

THERAPY



Our Workplace Guide



Family Friendly Policies to Enhance the Work Life Balance of Employees



Staff Handbook

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Disclaimer:

This publication is intended to be a guide only. All due care has been taken in its preparation and the information is believed to be current and correct at the date of publication. For further information, or to discuss how the information in this manual impacts on you, it is strongly suggested that advice is sought from organisations such as the Fair Work Ombudsman <http://www.fwo.gov.au/>

Introduction for Employees

Family and work life balance is achieved when an individual's right to a fulfilling life inside and outside work is accepted and respected.

Achieving a balance between family, work and other things in life is of benefit to employees, employers and the wider community. (COTA Better Work and Family Life Balance Grants Program, 2005)

The aim of this manual is to provide resources to assist prospective, new and existing employees of Therapy Matters understand the family and work life balance strategies on offer at our workplace.

Promoting and achieving family and work life balance is vital for private speech pathology practices because of the ever-increasing pressure on employees to balance the provision of a high quality speech pathology service with the demands of a family.

If staff members are given the opportunity to balance their work and family life, there will be less chance of employee burnout and turnover and a greater opportunity for high job satisfaction and well-being.

With the current shortage of qualified, experienced speech pathologists, it is more important than ever that staff members are retained so that organisations such as ours are able to ensure high quality service delivery.

This manual is aimed at giving practical help and easy to understand information about the range of options available to make our Therapy Matters workplace family friendly with staff that are happy, satisfied, well resourced and highly skilled.

Tania Teitzel
Centre Director
Senior Speech Pathologist

1. Vision, Mission Statement and Goals



Our Vision

To be a leader and innovator for private speech pathology services within Australia.

Our Motto

Learning to Talk, Talking to Learn

Our Mission Statement

Therapy Matters is committed to the provision of the highest quality speech pathology services by dedicated, fulfilled and experienced staff within a welcoming and family-friendly workplace. We strive to be supportive, respectful and understanding when we support children with communication difficulties to fulfil their potential. We acknowledge that parents have expert knowledge on their child and our mission is to help parents apply this knowledge at every opportunity to understand their child's communication disorder, why it is happening, how it can be helped and the value of speech therapy in this process. Our team will always passionately advocate in the wider community for the important role that speech and language skills have in learning, relationships and life.

Our Goals

1. To provide comprehensive, exemplary speech pathology services for children and adolescents with speech, language and learning disorders.
2. To provide understanding, empathy and education to the parents of our clients so that they have a clear understanding of what their child's communication difficulty is, why it is happening, how it can be helped and the value of speech therapy in this process.
3. To provide thorough and meaningful diagnostic information and recommendations to schools, early childhood settings and other referral agents so that they can understand the crucial role that speech and language development plays in children's learning and socialising.
4. To ensure that all members of the community that become involved in our clinic speak highly of our service and value the role of speech pathologists in the community.
5. To have staff that are happy, fulfilled, supported and well resourced so that they can have a satisfied work-life balance and provide the very best of services for each and every client.
6. To have a clinic that is both efficient and effective through its workplace systems, physical resources and administration staff.
7. To remain committed to family friendly workplace flexibility policies and look for innovative opportunities to develop staff well-being.
8. To develop, maintain and grow a financially viable private practice that applies effective business practices.
9. To source and retail the latest innovative products for the Resources@Therapy Matters range.
10. To develop and adhere to business practices which minimise our environmental footprint

2. About Therapy Matters

- 1995 Therapy Matter's Director, Tania Teitzel commenced a small private practice to compliment work at the University of Queensland as a researcher of childhood speech disorders and links to literacy difficulties. The practice started as a Saturday morning clinic in a medical centre at Kingscliff and it also included a contracted service to Tweed Valley Early Childhood Intervention Service. The early days of the practice also included mobile visits to homes, child care centres and schools.
- 2000 The practice relocated to an office at 419 Golden Four Dr, Tugun.
- 2001 We welcomed our first associate speech pathologist when Tania went on maternity leave. Around the same time we had the opportunity to acquire a nearby speech pathologist's practice who was retiring and we were able to commence our school based service to St Andrew's Lutheran College as well as form a collaborative consultative arrangement with Catholic Education - Lismore Diocese.
- 2003 As the practice continued to grow we expanded into an adjacent office suite in Tugun and welcomed more associate speech pathologists as Tania went on her second maternity leave.
- 2006 The name Therapy Matters was created to reflect the growing number of associate speech pathologists joining our team as well as an Office Manager, Occupational Therapist and Psychologist. Our practice commenced work on the Communities for Children - Ready for School Project which involved outreach visits to early childhood settings in the Murwillumbah area.
- 2007 Our office at Tugun was bursting at the seams so we relocated to our current location in West Burleigh and we were able to build the office for our unique specifications. We also extended our range of school based services to St Anthony's Primary School, Kingscliff and St Josephs Primary School, South Murwillumbah. We briefly opened an outreach clinic in Terranora to meet the needs of one of our associate speech pathologists who lived in Northern NSW.
- 2009 We commenced involvement with the FaHCSIA Helping Children with Autism initiative and this led to another exponential growth in our practice and caseload with more associate speech pathologists appointed, a number of subcontractors added to help meet demands and an adjacent office acquired to allow for future growth.
- 2010 Our practice occupies two office suites with 4 treatment rooms, a resource room, toy pantry, waiting room, reception and family room. We look forward to welcoming more associate speech pathologists aboard and adding more allied health professionals to our team.

Therapy Matters has a proud history of supporting staff to seek employment that meets with their needs. Over the years we have assisted staff from a range of backgrounds to achieve job satisfaction and a suitable work-life balance. Our associate speech pathologists have included: staff returning from maternity leave, breast feeding staff, staff re-entering the profession after an extended break of full-time motherhood, staff wishing to expand their clinic skills into new areas, staff returning to work after periods of study leave and staff wishing to combine private practice work with other part-time public sector positions.

