



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## How can I join STONZ?

You can sign up to STONZ via our website.

You can resign from a union at any stage and go onto an Individual Employment Agreement with a DHB. But you cannot sign up to become a member of another union and be covered by their terms and conditions until you rotate DHB/change employer (up to June 2022 only) or until 2 months prior to the expiry of the MECA you were previously covered by.

## I'm a TI, can I join STONZ?

Yes, of course! Just sign up online and membership is free.

Note: as a TI you can change unions easily as you are not yet considered an RMO. However, if you are a member of a union on the day you become a House Officer you will be covered by the terms and conditions of that MECA.

## What constitutes continuous service?

As long as you have not taken more than 3 months leave then your service is considered to be continuous, or 12 months for Rural Health Medicine trainees employed at a non-DHB rotation.

Continuous service doesn't have to be at one DHB, it will be considered continuous as long as you have been employed by any DHB in NZ.

## How much leave am I entitled to?

The provisions in the MECA state:

- **Annual Leave:**  
6 weeks
- **Medical Education Leave:**
  - Registrars on a Vocational training programme 12 weeks
  - House Officers PGY2 or more and Registrars not on a training programme are entitled to a maximum of 5 days per year. Plus, an additional one-off three-week (15 days) MEL.
- **Conference Leave:**  
Registrars in a recognised vocational programme who have passed their Part 1 exam or equivalent shall be granted a total of 10 days additional leave to attend appropriate conferences during their vocational training.

## How does the CME Fund work? (clause 10.8.2)

This fund is available to all Registrars. This fund of \$2000 (before tax) is available for each full year of service. The CME fund has a common anniversary date of the 10th of December each year.

If you use this fund to pay for something other than IT equipment and it was purchased in NZ, the DHB will reimburse the full amount. If you purchase IT equipment, the government classifies this as Income. The DHB will reimburse the full amount however you will be deducted PAYE tax.

There is a 6month limit to claim items after the date of purchase. This fund can also be used to attend conferences but is not intended for courses.

## If I apply for Annual leave on the weekend will this affect my leave balance?

If you apply for leave for the weekend and it was approved there would be no deduction for annual leave whether rostered or not. The only exception is sick leave or STIL leave on a weekend, which would be deducted. However, if you are working a full rotating shift roster then you may get deducted for weekends but no more than 5 days per week as per clause 21.5 can be deducted from your leave balance.

## What happens to my Sick Leave if I move to STONZ?

If you transfer to STONZ you can transfer your entire SL balance. As a member of STONZ, the MECA allows for up to 20 days of Sick Leave to be transferred between DHBs and then on appointment to a new DHB you will be entitled to a further 10 days Sick Leave. There is also a clause that allows for additional sick leave each year if required at the DHBs discretion.

Sick leave and abutting weekends: the DHB cannot deduct sick leave for off duty weekends where Sick leave crosses a Friday to a Monday. If you were sick on a Friday and a Monday you would be only de-deducted 2 days, rather than 4.

## How much parental leave am I entitled to?

If you are the primary caregiver and have been employed by the DHB's for more than 12 months you are entitled to take up to 52 weeks leave. If you have been employed for less than 12 months you can apply up to 6 months leave.

- **Parental Leave (Primary Caregiver):**  
14 weeks paid parental leave (the DHB will pay the difference between the weekly statutory payment and the equivalent weekly value of your base salary.)
- **Parental Leave (non-primary caregiver):**  
You are entitled to up to 2 weeks paid leave on your ordinary salary. This is on top of the 2 weeks unpaid statutory minimum.

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## Why are STONZ Categories sometimes lower than the NZRDA?

The STONZ Categories listed are sometimes lower than the NZRDA salary as the STONZ salaries in the table have already accounted for the unpaid RDO's. The NZRDA salaries listed don't include the deductions for RDO's, which will then be deducted from your pay when you observe the RDOs.

This will change from April 2022 when the NZRDA will begin to calculate RDOs the same way as STONZ does currently. That is, there will be no deduction from your pay, rather if you are observing RDOs with will be accounted for in the salary calculation.

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## What is the Training Grant House Officers?

The extra training support for House Officers is an additional \$500 (on top of normal entitlements). This grant is to assist with acceptance into a New Zealand or Australasian Training Programme and can be used to fund things such as subscriptions to journals or education websites, attendance at conferences, textbooks etc.

House Officers in their second and subsequent years of service are able to access this grant. It should be discussed with their educational supervisor and in line with the House Officers career plan.

This grant can be claimed for two years (\$1000) and can be transferred between DHBs. It cannot be used to reimburse the purchase of IT equipment or medical/surgical equipment.

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## I've passed my Part 1's (or equivalent), shouldn't I go up a salary step?

Yes, once you receive confirmation of passing your part 1's make sure you forward a copy to your RMO Unit and Payroll department as per clause 12.3.1. Progression will be granted provided you have completed at least 5 years of service after you have graduated (i.e., PGY6) and you are a Registrar.

## What happens if I want to change unions once I am employed by a DHB as an RMO?

There are only 2 ways to change unions.

1. When you change employer. To do this you must resign from your current union at least 2 weeks prior to moving DHBs and indicate to your new employer (DHB) which union you'll be linked to and then sign up. Note, this will not be an option under the one employer model - HealthNZ from June 2022. Or,
2. In the 60 days prior to the MECA whose terms and conditions you are currently covered by are due to expire and until a new MECA is ratified.

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## I'm working a Schedule 10 Roster – what are my options if I move to STONZ mid-run?

As a new STONZ member, the DHB should contact you confirm what your preference is. The three options if you are transitioning to STONZ are:

- If you are new to the STONZ MECA (mid-run) you can request to observe the RDO's, however you wouldn't be entitled to be paid for those days so the DHB can recalculate your salary.
- However, if they recalculate your salary with the RDO's and it remains the same, then they can request you to work the RDO's.
- The other option would be to not take RDOs & work the 12 days in a row without it affecting your remuneration.

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## Can I observe RDOs as a STONZ member?

PGY1s in quarter 1 and 2 can observe RDOs on schedule 10 rosters.

Outside the first 2 quarters as a PGY1 once you have transitioned to the STONZ MECA, the DHB can require you to work 12 days in a row. However, some DHBs offer alternative options to STONZ RMOs who would like to observe RDOs such as:

- Recalculating your salary individually so that you can observe them.
- Balloting all STONZ members on a run and seeing what the overall preference is and then rostering for the majority e.g., everyone observes the RDOs or everyone works 12 days.
- Offering Annual Leave in order to observe the RDOs.

If you want to know the options at your DHB, please discuss this with your RMO Unit Manager/Advisor [before signing up](#).