



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Tuesday, 24 March 2020**

## **AHA AND UNION COOPERATE TO SAVE JOBS**

In a ground-breaking act of consensus, the Australian Hotels Association (AHA) has worked collaboratively with the United Workers Union (UWU) in making a successful application to vary the Hospitality Industry General Award (HIGA), helping to save jobs throughout Australia's hospitality industry.

The Fair Work Commission today considered and approved an application made by the AHA - with the consent of the UWU - to urgently vary the HIGA in response to the unprecedented circumstances which have unfolded in response to COVID-19. The following variations were approved:

- After consulting with the relevant employee, employers can now direct full-time employees to work between 5 days and 3 days or 60 per cent of their guaranteed hours per week.
- Employees can perform duties within their skill level regardless of their classification, provided that their duties are safe.
- An employer may direct an employee to take annual leave upon 24 hours' notice.
- An employer and employee may agree to the taking of twice as much annual leave at half the rate of pay.

AHA National CEO Stephen Ferguson said the objective of the variation is to ensure as many employees as possible can retain employment during this unprecedented crisis.

"The AHA and UWU believes the variation provides as much flexibility to employers as possible while also ensuring employees are protected," Mr Ferguson said.

"I want to thank UWU National President Jo Schofield and her team for working with us as quickly as possible to make this application."

"We also commend the Federal Government for its support of this application and, in particular the leadership of the Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations the Hon Christian Porter MP."

"The full bench of the Fair Work Commission commended the balanced nature of the arrangements and noted that this was a time for cooperation not conflict."

**-Ends-**

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