



# FIJI TEACHERS UNION

(THE CHILD OUR HOPE)

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Affiliated to EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL, FTUC, Fiji Teachers Confederation & COPE

President : Muniappa Goundar

Our Ref:

General Secretary: Agni Deo Singh

Press release

Your Ref:

## Removal of Compassionate Leave

FTU is deeply concerned at the fact that teachers are now compelled to take leave without pay for urgent private matters like attending to sick spouse children or parents, taking them to the doctor etc.

Other civil servants get annual leave which they can utilize in case of the need to attend to personal matters.

For teachers, the school holidays are the annual leave as per the general orders.

The union had successfully negotiated compassionate leave of up to three days for teachers, to serve this purpose. This provision had been there for decades till it was unilaterally removed by the State in 2016.

The union took the matter to court.

The case was still pending when the Minister for Civil Services announced in 2018 that five days of 'Family Care Leave "would be afforded to all workers."

We rested our case then.

However, the five-day family care leave was reduced to three day in 2019, two days in 2020, one day in 2021 and then completely removed this year.

MEHA is now adding up the minutes of late arrival during a month and deducting teachers pay. No consideration is given to urgent matters like attending a sick baby, spouse or parent, for example.

The Union received reports that teachers were forced to take leave without pay to even attend their FNU and USP graduation ceremonies because there was no specified leave available to them.

On the contrary teachers, who are on duty for the week, are required to report to work as early as 7.00am to assist children in crossing the road and to supervise them.

Working parents travelling from Nausori or Navua drop their children at school very early and these children are supervised from 7.00am to 8.00am by teachers.

The reporting time to school for teachers is 8.00am.

The Union is saddened that there is no compensation of flexibility in terms of allowing a few minutes for late arrival or early departure.

All correspondence to the General Secretary Fiji Teachers Union, Please.

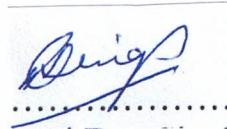
Branches: Suva, Nasinu, Rewa, Tailevu, Ra, Tavua, Ba, Lautoka, Nadi, Sigatoka, Navua, Labasa, Bua, Taveuni, Savusavu, Levuka.

Most of the policies imposed in the last decade, for instance, the contractual appointments and the disciplinary guideline have been done unilaterally and without much consultation.

Transfer guideline and the like, and the removal of compassionate leave are hitting teachers the hardest where it hurts most.

The Union is urging the Ministry for Civil Services as well as MEHA to convene a meeting with the teacher unions as soon as possible to resolve all outstanding issues.

MEHA is also reminded that Fiji is a signatory to SDG 4 which clearly states that the " Teachers and their representatives will be involved in the formation, implementation, monitoring and review of all policies ". The failure to honor the commitment is a clear demonstration of bad faith.



**AGNI DEO SINGH**  
**GENERAL SECRETRAY**  
**27<sup>th</sup> MAY 2022.**