

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021

## ACTU calls on FWC to reconsider 10 days paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave

The ACTU has asked the Fair Work Commission to initiate a review to reconsider the need for 10 days paid leave for those experiencing family and domestic violence.

Paid leave is essential for people who are experiencing family and domestic while also trying to stay in work. The process of leaving an abusive partner and finding a new, safe space for yourself and your family costs on average almost \$20,000 and takes more than 141 hours. The Morrison Government's current provision of unpaid leave fails to properly protect people in crisis.

No worker should ever have to choose between their safety and their income. Paid family and domestic violence leave must be included in the safety net for workers.

### Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

"No one should have to choose between protecting themselves and their family from violence and keeping their job or their income. Escaping violence takes time and money – 10 days paid leave provides both and should be available to all working people.

"We have asked the Commission to review the need for this life-saving entitlement as soon as possible.

"Unionists have been campaigning alongside survivors of family and domestic violence for years. We can't continue to wait for the Morrison Government on this issue.

"Work from home has added complexity to the relationship between work and family and domestic violence for many Australians during the pandemic.

"We hope that Minister Cash's views on the necessity of this leave entitlement have evolved since 2016 when she warned that a new leave entitlement for women escaping violence might act as a "perverse disincentive" to employers considering hiring women.

"The reality is that in the absence of action from the Morrison Government unions have won agreements in workplaces that have adopted this change – but we cannot allow a worker's workplace to dictate whether they have access to this entitlement. This must be accessible for all Australian workers."

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If you are affected by the issues discussed in this statement and need support please contact the Domestic Violence Impact Line: 1800 943 539