Our Workplace Culture

Commitment

- ❖ **We are committed to the vision, mission, goals and success of Therapy Matters, its staff and clients, at all times**

Environmental responsibility

- ❖ **We are committed to recycling, energy saving and environmentally friendly workplace practices**

Integrity

- ❖ **We always speak the truth**
- ❖ **We keep our promises and commitments to others**
- ❖ **We deal fairly with everyone we come in contact with**
- ❖ **We are respectful and courteous**
- ❖ **We resolve all conflicts as quickly as possible**

Excellence

- ❖ **We always provide services of exceptional quality**
- ❖ **We always seek opportunities to improve or innovate our services**

Communication

- ❖ **We always demonstrate spoken and written communication of a high calibre**
- ❖ **We speak positively of our fellow staff members, clients and Therapy Matters**
- ❖ **We listen intently and actively to all we come in contact with**

Success

- ❖ **We focus our attention on positive outcomes for clients in whatever we do**
- ❖ **We display pride, competence and confidence in our work**

Education

- ❖ **We are passionate life-long learners happy to impart knowledge to others and learn from other's experience and modelling**
- ❖ **We are willing to learn from our mistakes and accept constructive feedback**
- ❖ **We readily provide education to our clients to help them fully comprehend the speech therapy process and their role in it**
- ❖ **We always impart practical, useable knowledge in addition to theoretical knowledge**

Our Workplace Culture

Team Work

- ❖ **We focus on cooperation and collaboration within our team**
- ❖ **We ask for help when we need it and we are compassionate when others ask for help**
- ❖ **We are flexible in our work, able to change what we are doing if it is not working**

Balance

- ❖ **We have a balanced approach to our life making sure that we take advantage of the family friendly options and flexibility offered at Therapy Matters.**

Fun

- ❖ **We help create an workplace atmosphere of fun and happiness**
- ❖ **We are fulfilled and satisfied in our work**

Systems

- ❖ **We follow systems and procedures as they are specified**
- ❖ **We suggest system improvements for the benefit of the practice**

Efficiency

- ❖ **We are efficient in our provision of written materials to clients (e.g. reports, summary letters, invoices, receipts and appointments)**
- ❖ **We are prudent in our usage of workplace resources (e.g. printer, photocopier, laminator, photocopyables) so that they are used wisely**

Gratitude

- ❖ **We show appreciation often and in many ways so that those around us know how much they are valued**
- ❖ **We share and celebrate our successes and that of our clients**

Humility

- ❖ **We are humble in our knowledge and constantly seek new skills and information from others**
- ❖ **We recognise the need to constantly and critically evaluate what we do**
- ❖ **We are humble in our dealings with parents and respect the great knowledge that they have on their individual child**

3. Fair Work Act

From 1 January 2010 there were several important changes to Australia's workplace laws. The changes include the introduction of new National Employment Standards, the movement of Queensland employers such as Therapy Matters into the national system, and the commencement of modern awards.

3.1 National Employment Standards

The *Fair Work Act 2009* provides employees with a safety net of minimum terms and conditions of employment through the National Employment Standards (NES). There are 10 minimum workplace entitlements in the NES:

1. A maximum standard working week of 38 hours for full-time employees, plus 'reasonable' additional hours.
2. A right to request flexible working arrangements to care for a child under school age, or a child (under 18) with a disability.
3. Parental and adoption leave of 12 months (unpaid), with a right to request an additional 12 months.
4. Four weeks paid annual leave each year (pro rata).
5. Ten days paid personal/carer's leave each year (pro rata), two days paid compassionate leave for each permissible occasion, and two days unpaid carer's leave for each permissible occasion.
6. Community service leave for jury service or activities dealing with certain emergencies or natural disasters. This leave is unpaid except for jury service.
7. Long service leave.
8. Public holidays and the entitlement to be paid for ordinary hours on those days.
9. Notice of termination and redundancy pay.
10. The right for new employees to receive the Fair Work Information Statement.

NB. At Therapy Matters, the right to request flexible working arrangements applies to all staff not just those employees with young dependent children or children with a disability.

3.2 Modern Awards

In addition to the NES, employees are covered by new modern awards. These awards cover an industry or occupation and provide additional enforceable minimum employment standards.

Modern awards may contain terms about minimum wages, penalty rates, types of employment, flexible working arrangements, hours of work, rest breaks, classifications, allowances, leave and leave loading, superannuation, and procedures for consultation, representation, and dispute settlement. They may also contain terms about industry specific redundancy entitlements.

Transitional arrangements to introduce the modern award system may affect employees' coverage or entitlements under a modern award.

*The Modern Award that applies to Therapy Matters staff is
The Health Professionals and Support Services Award 2010*

4. Types of Employment

4.1 Casual

What is it?

Employees are usually employed on an hourly or daily basis and don't usually get paid sick leave or annual leave. They generally get additional pay called a casual loading to make up for this. Casual workers are also less likely to have regular or guaranteed hours of work. Notice periods do not apply to casuals upon termination of employment.

Short-term casual employees are casual employees who have not been engaged on a regular and systematic basis, have not been engaged for several periods of employment of a least one year and do not have a reasonable expectation of further employment with the employer.

Long term casual employees are casual employees engaged by a particular employer, on a regular and systematic basis, for several periods of employment during a period of at least 1 year immediately before the employee seeks to access an entitlement under Parental Leave (unpaid), Professional Development Allowance (Paid) or Long Service Leave (paid)

@ Therapy Matters – Initial Contracts of Service

Typically all new staff will be placed on fixed term contracts of casual employment for between 1 and 6 months. Hours of work will be rostered on a day to day basis by the Senior Speech Pathologist/Centre Director. Initial casual employees are guaranteed a retainer minimum wage at the hourly wage + casual loading for their Level and Pay Point on the award. There may be some limited provisions for incentive based payments (speech pathologists only) during this fixed term contract.

@ Therapy Matters – Continuing Staff

All other casual employees will be engaged to work on days rostered 30 min prior to first client and 30 minutes after last client. Casual employees are guaranteed a retainer minimum wage at the hourly wage + casual loading for their Level and Pay Point on the award in addition to an incentive bonus (speech pathologists only). Casual employees will be offered a net incentive payment (INCENTIVE BONUS) on top of their minimum hourly wage (WAGE). The incentive based payment ranges from 40% - 60% of employees takings for the day (COMMISSION) so actual amount of incentive based pay is: $COMMISSION - WAGE = INCENTIVE BONUS$. If the WAGE is higher than the COMMISSION then the WAGE is the employees guaranteed pay for the hours worked under the award. If the COMMISSION is higher than the WAGE then the INCENTIVE BONUS would apply and would be added to the WAGE.

4.2 Part-Time

What is it?

