

## Will changes in job size be backdated?

There is a close link between job size and remuneration. Job size governs remuneration but there is no automatic entitlement to backdating. This is a matter for negotiation and agreement at the time. We strongly advise you to seek agreement on the effective date of any change at an early stage in the process. Further, we advise that the effective date is when you and your SMO colleagues present to your managers, with the appropriate authority, your collective assessment of what your job sizing should be.

The real purpose is to be properly remunerated. Backdating is always problematic and should not become a central focus. Hence the overwhelming need to have job size under constant review.

## We are doing more hours than we are paid for, but management refuses to hire more staff or to pay us more.

Management often contend that there is no money. If they won't pay you for the work that you're doing, they must reduce your workload. You are not required to work for nothing.

If the employer will not increase your job size it would not be unreasonable for you to reduce your workload.

Ultimately (ie, in the eyes of the law) you are responsible for your own medical practice. The number of patients you see and how frequently you see them should be determined by clinical needs of patients and good practice, not by the funding constraints of the employer.

Although, as a last resort, a dispute could be referred to the mediation and adjudication services of the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment or to the Employment Relations Authority, such a referral really only removes responsibility from you and what you believe is appropriate.



ASSOCIATION OF SALARIED MEDICAL SPECIALISTS  
TOI MATA HAUORA

PO Box 10763 Wellington, New Zealand  
+ 64 4 499 1271 | [asms@asms.org.nz](mailto:asms@asms.org.nz) | [asms.org.nz](http://asms.org.nz)

# A quick guide to job sizing

## What is job sizing?

Job sizing is a method of measuring and securing agreement with management about the time and staffing levels needed to complete the wide range of clinical and other tasks required of any particular service, or of an individual.

## Why a job size?

A job size ensures you are properly paid for the work you do and that the service is adequately staffed.

Job sizing encourages transparency within and between departments, assists service planning and will identify any inadequacy of resourcing and unfairness of clinical workloads.

## What is the legal basis of job sizing?

Clause 13.1 of the MECA mandates job sizing.

“An employee’s hours of work and job size shall be mutually agreed and shall objectively reflect the requirements of the service and the time reasonably required for the employee to complete their agreed duties and responsibilities, as set out in their job description.”

## Do job sizes change over time?

Yes they do. The requirements of the service and time needed to perform duties will evolve as populations alter, old services are extended, new services are introduced and staffing levels change.

## What is my job size?

MECA clause 13.2 defines an employee’s job size as the average weekly number of hours that are required for the employee to undertake all duties.

Your job size includes:

- Clinical duties such as clinics, theatre lists, ward rounds and other activities associated with direct patient care.
- Non-clinical duties are defined in MECA clause 11.6 and may include:
  - administration and attendance at departmental and planning meetings

- formal teaching sessions and supervision of others
  - audit and other quality assurance activities
  - personal professional development, journal reading and research, clinical pathway development and credentialing.
- After-hours’ on-call duties, including telephone conversations and travelling time.

## How do we go about job sizing?

If a service is being job sized you need to involve as many of your colleagues as possible, because this allows for a more accurate picture.

An individual’s job size provides the basis for ensuring that one is paid appropriately.

A reliable and effective method of job sizing may be applied at a meeting of you and your SMO colleagues, in the same service or department (or on the same roster) around a table with a white board, a computer and a spreadsheet.

1. Draw up a comprehensive list of ALL clinical activities.
2. Discuss and come to an agreement on the amount of time reasonably required to complete each of these activities. You may wish to consider College guidelines and HDC expectations.
3. Repeat the process for non-clinical activities.
4. Don’t forget to account for the impact of leave, ie internal locum cover and 10 weeks’ leave. Thus you need to calculate on the basis of a 42-week year, which takes into account six weeks’ annual leave, two weeks’ CME and two weeks of statutory holidays.
5. After a collective decision about a service size which accurately reflects required hours of work, arrange a meeting with management.
6. At that meeting present and discuss the draft service size and be prepared to modify the draft to accommodate management’s legitimate comments. Bear in mind that the final job size is a matter of mutual agreement.
7. Once service size has been agreed with management you will need to allocate duties and hours to individuals within the service.
8. Your new job size should form part of your job description which should be reviewed at the same time. This will be in a manner consistent with Clause 48 of the MECA.

## What about individual job sizing?

The same principles and processes apply in assessing and agreeing to the average number of hours of work needed to meet the requirements of each individual’s job size. Individual job sizing is the application to your own circumstances of the collective departmental/service process discussed above.

## How often should we job size our service?

Job sizing should be regularly reviewed and particularly in response to staff changes such as resignation of SMOs and shortages of RMOs or experienced nursing staff. Once you have completed and agreed on a job size for your service, it may be useful to review it annually as part of your service plan.

## Must changes in job size be agreed?

*“An employee’s hours of work and job size shall be mutually agreed and shall objectively reflect the requirements of the service and the time reasonably required for the employee to complete their agreed duties and responsibilities, as set out in their job description.”*

MECA clause 13.1

Job size is a matter of mutual agreement and may neither be **set** nor **changed** unilaterally by either the employer or the employee.