begin in July this year if the **majority vote yes**.

Have you improved the wording in the EA to better explain to part time employees how they are rewarded for hours worked beyond their rostered hours?

Yes. We have proposed an amendment to the relevant clause that improves clarity and to align with the wording in the modern award.



We are also proposing an amendment to the relevant clause that aligns with the modern award to ensure that when starting work with IRT, the following initial working arrangements are presented in writing: rostered minimum number of hours to be worked including the number of hours to be worked each week; the days of the week the employee will work; and the starting and finishing times each day.

What is IRT doing to ensure direct care workers and RNs can focus on their direct care duties?

We have proposed a new additional clause to the EA to ensure everyone is clear that the following staff are not required to perform cooking and preparing of main meals, or perform the role of a paid cleaner as a matter of routine: RNs, ENs, Nursing Assistants, and Aged Care Employees (Care Centres). We have also included words to confirm that the same staff will not be required to perform the duties of hospitality or laundry employees when hospitality or laundry employees are absent.

Does IRT intend to change the rosters so that care staff can't have pre-set days of unavailability?

We do not propose to change the current process. IRT routinely reviews the Master Roster to ensure our residents and customers receive the highest standard of care they need, and we acknowledge this may result in some unavoidable changes for staff. We also acknowledge that staff may identify days where they are not available so staff can still identify their unavailable days as long as they are aligned with their contracted hours.

Are you proposing to change the uniform provisions?

No. We believe we have a generous provision for uniforms in the existing EA and have no plans to change or remove it.

How did IRT determine the proposed annual increase of 2.5% for the EA?

To ensure our rates remain in the top ten the following steps were taken.

- A thorough review of more than 25 other aged care providers across Australia was conducted to assess what rates were being paid.
- This data was analysed to determine an overall picture of how IRT's current rates compare with every classification.
- Our P&C Business Partners were involved in the exercise to provide their expert knowledge of the aged care sector and all the classifications within it.
- This data and information was then reviewed with regard to the IRT budget to ensure our rates are sustainable from a commercial perspective.
- Our external employment law specialists also conducted an independent review of the proposed increases to ensure legislative compliance in relation to Fair Work Commission determinations through the Work Value Case.
- The final step in the process was presentation to the IRT Board for scrutiny and approval.



Appreciation days

Will appreciation days be introduced if there is not a successful yes vote for the EA?

No. If the majority vote no they are voting no to everything and appreciation days will not be introduced.

From what date will the appreciation days be applied? Will it be from my work anniversary, calendar year, or financial year?

We propose to implement it according to calendar year, but from July this year, all EA staff will be eligible to take 1 day's appreciation leave until 31 December 2025. It will then be restarted from 1 January 2026 from which point onwards, all EA staff will be eligible for 2 days of appreciation leave each calendar year.

How will the transition from birthday leave to appreciation days be managed?

Birthday leave will continue throughout calendar 2025 with the opportunity to submit an application for Birthday leave available up to 30 September. This will allow all employees to use their birthday leave in calendar year 2025 which, when combined with one day's appreciation leave in the calendar year, will allow for all EA staff to have 2 additional day's leave in the year.

Will appreciation days be available to all EA employees?

All EA staff, except casuals will be entitled to 2 day's appreciation leave.

How much notice will I need to give to take my appreciation leave?

The notice period for submission of your request to take your Appreciation Leave will be the same as that required for annual leave – four weeks.

Will I be able to 'cash out' my appreciation days (in other words, get an extra 2 days' pay instead of taking the days off)?

No. This is not the intention of the appreciation leave, which is to allow staff to take time away from work to refresh.

If I have run out of personal/carers leave, will it be possible to take the time that I need using my paid appreciation days?

If you're unfit for work and you do not have a personal/carers leave entitlement, you would let your manager know (perhaps via the comments section within your My Central application) and then discuss the opportunity to be paid using an appreciation leave day.

If it is agreed that you can do this, you would then make a comment when you submit your appreciation day leave request in My Central as follows: personal/carers leave exhausted, requesting payment via an appreciation leave day.



Will I be able to take both appreciation days together?

Yes however, as you know it is important to ensure the needs of our residents and customers are met with sufficient resources. To address this, your manager may request that you take single days to ensure sufficient staff coverage.

Will I be able to extend an annual leave request by adding on my appreciation leave?

Yes, all team members can submit applications for leave via My Central, utilising all the leave entitlements available to them. Your manager will assess each application to ensure resourcing is sufficient to meet the needs of our residents and customers.

If I leave the organisation, but have not yet taken my 2 days of appreciation leave, will those days be paid out along with my other leave and entitlements?

No. This is consistent with the current arrangements for birthday leave.

Will any additional loading be applied to each day of appreciation leave as is outlined for annual leave in the current EA?

No. This is consistent with the current arrangements for birthday leave.

Voting

Do we have to vote on the EA?

Voting is not compulsory but you are strongly encouraged to make your vote count and vote in favour of the proposed renewed EA, which outlines your future working conditions and certainty regarding future wage increases for the next three years.

What happens if the majority of votes are not in favour of the EA?

There will be nothing delivered in July. We will have to wait at least another 3 months to vote again; and we will not be obliged to commit to backpay or retrospective delivery of any of the proposed benefits.

More information?

Who can I contact if I have more questions about the EA?

You can speak to your manager or use the EA hotline or EA email address for more information about the EA.

- The hotline number, which is for EA enquiries only, will be answered by one of our People and Culture Business Partners, and is as follows: **1800 965 055**
- The email address is: itsyourEA@irt.org.au