Part-time employees have regular, ongoing work where they perform an agreed amount of hours, less than the normal full-time hours span. They're usually given the same basic entitlements as full-timers, based on the hours worked (this is called pro rata). Part-time work may be requested by employees for many reasons including:

- those who wish to gradually return to the workforce after parental leave;
- those who are unable to find suitable full-time care for their children;
- those who may wish to work fewer hours during normal school hours;

- those who have caring responsibilities for sick, elderly or disabled relatives;
- those who wish to combine work at Therapy Matters with a part-time position with another organisation and
- those who elect to work only part-time hours as a lifestyle choice to enhance their work-life balance.

@ Therapy Matters – Continuing Staff

Part-time employment is not typically offered at Therapy Matters during an initial appointment contract. However, it is offered to all employees as an option for permanent employment after this period. All part-time employees will have a regular roster each week. Before commencing part-time employment, the employer and employee will agree in writing on a regular pattern of work 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.

Seven days notice will be given for a change in a roster. However, a roster may be altered at any time to enable the functions of the practice to be carried out or where another employee is absent from duty on account of illness or in an emergency. Unless the employer otherwise agrees, an employee desiring a roster change will give seven days notice except where the employee is ill or in an emergency.

Part-time employees can add flexibility options into their working week through various modifications to their contract of service (see Flexibility Options below). Part-time employees may seek fixed term contracts of a term-time only appointment, use time off in lieu provisions or use purchased annual leave options. Therapy Matters encourages staff to use these flexibility options particularly during school holiday periods when the demand for speech pathology services are at their lowest. Part-time employees may be directed to take their annual leave during the clinics shut down period over the Christmas break.

All Part-time employees are guaranteed a retainer minimum wage at the hourly rate for their Level and Pay Point on the award. In addition, speech pathology employees will be offered an incentive payment (INCENTIVE BONUS) on top of their minimum hourly wage (WAGE). The incentive based payment ranges from 24% - 48% of employees takings for the day (COMMISSION) so the actual amount of incentive based pay is: $COMMISSION - WAGE = INCENTIVE BONUS$. If the WAGE is higher than the COMMISSION then the WAGE is the employees guaranteed pay for the hours worked under the award. If the COMMISSION is higher than the WAGE then the INCENTIVE BONUS would apply and would be added to the WAGE.

Part-time employees are entitled to pro-rata 4 weeks paid annual leave, 2 weeks personal/carer's leave, 2 days compassionate leave, long service leave (8.6667 weeks accrued for every 10 years of continuous service) and paid public holidays if they fall on the employees usual days of work.

4.3 Full-Time

Full-time employees work 38 hours a week, and have a continuing contract of employment. Benefits such as paid sick leave, annual leave, long service leave and carers or other types of leave usually apply.

@ Therapy Matters – Continuing Staff

Full-time employment is not typically offered at Therapy Matters during an initial appointment contract. However, it is offered to all employees as an option for

permanent employment after this period. All full-time employees will have a regular roster each week. Before commencing employment, the employer and employee will agree in writing on a regular pattern of work 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.

Seven days notice will be given for a change in a roster. However, a roster may be altered at any time to enable the functions of the practice to be carried out or where another employee is absent from duty on account of illness or in an emergency. Unless the employer otherwise agrees, an employee desiring a roster change will give seven days notice except where the employee is ill or in an emergency.

Full-time employees can add flexibility options into their working week through various modifications to their contract of service (see Flexibility Options below). Full-time employees may seek fixed term contracts of a term-time only appointment, RDOs, use time off in lieu provisions or use purchased annual leave options. Therapy Matters encourages staff to use these flexibility options particularly during school holiday periods when the demand for speech pathology services are at their lowest. Full-time employees may be directed to take their annual leave during the clinics shut down period over the Christmas break.

All full-time employees are guaranteed a retainer minimum wage at the hourly rate for their Level and Pay Point on the award. In addition speech pathology employees will be offered an incentive payment (INCENTIVE BONUS) on top of their minimum hourly wage (WAGE). The incentive based payment ranges from 32% - 48% of employees takings for the day (COMMISSION) so the actual amount of incentive based pay is: $COMMISSION - WAGE = INCENTIVE BONUS$. If the WAGE is higher than the COMMISSION then the WAGE is the employees guaranteed pay for the hours worked under the award. If the COMMISSION is higher than the WAGE then the INCENTIVE BONUS would apply and would be added to the WAGE.

Full-time employees are entitled to 4 weeks paid annual leave, 2 weeks personal/carer's leave, 2 days compassionate leave, long service leave (8.6667 weeks accrued for every 10 years of continuous service) and paid public holidays if they fall on the employees usual days of work.

4.4 Subcontractor

What is it?

A subcontractor works under a contract for a specific job or length of time. Unlike an employee, an independent subcontractor doesn't work regularly for an employer and can choose whether or not to do a job they're offered. It can be difficult to determine whether someone is a subcontractor or employee. It often depends upon the actual requirements of the work and the relationship between the subcontractor and the business.

A subcontractor:

- has a high level of control in how the work is done;
- decides how to carry out the work and what expertise is needed to do so;
- bears the risk for making a profit or loss on each job;
- generally has their own insurance;
- provides their own assessments, resources and therapy materials;
- sets their own hours of work;
- doesn't get paid leave and other employment benefits;

- is paid based on the completion of the job they're hired to do;
- invoices the person who hired them to do the job;
- pays their own superannuation and tax, including GST and
- is contracted to work for a set period of time (for example, 2 months), or to do a set task.

Whereas an employee:

- has a master – servant relationship with their employer;
- performs their job under the direction and control of their employer, on an ongoing basis;
- has all the assessments, resources and therapy materials provided by their employer;
- bears no financial risk (this is the responsibility of their employer);
- usually works standard or set hours;
- receives annual leave, personal leave and other benefits;
- is paid regularly and
- has their tax and superannuation dealt with by their employer.

@ Therapy Matters

Therapy Matters occasionally subcontracts Speech Pathology work out within its project initiatives when our existing staff are unable to meet the demands of the project and payments are received through third parties. Subcontracting is never offered at Therapy Matters for standard speech pathology services at the West Burleigh clinic or for any of our school based services.

