deputy

Hourly Work Index

OCTOBER 2026 EDITION

A detailed look into the state of hourly work across healthcare, hospitality, retail and services in Australia.

Built from Deputy's world of work and industry insights data, analysing month on month changes in the metrics that matter most.



AUSTRALIAN HOURLY WORK INDEX · OCTOBER 2026

A detailed look into the state of hourly work across healthcare, hospitality, retail and services in Australia.

The “Hourly Work Index” by Deputy is a detailed look into the state of hourly work across healthcare, hospitality, retail and services in Australia, built from Deputy’s world of work and industry insights data.

THE MONTH IN FOUR NUMBERS

October at a glance

AVERAGE HOURLY PAY · ALL SECTORS

$37.38 ▲ 0.5% MoM

Hourly pay increased in every sector after a flat September. Healthcare led, up 1.3% to $42.43 an hour.

HOURS WORKED · ALL FOUR SECTORS

35.9M ▲ 2.4% MoM

Hours increased after two monthly decreases. Hospitality drove the rebound (▲ 4.8%); Healthcare was the only sector to decrease.

EMPLOYEE TURNOVER · ALL SECTORS

▼ 1.9% Month-on-month

Terminations decreased in three of four sectors, with Retail the exception (▲ 5.8%). New hires decreased in every sector, down 4.0%.

PREDICTABLE SCHEDULING

8.6 days ahead ▲ 23.5% MoM

The biggest monthly increase and the most notice recorded this year, up from 5.6 days in January. Every sector increased by 19% or more.

Month-on-month changes compare with September figures restated on complete data, which may differ from those published in the September edition.

SECTOR · BY THE NUMBERS

Healthcare

SHIFTS / EMPLOYEE

9.5

▼ 1.4%

HOURS / EMPLOYEE

67.2

▼ 0.5%

SHIFT LENGTH (HRS)

7.09

▲ 0.9%

NEW HIRES

▼ 10.7%

vs September

EXITS

▼ 2.8%

vs September

DAYS' NOTICE

14.6

▲ 29.2%

AVG SHIFT PAY

$287.40

▲ 2.2%

AVG HOURLY PAY

$42.43

▲ 1.3%

Healthcare reversed its September role: it was the only sector where total hours decreased (▼ 1.2%), with hours per employee down 0.5%. Shifts still lengthened to 7.09 hours, the longest in the Index, and pay increased more than in any other sector. New hires decreased 10.7%, the largest decrease of any sector. At 14.6 days, Healthcare still rosters further ahead than any other sector.

SECTOR · BY THE NUMBERS

Hospitality

SHIFTS / EMPLOYEE

9.8

▲ 2.9%

HOURS / EMPLOYEE

65.8

▲ 3.3%

SHIFT LENGTH (HRS)

6.70

▲ 0.4%

NEW HIRES

▼ 1.9%

vs September

EXITS

▼ 1.0%

vs September

DAYS' NOTICE

6.8

▲ 19.8%

AVG SHIFT PAY

$215.94

▲ 0.7%

AVG HOURLY PAY

$35.69

▲ 0.8%

Hospitality led October's rebound, with shifts per employee increasing 2.9% and hours per employee 3.3%, the largest increases in the Index, and total hours up 4.8%. Hourly pay increased 0.8% to $35.69. Hiring and turnover both eased slightly. Notice increased 19.8% to 6.8 days, but Hospitality still has the shortest planning horizon of any sector.

SECTOR · BY THE NUMBERS

Retail

SHIFTS / EMPLOYEE
9.6
▲ 0.3%

HOURS / EMPLOYEE
64.1
▲ 0.4%

SHIFT LENGTH (HRS)
6.66
▲ 0.1%

NEW HIRES
▼ 3.1%
vs September

EXITS
▲ 5.8%
vs September

DAYS' NOTICE
9.8
▲ 23.5%

AVG SHIFT PAY
$218.16
— 0.0%

AVG HOURLY PAY
$35.15
▲ 0.1%

Retail was the only sector where terminations increased (▲ 5.8%), while new hires decreased 3.1% after strong hiring in August and September. Work per employee held steady and pay was flat. Notice increased 23.5% to 9.8 days, the second-longest planning horizon, although Pharmacies & Chemists (▼ 5.3%) and Home & Garden (flat) bucked the trend heading into the Christmas peak.

SECTOR · BY THE NUMBERS

Services

SHIFTS / EMPLOYEE

9.6

▼ 0.4%

HOURS / EMPLOYEE

64.3

▲ 0.6%

SHIFT LENGTH (HRS)

6.68

▲ 1.0%

NEW HIRES

▼ 7.2%

vs September

EXITS

▼ 7.9%

vs September

DAYS' NOTICE

8.4

▲ 28.6%

AVG SHIFT PAY

$240.56

▲ 1.4%

AVG HOURLY PAY

$39.97

▲ 0.1%

Services recorded the second-largest increase in advance scheduling, with notice up 28.6% to 8.4 days. Hiring and turnover both decreased, with new hires down 7.2% and terminations down 7.9%, the largest decrease in exits of any sector. Shifts got longer (▲ 1.0% to 6.68 hours) and pay per shift increased 1.4%, while hourly pay was effectively flat.

