

Thursday, 23 July 2020

## Morrison must step up to save and create jobs, deliver pandemic leave

With Australia facing its gravest economic crisis in a century, the Morrison Government must provide a real plan for job creation and national economic reconstruction as well as paid pandemic leave for all workers in order to protect the livelihoods of Australian workers and businesses.

The Morrison Government must commit to providing paid pandemic leave for all working people – at 100% of their wages, whenever they are tested or have to isolate. This is essential in stopping the spread of the virus.

Australia needs a comprehensive strategy that will create a stronger, fairer Australia on the other side of this pandemic for the huge numbers of people currently looking for work or needing more hours. 13 people are currently looking for work for every available job.

The ACTU's National Economic Reconstruction Plan is a comprehensive plan which would create the jobs and skills we need to get the economy started again and get people back in secure work.

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

"This crisis has had an unprecedented impact on working people and the economy. People need confidence that Australia isn't going from recession to depression, so the sooner the government tells people the plan for jobs the better for everyone.

"We have lost 870,000 jobs between March and May. 1 million people have had their hours reduced. Unemployment is expected to peak above 9 per cent. We know that the effective unemployment rate is much higher. Wage growth for 2020-2021 is projected at just 1.25 per cent, the lowest on record.

"No one wants to see people fall through the gaps which is why we need to continue support for JobKeeper and JobSeeker while government creates more secure local jobs and training opportunities.

"We need paid pandemic leave for all working people. No one should face a financial penalty or risk losing their job so that they can isolate or get tested. This needs to happen immediately.

"The ACTU's National Economic Reconstruction Plan includes a detailed set of strategies which would save and create jobs and give working people the skills and opportunities they need as we start to recover from this pandemic.

"Programs need to be targeted to the people and industries who need them, if we don't look after people they can't look after the economy"

**ENDS**

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