5. Wages

5.1 Classifications

All employees covered by the Health Professionals and Support Services award must be classified according to the structure and definitions set out in Appendix A and Appendix B – Classification Definitions for Health Professionals and Support Services. Employers must advise their employees in writing of their classification upon commencement and of any subsequent changes to their classification. Progression for all classifications for which there is more than one pay point will be by annual movement to the next pay point having regard to the acquisition and use of skills, or in the case of a part-time or casual employee, 1824 hours of similar experience.

5.2 Minimum wage for Support Services: Admin staff and Business Manager

LEVEL	Part-Time Per hour	Casual Per hour	Saturday Casual Per Hour
Level 1	\$17.93	\$22.41	\$31.38
Level 2	\$18.67	\$23.34	\$32.68
Level 3	\$19.41	\$24.26	\$33.97
Level 4	\$19.64	\$24.55	\$34.36
Level 5	\$20.30	\$25.38	\$35.54
Level 6	\$21.39	\$26.74	\$37.44
Level 7	\$21.78	\$27.22	\$38.11

5.3 Minimum wage and Incentive Bonus for Health Professionals: Speech Pathologists

The Minimum wage and hourly rate for all levels and classes of employment are listed below. Almost all Speech Pathologists will be paid this minimum wage or hourly rate in addition to an Incentive bonus which is COMMISSION – WAGE = INCENTIVE BONUS. The Commission Percentage is the percentage of the speech pathologist's actual gross takings for the day. The Commission Percentages listed below are a general guide. Actual percentages will depend upon the speech pathologists administrative and clinical needs and their potential to cover the range of specialty areas covered in a Therapy Matters caseload.

LEVEL	FULL-TIME	COMMISSION PERCENTAGE	PART-TIME	COMMISSION PERCENTAGE	CASUAL	COMMISSION PERCENTAGE	WEEKEND CASUAL HOURLY
	WEEKLY		HOURLY		HOURLY		
LEVEL 1	NEW GRADUATE POSITION						
Pay Point 3	\$848.90	32%	\$22.34	32%	\$27.92	40%	\$39.09
Pay Point 4	\$878.20	34%	\$23.11	34%	\$28.89	42.5%	\$40.44
Pay Point 5	\$956.80	36%	\$25.18	36%	\$31.47	45%	\$44.06
Pay Point 6	\$990.70	38%	\$26.07	38%	\$32.59	47.5%	\$45.62
LEVEL 2	ASSOCIATE SPEECH PATHOLOGISTS						
Pay Point 1	\$996.20	40%	\$26.22	40%	\$32.77	50%	\$45.88
Pay Point 2	\$1032.20	42%	\$27.16	42%	\$33.95	52.50%	\$47.54
Pay Point 3	\$1071.60	44%	\$28.20	44%	\$35.25	55%	\$49.35
Pay Point 4	\$1114.30	46%	\$29.32	46%	\$36.65	57.50%	\$51.32
LEVEL 3	CLINICAL SPECIALIST SPEECH PATHOLOGISTS						
Pay Point 1	\$1162.70	48%	\$30.60	48%	\$38.25	60%	\$53.55
Pay Point 2	\$1195.20	48%	\$31.45	48%	\$39.32	60%	\$55.04
Pay Point 3	\$1221.10	48%	\$32.13	48%	\$40.17	60%	\$56.23
Pay Point 4	\$1275.10	48%	\$33.56	48%	\$41.94	60%	\$58.72
Pay Point 5	\$1322.30	48%	\$34.80	48%	\$43.50	60%	\$60.90

6. Hours of Work

6.1 Ordinary Hours of Work

The ordinary hours of work for a full-time day worker will be worked between 7.30 am and 9.00 pm Monday to Friday and between 8.00 am and 4.30 pm on Saturday.

6.2 Saturday and Sunday Work

For all ordinary hours worked between midnight Friday and midnight Sunday, a day worker will be paid their ordinary hourly rate and an additional 50% loading. A casual employee who works on a Saturday or Sunday will be paid a loading of 75% for all time worked instead of the casual loading of 25%.

6.3 Meal Breaks

An employee who works in excess of five hours will be entitled to an unpaid meal break of not less than 30 minutes and not more than 60 minutes.

6.5 Tea Breaks

Every employee will be entitled to a paid 10 minute tea break in each four hours worked at a time to be agreed between the employer and employee. Subject to agreement between the employer and employee, such breaks may alternatively be taken as one 20 minute tea break. Tea breaks will count as time worked.

6.6 Lactation Breaks

Full-time or part-time nursing mothers are permitted to have regular breaks during working hours to either breastfeed a baby if the child is nearby or for breast milk to be expressed and stored for a baby's later consumption. A full-time staff member or part-time staff member who works more than three consecutive hours and who is breastfeeding is entitled to up to one hour unpaid leave per day to express and/or attend upon their child to breast feed (this includes any period away from the workplace, provided that such leave does not unreasonably interrupt the operational needs of the workplace).

7. Leave Entitlements

7.1 Annual Leave

What is it?

All full-time and part-time employees are entitled to 4 weeks paid annual leave for each 12 months of service. The employer pays annual leave at the employee's base rate of pay for their ordinary hours during the period of leave. Therapy Matters does not pay leave loading when the employee is paid using the incentive bonus method as this ensures for an above award payment. This doesn't include separate entitlements such as incentive-based payments and bonuses, loadings, monetary allowances, overtime or penalty rates. There's no minimum or maximum amount of accrued annual leave that must be taken at a time.

@ Therapy Matters

Therapy Matters typically directs all employees to take annual leave during the Christmas Holiday period when the practice is temporarily closed in our annual shut down period. If an employee does not have sufficient accrued annual leave

for this period, they may be required to take annual leave in advance or use Time Off in Lieu where such requirement is reasonable. Employees are also encouraged to use the remainder of their annual leave during other school holiday periods when the demand for speech pathology services is low.

7.2 Personal or Carer's Leave

What is it?

Personal leave or sick leave is paid leave for the full-time or part-time employee in the case of illness or injury. Carer's leave occurs when the employee needs to care for an immediate family or household member who is sick, injured or has an unexpected emergency. Immediate family includes an employee's: spouse, de facto partner, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, or a child, parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling of the employee's spouse or de facto partner.