EMERGING TRENDS

Month-on-month changes

Looking at the run of monthly data since January, three trends stand out in October.

01

Hours bounced back

Hourly workers clocked 35.9M hours in October, about 830,000 more than in September (▲ 2.4%). Hospitality drove it: the average worker picked up around two extra hours heading into spring. Healthcare was the only sector to work less (▼ 1.2%).

02

Hiring cooled in every sector

Businesses held on to the teams they have. Around 1,000 fewer people were hired (▼ 4.0%), the first month this year every sector hired less, and around 650 fewer left (▼ 1.9%). Yet hours rose, so existing staff picked up the extra work.

03

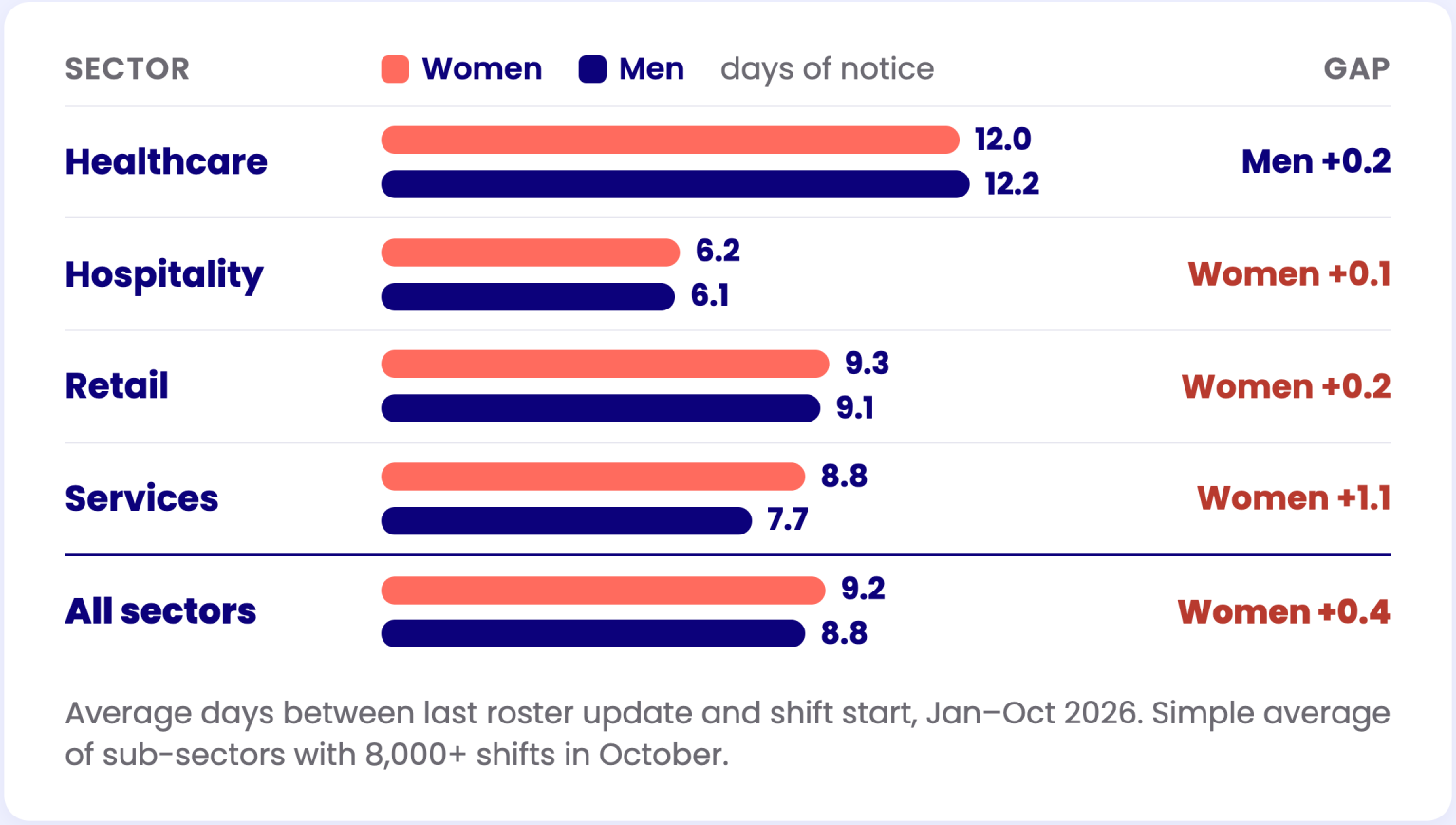
Notice jumped to a new high

Notice rose 23.5% to 8.6 days, the biggest increase this year, and went up in 29 of 32 major sub-sectors.

