

Tuesday 13 July 2021

Morrison Government abandons JobKeeper, cuts support for workers

The Morrison Government has walked away from the successful JobKeeper program which kept businesses and workers afloat throughout 2020 in favour of disaster relief payments which do not guarantee jobs and radically cut support to workers.

The new payments will not be available to anyone until the fourth week of a lockdown, are 20 per cent below the full-time minimum wage and come with no requirements for employers to keep current employees in their jobs, much less keep paying them. Workers who have already been let go get nothing.

This is in stark contrast to the support of JobKeeper which was originally up to \$1500 a fortnight and guaranteed connection to jobs for most workers.

Sydney's lockdown is expected to continue for another month and workers have no certainty that they will still have a job when it ends. The announcement today will do nothing for workers who have already lost their job, who are struggling to support themselves and their families on reduced hours, or who are facing stand-downs or loss of hours as the lockdown drags on.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

"The Morrison Government has walked away from the best tried and true job saving program our country has seen – JobKeeper.

"They have radically cut the support given to workers in 2021 compared to 2020. Weekly payments have been slashed by up to \$150 per week, there is no guarantee jobs will be kept and those who have already lost their jobs will get nothing.

"JobKeeper gave people job security and just enough support to get through. We know it works. Now those affected by lockdowns caused by the Morrison Government's failed vaccine rollout will be paying the price with their jobs and their pay packets.

"Instead of guaranteeing workers weekly pay and a connection to their jobs, workers now have to navigate Centrelink and hope their employers keep them on."

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