Full-time and part-time employees are entitled to 10 paid days per year (pro-rata for part-time employees and unpaid for casual employees) and this leave can be cumulative. This personal/carer's leave is paid at the employee's base rate of pay for the ordinary hours they would have worked during the period of leave. This doesn't include separate entitlements, such as incentive-based payments and bonuses, loadings, monetary allowances, overtime or penalty rates. When an employee takes a period of paid personal/carer's leave, they're entitled to be paid for each hour (or part hour) of leave taken.

@ Therapy Matters

Staff should notify the Centre Director as soon as possible to request personal or carer's leave. Where possible, such leave should be negotiated in advance to minimise disruption to the workplace. Ideally, staff should notify the Centre Director or Office Manager as early as possible in the morning of an inability to attend work for the day. If possible, the staff member should attempt to cancel their first few clients themselves and leave other cancellations to the Office Manager or Centre Director.

7.3 Compassionate Leave

What is it?

Full-time and part-time employees are entitled to two days of paid compassionate leave (and two days of unpaid compassionate leave – all employees) to spend time with a member of the employee's immediate family or household who has sustained a life-threatening illness or injury. Compassionate leave may also be taken after the death of a member of the employee's immediate family or household. An employee may take compassionate leave for each occasion as:

- a single continuous two day period; or
- two separate periods of one day each; or
- any separate periods to which the employee and his or her employer agree.

If an employee, other than a casual employee, takes a period of compassionate leave, the employer must pay the employee at the employee's base rate of pay for the ordinary hours they would have worked during the period of leave. This doesn't include separate entitlements, such as incentive-based payments and bonuses, loadings, monetary allowances, overtime or penalty rates.

7.4 Parental Leave

What is it?

Parental leave includes maternity, paternity and adoption leave. Parental leave refers to the minimum legal entitlement of an employee to take up to 52 weeks unpaid leave in connection with the birth or adoption of a child with an option to

extend the leave to a further 52 weeks. A full-time or part-time employee will qualify for unpaid parental leave after the completion of 12 months continuous service.

What about the Australian Governments Paid Parental Leave Scheme?

The Australian Government will deliver Australia's first national Paid Parental Leave scheme from 1 January 2011. Paid Parental Leave:

- will be funded by the Australian Government
- will be for mothers who have been working before the birth of their child
- can be transferred to the other parent
- will be paid at the National Minimum Wage—currently \$543.78 a week before tax
- will last for up to 18 weeks
- can be taken any time in the first year after birth
- will also be available to adoptive parents.

Paid Parental Leave gives working parents support to spend more time at home with a new baby and help employers retain valuable and skilled staff.

Who is eligible?

Mothers of babies born on or after 1 January 2011 may be eligible for Paid Parental Leave. The initial primary carer of a child under 16 years of age who is adopted on or after this date may also be eligible. Employees may be eligible for Paid Parental Leave if they:

- are the mother of a newborn child
- are the initial primary carer of a recently adopted child
- have met the Paid Parental Leave work test before the birth or adoption occurs
- have an individual income of \$150,000 a year or less, and
- are living in Australia and are an Australian citizen or permanent

Employees must be on leave or not working from the birth or adoption of their child until the end of your 18 weeks of Parental Leave pay. If employees return to work before this time, their partner may be able to receive any unused Parental Leave pay.

What is the work test?

Employees meet the Paid Parental Leave work test if they:

- worked continuously for at least 10 of the 13 months prior to the birth or adoption of your child, and
- worked at least 330 hours in that 10 month period (just over one day a week).

Employees may be regarded as working continuously even if they:

- work part-time or as a casual
- have multiple employers
- have recently changed jobs, or
- are between jobs or on unpaid leave for no more than 8 weeks at a time.

Can employees use Paid Parental Leave with other workplace leave?

Employees can receive Parental Leave pay before, after or at the same time as employer-provided paid and unpaid leave, such as maternity leave, recreation or annual leave and long service leave.

How will employees be paid?

Generally, if employees have been with their employer for 12 months or more, they will receive their Parental Leave pay from their employer, just like other leave payments. This will take full effect from 1 July 2011, with employers able to opt in from 1 January 2011. Employers will be funded by the Australian Government to provide Paid Parental Leave.

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Staff are permitted to use Time Off in Lieu to obtain some paid parental leave. Prior to the birth of their child, employees can accumulate hours during each working week to allow them to take the agreed paid leave period. This paid leave can be allocated before, during or after the Australian Government Paid Parental Leave Scheme. Staff should notify the Centre Director in writing at least 5 months in advance of their request to commence parental leave (paid and unpaid). Staff should notify the Centre Director in writing at least 2 months in advance of their request to return from parental leave.

7.5 Public Holidays

What is it?

Full-time and part-time employees are paid for public holidays at the base rate of pay for the employee's ordinary hours of work on that day or part-day. The base rate of pay excludes incentive-based payments and bonuses, loadings, monetary allowances, overtime or penalty rates or any other separately identifiable amounts. However, an employee is not entitled to payment if they do not ordinarily work on that day. For example, a part-time employee is not entitled to payment if their part-time hours do not include the day of the week on which the public holiday falls.

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The following public holidays will be observed by Therapy Matters:

- New Year's Day
- Australia Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Saturday
- Easter Monday
- Anzac Day
- Labour Day
- Queen's Birthday
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day
- Gold Coast Show Day (Friday in Late August)

7.6 Long Service Leave

What is it?

Long service leave is a period of paid leave granted to all employees in recognition of a long period of continuous service. Continuous service refers to paid working time and paid leave with the same employer. Continuous service is not accrued during periods of parental leave and other unpaid leave however, there are specified periods of granted unpaid leave that do not break the continuity of continuous service (e.g. absence from work due to unpaid leave associated with illness or injury). A National Long Service Leave Standard is expected by Fair Work Australia in the future but was not available at the time of publication of this guide.

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Full-time employees are entitled to long service leave of 8.6667 weeks on full pay after each period of 10 years continuous service. After an employee has completed their first 10 years continuous service, they are entitled to take any further long service leave accumulated only after another five years continuous service (i.e. after 15 years continuous service). Employees are paid at the current base rate of pay for the employee's ordinary week. The base rate of pay excludes incentive-based payments and bonuses, loadings, monetary allowances, overtime or penalty rates or any other separately identifiable amounts.

Part-time employees and long-term casual employees are entitled to the same leave as full-time employees although at a pro-rata rate which takes into account the reduced hours worked by these employees.

7.7 Community Service Leave

What is it?

