

Friday 25 June 2021

Sydney lockdown and poor vaccine rollout renew calls for JobKeeper 2.0

Woollahra, Waverly, Randwick and the city of Sydney have gone into lockdown, renewing union calls for Jobkeeper 2 to be brought in to cover ongoing lockdowns caused by the Federal Government's failure to rollout the vaccine.

The small supports recent announced by the Federal Government are only available if a lockdown lasts more than a week. This is insufficient, especially for those in insecure work who live pay check to pay check.

The current emergency payments of \$500 for those working over 20 hours and \$325 who work less than 20 hours does not guarantee that workers will be connected to a job, unlike Jobkeeper, and will not be available to any workers affected by the Sydney lockdown as it stands.

Only 5 per cent of the population are fully vaccinated and Astra Zeneca has recently been ruled out for those under 60 – we are a long way off having herd immunity and regular lockdowns are something to be expected and prepared for.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

“This lockdown is the direct result of the Morrison Government's inability to secure enough vaccines and manage the vaccine rollout. With only 5 per cent of the population fully vaccinated we are dead last for the vaccine rollout in the OECD.

“With such a slow vaccine rollout and no quarantine facilities not yet built we can expect lockdowns to happen again – and whilst big business may survive lockdowns, small businesses and workers will not. The Government must put Jobkeeper 2 in place to keep workers attached to their jobs and keep the economic recovery going.

“The Federal Government's emergency Covid payments are grossly insufficient. They make it look like the Morrison Government is helping, when in reality these payments are below the poverty line, inaccessible during 1-week lockdowns and don't give workers job security.

“The Morrison Government must bring in Jobkeeper 2 and give workers and businesses security not just to survive, but to keep the economic recovery rolling.”

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