

**Submission
No 14**

OPTIONS FOR ESSENTIAL WORKER HOUSING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 7 September 2024

Partially
Confidential

Following my permanent posting under NSW Ambulance I was sent out to a remote rural town October/November 2023. Following a complete lack of viable accommodation in my posted town, rentals/housing for sale along with affordable hotel/motel accommodation options, I was forced to take up an unofficial and frowned upon situation unawares to my employer to fulfil my contractual arrangements at an on-call ambulance station.

Studying full time at the time, under a pathway program with NSW and at my own expense might I add, the only other option available was to stay at a local motel where I would have been subject to losing half my base pay every roster block for accommodation. I reached out to Transfer Employment Benefit personnel within NSW to be told "try contacting your local rural nursing coordinator, or have you tried reaching out to the teachers federation for accommodation availability". Not only was I overwhelmed with a full-scale relocation, full time study, full time rostering along with on call duties, but my employer couldn't/would not provide viable lines of support. Current internal policy would only permit a 4-week reimbursement of less than 30% of my predicted block accommodation cost, and when I enquired further as to the hardship, I was informed there would be no flexibility. Rural incentive programs myself and some fellow staff were advised to apply for, holding eligibility under Health NSW, later turned to be uneventful and complete wastes of my limited time in following up with NSW excluding staff at my trainee level for eligibility despite remote location status. I have made every effort to give my western deployment a fair go, show commitment to stay out here for a few years, yet feel as though not only my employer neglected to support me, but even government-initiated schemes failed to hit the mark for people in the same or like situations.

You want to know why you do not or cannot get reliable, committed individuals in these areas... this is why... NO SUPPORT, NO viable accommodations (ie substantially run down, no availability, or housing options in areas not fit for staying in due to safety and security), and NO willingness to facilitate improved conditions.