



Final Year Medical Students Program: Preparing for Internship & Employment

What is AMA Victoria? What is ASMOF Victoria?

AMA Victoria is your professional association; ASMOF Victoria is the union that represents salaried doctors in this state. We're a not-for-profit organisation run by members for members. While the AMA and ASMOF are technically two different organisations, in Victoria they are really one and the same. To the extent that there are differences, they are not relevant to you as doctors in training.

Why should you join AMA Victoria/ASMOF Victoria?

There are many reasons doctors join and stay members of AMA/ASMOF throughout their careers, but as a DiT those reasons will be mainly related to industrial relations. You need to be a member for us to represent and support you in any individual workplace issues you may have. Moreover, we need the collective strength that a large membership provides to be able to negotiate improved workplace terms and conditions for all doctors in training, and each additional member counts. When you join AMA/ASMOF you join the peak representative body

Who is your employer?

Unlike every other state in Australia, you're not a State Government employee. Rather, you're employed by the Health Service that you work for as an employee under the Commonwealth *Fair Work Act*.

The Enterprise Agreement (EA- please see below) that we have negotiated covers 38 of the 60+ Health Services. Without the EA, you'd need to have a separate contract with each of the Health Services that you work for (and as a DiT you're likely to work at 4-5 different Services in your time). This would mean you would lose leave entitlements each time you change Service. Therefore, it's important that we maintain the EA.

The difference between the Award, the EA and your contract, and how they all work together

There are four layers to the system which grants you workplace rights.

The first is the *Fair Work Act* and the National Employment Standards contained therein. These grant you basic entitlements such as 20 days annual leave and 10 days sick leave.

The second is the Medical Practitioners Award which builds on the entitlements of the Act.

The third- and most important- document is the EA, which contains the terms and conditions that you're employed under. The EA, which AMA Victoria negotiated, ensures that you get paid significantly higher than the award. We will be returning to the table to negotiate a new EA with the government next year.

Your employment contract is really more of a letter of offer and is rather incidental. The EA supersedes the contract to the extent of any inconsistency.

Establishing my direct reporting line

As interns entering the workforce, it's important that you understand who you need to go to in the hospital to raise issues.

You have two main reporting lines. The first the clinical reporting line, and includes the registrar/consultant and training supervisor. The second is Medical Workforce. You would see Medical Workforce for issues like claiming overtime or getting a roster swap. They are responsible for applying the terms and conditions you get through the EA.

Understanding who to go to for a particular issue will help you be able to get things resolved more quickly. This information should be in your induction pack, and you should take the time to read it.

The Health Service hierarchy, and where I sit in the pecking order

Whilst you are an intern at the bottom of the medical rung, you are a doctor and need to manage your professionalism in the workplace accordingly. By virtue of your title, some employees in the Health Service will see you as senior. It is important that you deal with all members of staff with respect and should try to comply with all reasonable directions from your direct managers as mentioned above.

Additional key messages

As soon as you think you should contact AMA Victoria about an issue, you should pick up the phone and do so.

You should be getting paid for undertaking any compulsory/required training. This is both before and during orientation week.