Leave for jury service or activities dealing with certain emergencies or natural disasters. This leave is unpaid except for jury service.

8. Flexibility Options

8.1 Flexible Working Hours

What is it?

Flexible working hours are an arrangement between the employee and the employer. Flexible working hours assist employees to manage their work and family responsibilities.

8.2 Flexitime and banking time:

What is it?

Flexitime allows employees to choose when they start and finish each day whilst ensuring that core work times are covered. Banking time allows employees to work extra hours above the agreed weekly (or fortnightly) hours, during the busy and peak periods, and then take this time off in lieu (TOIL) during quieter times (e.g. school holidays) by agreement with the Centre Director

8.3 Staggered starting and finishing times

What is it?

This consists of determining working hours outside the normal 9am – 5pm structure, for example 8.00am – 4.00pm or 10.00am – 6.00pm. Hours may vary from day to day, but must equate to the required hours per week or fortnight.

8.4 Rostered Days Off (RDOs)

What is it?

The following arrangements are available:

9-day fortnight: This arrangement for full-time employees provides for a day off every fortnight; employees work longer days for those nine days of the normal fortnight cycle and then take every tenth working day off, on a fixed and permanent basis.

Compressed workweeks: Instead of working full-time hours over the usual five days per week, compressed hours allows employees to work longer hours each day over fewer days. For example, a person working a full-time 38 hours week may opt to work 9.5 hours per day, Monday through to Thursday, and therefore not work on Fridays.

8.5. Flexible Working Year Schemes (Purchased Annual Leave)

What is it?

This is an arrangement where an employee works less than the standard year of 52 weeks (i.e. 48 weeks and 4 weeks annual leave). Employees may negotiate to purchase up to an additional 6 weeks paid leave to be used during school holiday periods. The annual income of the employee is adjusted to meet the additional leave. Typically, employees could choose to only work 48 weeks in the year but have their annual income spread over 52 weeks leading to an overall reduced weekly earnings. It is a simple matter of subtracting 4 weeks pay from the annual salary that the employee is entitled to and then dividing this amount by 52 weeks to calculate their new weekly pay. Essentially, employees accumulate hours during each working week to allow them to take the agreed additional paid leave period. Other variations of this leave include 46/52 or 50/52. Leave loading is only paid at the normal annual leave component not the additional purchased leave component. Leave that is accrued prior to the commencement of a purchase leave arrangement is paid at the employee's rate of pay prior to entering the agreement. Leave that is accrued during the purchased leave agreement would be subject to a 17.5% loading at the employees reduced rate of pay.

8.6 Fixed Term-Time Appointments

What is it?

Employees are engaged in a contract of service to work during Queensland term-time only. Employees would be engaged for a contract of service each term of the school year with pro-rata entitlements for annual leave paid out at the completion of the contract each term. Eligible employees may be offered contracts for casual employment during the school holidays should demand arise.

8.7 Employee choice rostering

What is it?

Employee choice rostering allows employees to select their own shifts from a work place roster. Staff may select their own rostered shifts in cooperation with the Centre Director to ensure that workplace staffing requirements are met. Staff can advise the Office Manager on client start times, finish times, breaks between clients and breaks for lunch, preparation, administration and report writing.

8.8 Home-based work

What is it?

Depending on the type of work the employee is engaged to do, employees may negotiate to work from home on an occasional basis for special projects (e.g. scoring and interpretation of Kindergarten Screener, Action Plan writing for Communities for Children Project). We are currently investigating computer based solutions for staff that are at home and need to access our office database and calendar. Home based work should not be used as a substitute for childcare arrangements but should be work time that is free of caring responsibilities.

Staff should negotiate with the Centre Director if they wish to work from home on an occasional basis. Where special equipment is required to conduct work from home, the provision of equipment should also be agreed.

8.9 Return to work (following parental leave)

What is it?

Employees who wish to return to work after taking parental leave may negotiate part-time hours, flexible hours, reduced hours, home-based work or a change in their previous roster agreement.

Employees returning from parental leave are entitled to:

- return to their own job, or a job which is at least comparable in both pay and status to the one they were doing prior to parental leave;
- continue breastfeeding their baby after returning to work.

Staff should discuss their return to work arrangements with the Centre Director in advance of their return from parental leave. Changes to return to work arrangements should be re-negotiated during the return to work period.

9. Family Friendly Options

9.1 Family Definition

What is it?

“The term “Family” is defined within its broadest sense and is inclusive of the wide range of lifestyles of employees. “Family” includes any person dependent on the employee for care or support such as a relation by blood (child, sibling, and grandparents), marriage (including de facto relationships), adoption, fostering or traditional kinship without discrimination in interpretation as to race or sexual preference.”

9.2 Breastfeeding

What is it?

Nursing mothers have special provisions that enable them to have regular breaks during working hours to either breastfeed their baby if the child is nearby or for breast milk to be expressed and stored for their baby’s later consumption. Employees are supported to continue breastfeeding by the provision of:

- Lactation breaks (1 hour unpaid break every shift in excess of three hours to express or attend to their child);
- Breastfeeding and expressing facilities of a quiet, clean and comfortable room with a refrigerator (see Family or Carer’s Room)
- Flexible work options (see Flexibility Options)
- Breastfeeding information is provided to all staff upon the commencement of their maternity leave

As individual needs of mother, carer and baby vary, Therapy Matters is committed to offer flexible work arrangements that will meet the needs of the employee and help them balance their work and family commitments.

9.3 Family or Carer's room

What is it?

Employees may use a designated family room to accommodate children on a short-term basis. The room can be equipped with any of the therapy resources at the clinic in addition to a permanent television, DVD player and Wii. The family room may be used by older school children who travel home from school independently to provide a meeting point with their parent. The family room is a clean, hygienic and private area that can also be used by staff who wish to express breast milk or feed their baby if the baby was brought to the office. The family room has a fridge/freezer, a sink and storage facilities to assist in this process.

9.4 Career break for family reasons

What is it?

Employees may negotiate to take a break away from work for a fixed period of time to fulfil family responsibilities, while maintaining a guaranteed position at the end of the agreed break. The leave will be at the discretion of the supervisor and may be in addition to parental leave, personal/carers leave or other paid or unpaid leave. This career break will be unpaid. To be eligible for this arrangement, employees must be either permanent (full- or part-time), or a long-term casual employee, who has been with the business for a period of 12 months or longer.

