

Roster Fatigue Risk Checklist

10 things to review before publishing a shift roster

A practical checklist for managers, safety teams, workforce planners, and consultants reviewing shift-work rosters before they are approved or distributed.

This guide is educational only. It is not a legal compliance certificate, fatigue model, medical assessment, or replacement for local legislation, awards, enterprise agreements, company policy, or professional safety advice.

Use this checklist when:

A roster is being prepared, a new shift pattern is being tested, short turnarounds are appearing, night shifts are increasing, or fatigue risk needs to be discussed before the roster goes live.

Visit rosterrest.io for self-service roster fatigue audit-style reports and individual worker sleep planners.

The 10-Point Roster Review

1. Minimum rest gaps

Check the time between the end of one shift and the start of the next. A legal gap may still be a poor recovery opportunity once commute, meals, wind-down, family commitments, and the next alarm are included.

2. Warning gaps

Review rows that are above the high-risk threshold but still tight enough to deserve attention. Warning gaps can reveal roster pressure before it becomes a critical short turnaround.

3. Consecutive shifts

Look for long runs of work without a recovery break. Consecutive day, night, or mixed shifts can build cumulative fatigue even when each individual shift looks acceptable.

4. Day-to-night transitions

Identify the first night in a block. Workers moving from days to nights often need a practical transition plan, including a pre-shift nap window and protected recovery after the first night.

5. Night-to-day recovery

Check what happens after the final night shift. A rest day following nights should support recovery, not force a confusing or unrealistic sleep pattern.

Patterns That Deserve A Second Look

6. Early starts after late finishes

Late-to-early patterns are easy to miss in a spreadsheet. They can sharply reduce available sleep time and may need a manager review before approval.

7. Commute and preparation time

Roster gaps are not the same as sleep opportunity. Include realistic prep and commute assumptions so the review reflects the worker actual recovery window.

8. Crew, site, role, and department hotspots

Group the risk items. If one crew, site, department, or role carries most warnings, the issue may be a pattern in the roster design rather than one isolated row.

9. Repeated pressure on the same worker

One tight shift may be manageable. Repeated tight gaps, nights, or compressed recovery periods for the same person may point to cumulative fatigue risk.

10. Worker-facing guidance

A management report is useful, but workers also need practical guidance. Sleep, wake, nap, caffeine, and recovery prompts make the roster easier to act on.

Quick Manager Checklist

- ☐ Have all short turnaround rows been reviewed?
- ☐ Are warning gaps repeated for the same worker, crew, site, role, or department?
- ☐ Are night-shift blocks and first-night transitions clearly visible?
- ☐ Are rest days shown in the roster data where possible?
- ☐ Have commute and preparation assumptions been included?
- ☐ Are long consecutive work runs highlighted?
- ☐ Can workers see practical sleep and recovery guidance?
- ☐ Has the roster been reviewed against local rules, policy, and operational requirements?

Important note

Fatigue risk review should be part of a broader fatigue risk management process. RosterRest reports are designed to support operational review and discussion; they do not certify legal compliance or workplace safety.

Need to turn roster data into a report pack?

RosterRest.io creates audit-style PDF reports, risk registers, warning reports, and individual worker sleep planners from uploaded roster data.