

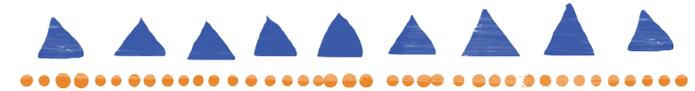


Supporting workers during Sorry Business

? What?

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples mourn the loss of a family member by following traditional ceremonies and practices, often known as 'Sorry Business'. This is part of a community and cultural tradition that is highly important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

An Indigenous community may also conduct Sorry Business if a family or community member is ill or imprisoned, or to mourn the loss of cultural connection to the land (e.g. if a native title application is lost).



Who?

Sorry Business can take place in relation to the illness or death of immediate family members, extended family and people with kinship and community ties.

How long?

There is no set time period for Sorry Business. Ceremonies and mourning periods can vary depending upon:

- community customs
- the status of the person
- the nature of the relationship between the person taking part in Sorry Business and the person who died.

? What can you do to help?

- Listen carefully to your worker and offer your support
- Check how much time your worker might need away from work and when they might need this time
- Talk to your worker about using compassionate leave. Be aware that some awards allow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers to take unpaid ceremonial leave – you can check at www.fairwork.gov.au/awardsandagreements
- Consider options for additional paid or unpaid leave wherever possible (this could include compassionate leave, annual leave, sick/carer's leave, leave in advance, unpaid leave or time off in lieu)
- Explain the significance of Sorry Business to other workers and promote cultural awareness in your workplace
- Get some help if you are unsure how to support your worker. This could include speaking to a trusted community member or Indigenous liaison officer to better understand the cultural issues around Sorry Business.



Tip to remember

If your worker needs to take time off work for sorry business it might have an impact on your business. You should discuss the circumstances with your worker and agree on arrangements that help meet their needs and the needs of your business. Remember, reducing the stress from conflicting demands between family, work and other responsibilities in life is of benefit to workers, bosses and the wider community.

For more information about compassionate leave you can go to www.fairwork.gov.au/leave.

Call our Small Business Helpline for quick and easy access to workplace relations advice. Contact the Helpline by calling **13 13 94** and pressing option 3.