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Morrison must provide JobKeeper 2.0 as Sydney workers face another week without pay

Workers in Sydney who have been stood down or lost their shifts face another week without pay as cases grow daily and the Morrison Government refuses to provide JobKeeper 2.0.

Current emergency payments of \$325 a week for those who have lost less than 20 hours and \$500 for those who lost 20 hours or more are grossly inadequate and a third less than original JobKeeper payments.

Unlike JobKeeper, Covid emergency payments do not link workers to employment, and as the lockdown in NSW drags on, it is essential that workers have a job to return to.

The Morrison Government must provide workers and businesses certainty by bringing in JobKeeper 2.0 that is available for all workers – including casuals.

Fortnightly payments should be a minimum of \$1500 for all workers so that they can pay rent, power bills and buy food to live on.

JobKeeper 2.0 should have safeguards in place to ensure that unscrupulous big businesses do not put these payments into profits, dividends or executive bonuses.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

“The Morrison Government cannot continue to refuse to support working people who are trying to make it through lockdowns caused by the failed vaccine rollout. The current emergency payments are utterly insufficient no one in Sydney can survive on this amount.

“Workers need financial support through the lockdown and a job to return to when the lockdown is over. JobKeeper 2.0 would provide this. The vast majority of permanently employed workers who were stood down in 2020 have now exhausted all of their paid leave. This means in 2021 they have nothing to fill the gap between support payments and their normal wages.

“Casual and other insecure workers in Sydney are currently living in limbo with no end in sight to the lockdown, no financial stability and no certainty that their jobs will still be there when the lockdown ends. Unlike the current emergency payments JobKeeper 2.0 would attach workers to employment and give them financial security.

“With a failed vaccine rollout and inadequate quarantine facilities, Australian workers will continue to have to deal with lockdowns. JobKeeper 2.0 is what workers need to help them through lockdowns.

“Money given directly to businesses with no obligation to keep their workers in employment is not the answer. We need money in the hands of working people and a light at the end of the tunnel in the form of a job to return to.”

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