Staff wishing to negotiate a career break should discuss this with the Centre Director. Prior to an employee commencing a career break, the following issues should be addressed:

- The length of the career break;
- The commencement of leave and return to work dates (if possible);
- The impact upon the employee's sick leave, annual leave, long service leave and superannuation entitlements;
- The employee's capacity to return to work during the break to act as a relief employee;
- How the employee and supervisor will maintain contact during the break and keep the employee up to date with any changes in the workplace.

At the end of the career break the employee may return to a position at the same level and hours they worked before commencing the break. Suitable notice of intended resumption of work should be agreed. If there is no position immediately available at the level the employee held before the break, it may be agreed to place the employee in another position but with the same salary and entitlements as paid before the career break.

9.5 Telephone access

What is it?

Employees are provided with access to a telephone during business hours so that:

- they can be contacted in the event of an family emergency;
- they can be informed when older children are safely home from school and
- they can contact essential services that may not be available outside of working hours.

10. Employee well-being

10.1 Celebrating milestones

What is it?

Employer funded gifts for celebrations such as birthdays, commencement of maternity leave and birth of a child. Our activities officer will make sure that staff are recognised, valued and generally spoilt during these special occasions.

10.2 Fortnightly Staff Meetings

What is it?

Fortnightly staff meetings occur on rotating days so that all staff can attend not only for procedural matters about the clinic administration but for invaluable case discussions, networking and support.

10.3 Staff Social Events

What is it?

Each term our activities officer will organise a work function that may involve other family members (e.g. end of year Christmas dinner) or staff only activities (e.g. nibbles after work).

10.4 Workplace Fitness

What is it?

All staff can access the Wii in the family room for fun and exercise during their unpaid lunch break or after work hours. Periodically, employer funded workplace programs may be organised during work hours or at the beginning or end of the work day to suit employee needs (e.g. yoga or meditation). Our office is immediately adjacent to the Tallebudgera Creek and Schuster's Park which both provide an array of avenues for walk or bike rides after work hours or in lunch breaks.

10.5 Termly Newsletter

What is it?

Our clinic publishes a newsletter every term to educate clients and provide administrative information about the clinic. This newsletter is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate staff achievements and to value staff for their wider activities and interests (e.g. sections on Reading Matters – what are staff reading at present, Learning Matters – what are staff learning about currently).

10.6 Keeping in touch programs for staff on leave

What is it?

Keep in touch programs provide a systematic way of keeping in contact with employees who are on extended leave, i.e. parental leave, study leave or extended sick leave. These programs are aimed at enabling the employee to remain connected to their workplace and to assist them in reintegrating into the workplace when they return from extended leave.

10.7 Activities Officer

What is it?

Our junior receptionist has additional duties as the staff activities officer. The activities officer is responsible for the celebration of milestones, publishing the termly newsletter, ensuring the offices are clean and tidy, organising staff social events, coordinate the keeping in touch program for staff on leave, organising

workplace fitness program, decorating the office and engaging staff for certain theme events (e.g. Christmas, Easter or Speech Pathology Week).

11. Professional Development

11.1 Professional Development Leave

What is it?

Full-time and part-time employees are granted paid leave for up to 5 days per year (pro rata) for attendance at professional development events

11.2 Professional Development Allowance

What is it?

Full-time employees are granted up to \$500 annually and part-time/long-term casual employees are granted up to \$250 annually for employer payments towards attendance at professional development events approved by the Centre director.

Full-time employees are granted resources up to the value of \$500 annually and part-time/long-term casual employees are granted resources up to the value of \$250 annually to add to the Therapy Matters library. These resources are ones that would particularly help treat the clients on the employee's caseload.

12. Other Allowances

12.1 Salary Sacrificing for Laptop

What is it?

Laptops that will be used primarily for an employee's work purposes at Therapy Matters can be salary sacrificed. Employees must provide a written declaration to substantiate that the laptop purchased and provided to an employee will be used primarily for work purposes. In essence, the employee would purchase a laptop ideally using their credit card and then the employer would reimburse the full cost of the laptop into the employee's bank account. The GST-exclusive cost of the laptop is then deducted from the employee's pre-tax salary over a number of pays (up to 26) as elected by the employee. The following lists the items that can and cannot be salary sacrificed:

- Laptop/ notebook computer (Must be sold to employee by a business with an Australian Business Number (ABN))
- Devices and accessories (internal or external) included in the price of the laptop (i.e. no separate identifiable cost)
- Mouse
- Software in the following circumstances only:
 - The software forms part of the computer package and there is no separate identifiable cost; **OR**
 - The software is for use in the employee's work at Therapy Matters (employee must provide details of this software in the laptop declaration)
- Portable printer designed specifically for use with a laptop computer.
NOTE: documentation (e.g. a copy of first page of user manual, promotional material, etc.) must be provided to prove the device is marketed as a "portable" printer

- Other (non-portable) printers
- External devices not necessary for the basic operation of the laptop computer (e.g. external memory devices, modems, extra keyboards, extra monitors, docking stations, wireless base stations, locks, etc.)
- Software (not included in price of computer AND not work related)
- Desktop computer
- Extended warranty
- Carry bag

12.2 Cleaning Allowance for staff on leave

What is it?

Staff who go on extended sick leave, extended carer's leave or parental leave will be offered the opportunity to have three employer funded cleaning services to suit their needs.

12.3 Workplace Giving

What is it?

Each year Therapy Matters will nominate one local charity to be the recipient of employer funded donations. All employees are welcome to volunteer additional donations or services for these organisations. Organisations we have donated to in the past include:

- Pyjama Foundation
- Drug Arm
- Rotary – Annual Circus Quirkus
- CanTeen
- Oral Language Resourcing of Schools (Catholic Education NSW)
- Trinh Foundation
- Autism Gold Coast

APPENDIX A

Support Services employees—definitions

**Only Levels Relevant to Employment @ Therapy Matters are reported
See Award for full list of classification levels.**

Support Services employee—level 1

Entry level:

An employee with less than three months work experience in the industry and who performs basic duties. An employee at this level:

- works within established routines, methods and procedures;
- has minimal responsibility, accountability or discretion;
- works under direct or routine supervision, either individually or in a team; and
- is not required to have previous experience or training.

