

EREL - FAQ's

Employment Relations Education Leave

1. What is EREL?

This stands for “*Employment Relations Education Leave*”. It is a provision of the Employment Relations Act 2000 and its amendments. Under this provision Unions may request members to attend employment relations education (ERE) approved courses. Unions calculate the aggregate leave entitlement for the group of eligible employees as at the 1st February each year and a formal letter is sent to the employer advising them the number of days the union is entitled to for that given year.

Members who attend these courses are to be paid by the employer at their relevant daily pay. This entitlement to relevant daily pay applies whether the EREL day falls on **a rostered day on or a rostered day off**. Please also refer to the EREL Employment Relations Act 2000 – EREL Rights for Union Members handout for further information.

2. Is this the same as Professional Study Leave and Health and Safety Reps Leave?

No. Those are separate and additional entitlements. EREL is a lawful Union right.

3. What is the purpose of EREL?

Eligible employees can take paid EREL to undertake approved courses in employment relations education if their union allocates ERE leave to them. The education is aimed at improving relationships between unions, employees, and employers by increasing understanding of employment relations, supporting members at their worksite, and building member's skills and techniques. ERE leave can only be used for education of a type that is approved by the Minister of Workplace Relations and Safety.

4. NZNO will:

Send your employer written notice of the member/s who are attending the authorised union education course, within a certain time period as per the Employment Relations Act (ERA) or the DHB MECA - clause 23.0. The employer can not unreasonably withhold the granting of education leave.

On completion of the education NZNO verifies your attendance with the employer. NB – under S.79 of the Employment relations Act, an employer must pay the member for every day or part day taken as EREL at the **member's relevant daily pay**.

5. What you need to do once you have received an invite from NZNO to attend an ERE course:

- ✓ **Confirm back asap to NZNO if you will be attending, or not.**
- ✓ Notify your manager/charge nurse of your leave requirement if you are rostered to work on that day, for them to arrange cover during your absence.
- ✓ If you have difficulty in being released contact the NZNO Member Support Centre on 0800 28 38 48 for your call to be logged and passed to your NZNO organiser.