Care Facilities	**▲ 58%**
Professional Services	**▲ 55%**
NDIS Providers	**▲ 40%**
Gyms	**▲ 37%**
Employment Services	**▼ 11%**

PREDICTABLE SCHEDULING BY GENDER · JAN–OCT 2026

Women get more notice than men in 25 of 32 shift-based sub-sectors



Average days between last roster update and shift start, Jan–Oct 2026. Simple average of sub-sectors with 8,000+ shifts in October.

14%

MORE NOTICE FOR WOMEN THAN MEN IN SERVICES

Why it matters: across all sectors the gap is under half a day, a fraction of September's 3.4-day gap between Boomers and Gen Z. But in Services, women got more notice in all 11 sub-sectors.

PREDICTABLE SCHEDULING BY GENDER · JAN–OCT 2026

Where the gender gap is widest

SUB-SECTOR	WOMEN	MEN	◀ Men ahead / Women ahead ▶
MEN GET MORE NOTICE			
Dentists	12.4	14.7	2.3
Hospitals	9.9	10.9	1.0
Home & Garden	11.7	12.7	1.0
Vets & Animal Health	18.3	18.8	0.5
WOMEN GET MORE NOTICE			
Personal & Beauty	11.1	7.1	4.0
Employment Services	7.8	6.3	1.5
Pharmacies & Chemists	10.9	9.5	1.4
Professional Services	8.7	7.4	1.3
In-Home Care	9.9	8.6	1.3

Average days' notice, Jan–Oct 2026; gap in days. Sub-sectors with 8,000+ shifts in October.

Services is setting the pace. Women got more notice in all 11 Services sub-sectors (personal & beauty: 11.1 days vs 7.1), making shifts easier to fit around caring, study or a second job.

Clinical care tilts towards men. Men got more notice at dentists (14.7 vs 12.4 days), hospitals and vets, while women led in care facilities and medical clinics.

Earlier rosters, wider talent pools? Personal & beauty and NDIS providers have more than doubled their notice since January and are hiring 26% more than early in the year.

PREDICTABILITY · OCTOBER 2026

Who is rostering furthest ahead

#	SUB-SECTOR	SECTOR	SEP	OCT	CHANGE
1	**Vets & Animal Health**	Healthcare	21.9	**25.2**	▲ 15%
2	**Personal & Beauty**	Services	13.2	**16.8**	▲ 28%
3	**Other Health Practitioners**	Healthcare	12.0	**16.6**	▲ 38%
4	**Home & Garden**	Retail	15.6	**15.6**	— 0%
5	**Medical Clinics**	Healthcare	12.3	**15.4**	▲ 25%
6	**Dentists**	Healthcare	12.5	**14.9**	▲ 19%
SHORTEST NOTICE					
	Employment Services	Services	4.9	**4.4**	▼ 11%
	Delivery & Postal	Services	0.7	**1.8**	▲ 149%

Average days between a shift's last roster update and the shift starting. Named sub-sectors with 8,000+ shifts; September restated.

8.6 days, all sectors
▲ 23.5% vs Sep

Vets lead by a wide margin

At 25.2 days, more than a week ahead of any other sub-sector.

Care is planning further ahead

Care facilities (▲ 58%) and hospitals (▲ 30%) rose sharply.

Retail's leaders paused

Home & Garden held at 15.6 days; Pharmacies fell 5% to 11.4.

QUOTE · COMMENTARY

Rosters are going out earlier, but not evenly

8.6

Days' notice

All-sector average in October, up from 5.6 days in January.

+1.1 days

More notice for women than men in Services, Jan–Oct

"October delivered the biggest single-month increase in roster notice we've seen this year. Workers received an average of 8.6 days' notice, up from 5.6 days in January, and every sector improved by around a fifth or more.

When we look at who gets that notice, the gap between women and men is small overall, but it isn't spread evenly. In Services, women received more notice than men in every sub-sector we track, and in personal and beauty services the difference is about four days.

The bigger divide is still the type of work. A vet clinic's roster is set more than three weeks out; a fast food roster, about five days. Every extra day of notice helps people plan childcare, study and second jobs, and it is one of the most practical retention tools a business has."



Emma Seymour

Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Deputy

ABOUT THE INDEX

Australian Hourly Work Index

The data methodology and processing standards powering Australia's premier index for hourly workforce insights.

Data Foundations

Utilises high-fidelity, anonymised, and aggregated customer and user data directly from Deputy, the leading global people platform for hourly work.

Statistical Normalisation

The raw data has been mathematically normalised to accurately account for seasonality and the natural demand fluctuations of workforces throughout the week (e.g. weekdays vs. weekends).

deputy

Thriving workplaces in every community