Indicative roles at this level are: General clerk

Support Services employee—level 2

An employee at this level:

- is capable of prioritising work within established routines, methods and procedures;
- is responsible for work performed with a limited level of accountability or discretion;
- works under limited supervision, either individually or in a team;
- possess sound communication skills and
- requires specific on-the-job training and/or relevant skills training or experience.

In addition to level 1, other indicative roles at this level are:

General clerk/Typist (between 3 months and less than 1 years service)

Support Services employee—level 3

An administrative/clerical employee at this level undertakes a range of basic clerical functions within established routines, methods and procedures.

Indicative roles performed at this level are:

General clerk/Typist (second and subsequent years of service)
Receptionist

Support Services employee—level 4

An employee at this level:

- is capable of prioritising work within established policies, guidelines and procedures;
- is responsible for work performed with a medium level of accountability or discretion;
- works under limited supervision, either individually or in a team;
- possesses good communication, interpersonal and/or arithmetic skills; and
- requires specific on-the-job training, may require formal qualifications and/or relevant skills training or experience at Certificate III level.

Indicative roles performed at this level are:

Medical imaging administration
Clerk (ward, casualty, medical records etc.)

Support Services employee—level 5

An employee at this level:

- is capable of functioning semi autonomously, and prioritising their own work within established policies, guidelines and procedures;
- is responsible for work performed with a substantial level of accountability;
- works either individually or in a team;
- in the case of an administrative/clerical employee, requires a comprehensive knowledge of medical terminology and/or a working knowledge of health insurance schemes;
- may require basic computer knowledge or be required to use a computer on a regular basis;
- possesses administrative skills and problem solving abilities;
- possesses well developed communication, interpersonal and/or arithmetic skills; and
- requires substantial on-the-job training and may require formal qualifications at trade or certificate level and/or relevant skills training or experience.

Indicative roles performed at this level are:

Secretary

Support Services employee—level 6

An employee at this level:

- is capable of functioning with a high level of autonomy, and prioritising their work within established policies, guidelines and procedures;
- is responsible for work performed with a substantial level of accountability and responsibility;
- works either individually or in a team;
- may require comprehensive computer knowledge or be required to use a computer on a regular basis;
- possesses administrative skills and problem solving abilities;
- possesses well developed communication, interpersonal and/or arithmetic skills; and
- may require formal qualifications at post-trade or Advanced Certificate or Associate Diploma level and/or relevant skills training or experience.

Indicative roles performed at this level are:

Computer clerk (advanced)

Pay clerk (advanced)

Support Services employee—level 6

An employee at this level:

- is capable of functioning autonomously, and prioritising their work and the work of others within established policies, guidelines and procedures;
- is responsible for work performed with a substantial level of accountability and responsibility;
- may supervise the work of others, including work allocation, rostering and guidance;
- works either individually or in a team;
- may require comprehensive computer knowledge or be required to use a computer on a regular basis;
- possesses developed administrative skills and problem solving abilities;
- possesses well developed communication, interpersonal and/or arithmetic skills; and
- may require formal qualifications at trade or Advanced Certificate or Associate Diploma level and/or relevant skills training or experience.

APPENDIX B

Health Professionals employees—definitions

**Only Levels Relevant to Employment @ Therapy Matters are reported
See Award for full list of classification levels.**

Health Professional—level 1

Positions at level 1 are regarded as entry level health professionals and for initial years of experience.

This level is the entry level for new graduates who meet the requirement to practise as a health professional (where appropriate in accordance with their professional association's rules and be eligible for membership of their professional association). It is also the level for the early stages of the career of a health professional.

Health Professional—level 2

A health professional at this level works independently and is required to exercise independent judgment on routine matters. They may require professional supervision from more senior members of the profession or health team when performing novel, complex, or critical tasks. They have demonstrated a commitment to continuing professional development and may have contributed to workplace education through provision of seminars, lectures or in-services. At this level the health professional may be actively involved in quality improvement activities or research. At this level the health professional contributes to the evaluation and analysis of guidelines, policies and procedures applicable to their clinical/professional work and may be required to contribute to the supervision of discipline specific students.

Health Professional—level 3

A health professional at this level would be experienced and be able to independently apply professional knowledge and judgment when performing novel, complex, or critical tasks specific to their discipline. At this level health professionals will have additional responsibilities including:

- works in an area that requires high levels of specialist knowledge and skill as recognised by the employer;
- is actively contributing to the development of professional knowledge and skills in their field of work as demonstrated by positive impacts on service delivery, positive referral patterns to area of expertise and quantifiable/measurable improvements in health outcomes;
- is performing across a number of recognized specialties within a discipline;
- may be responsible for providing regular feedback and appraisals for senior staff to improve health outcomes for customers and for maintaining a performance management system; and
- is responsible for providing support for the efficient, cost effective and timely delivery of services.

APPENDIX C

Template Letter – Employee Request for Flexible Work Arrangements

[If you wish to request flexible working arrangements then you may wish to use this letter as a template to submit your request to your employer. **Delete any text and in [square brackets] and replace with your information where relevant before you send the letter.** Before filling out this letter, you are advised to read the preceding guidance]

EMPLOYEE REQUEST FOR FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Staff details: [enter your name, contact details and job title if relevant]

Dear [manager's name]

I would like to request under section 65 of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (the Act) to work a flexible work arrangement that is different to my current working arrangement.

I am making this request to [help me care for my child who is under school age OR is under 18 and has a disability - include whichever of the statements applies to you and delete the other option or add your own reason].

I can confirm that I have worked continuously as an employee of this business for the last 12 months and am employed on a [full time basis OR part time basis OR casual basis on a regular and systemic basis].

I would like to start working [include a paragraph to describe the working pattern you would like to have in the future including the days/hours/times you would like to work].

These changes will assist me to [insert reasons].

I would like this working arrangement to start from [insert date you would like to commence this arrangement].

I believe that the affect on the business and my colleagues can be accommodated by [identify ways the work can be performed, how your proposal may help the business or how you are committed to working hard to make the arrangements work well].

I would appreciate your response to this request, in accordance with the Act, within 21 days of today's date.

I am happy to discuss this matter at a time that is convenient. I am willing to discuss possible alternatives to the arrangements I have outlined and I am also willing to work with you to make sure that this arrangement works effectively for both the business and me.

Please contact [me/my representative (insert details)].

Yours sincerely

.....
[Your name]

.....
[insert date]