

Thursday 26 August 2021

Hospitality and retail lead job losses as workers continue to suffer without JobKeeper

Workers struggling through lockdowns without JobKeeper continue to lose jobs at an alarming rate with nothing to keep them connected to an employer while they receive support payments.

New payroll data released today by the ABS shows a 9.2 per cent decline in the total number of jobs in Western Sydney over the first five weeks of the Sydney lockdown from the 26th of June.

Data for other states shows the ripple effects of the lockdown in Sydney – over the first 5 weeks of the lockdown 2.6 per cent of jobs were lost in Victoria, 1 per cent in Queensland, 4 per cent in South Australia and 2.1 per cent in Tasmania.

Nationally, almost every industry saw falls in their payroll jobs in the second half of July. These falls were largest in the arts and recreation services and accommodation and food services industries (down 5.9 per cent and 5.8 per cent).

Among the larger employing industries, accommodation and food services, retail trade and construction had the greatest shares of payroll job losses in the fortnight to 31 July.

Payroll job losses in the accommodation and food services, retail trade and construction industries accounted for 44.3 per cent of job losses across Australia in the second half of July, and 45.4 per cent in New South Wales.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O’Neil:

“We had a system in place last year which ensured that even in a long lockdown working people remained connected to their employer – the Morrison Government decided to end this prematurely, weeks before their failed rollout plunged millions of working people back into lockdowns.

“We should reform and reintroduce the JobKeeper system to include all casual and visa workers in all industries, make it available to everyone affected by a lockdown and ensure it cannot be rorted by employers.

“The rates of job losses we are seeing in Sydney and elsewhere are appalling and completely unnecessary. We should be supporting working people through lockdowns, not allowing them to lose work and then asking them to pick up the pieces when it’s over.

“The Morrison Government is responsible for the impact of their botched vaccine rollout and should take responsibility for ensuring that working people have something to return to when lockdowns are finally over.

“Working people cannot continue to pay the price for the incompetence of this Government’s vaccine rollout.”

Media contact: Peter Green 0400 764 200