

Tuesday 8 December 2020

New report shows majority of casuals do not receive loading and have regular hours

More than half of casual workers probably do not receive the legal 25 per cent loading in their pay according to a new report by Professor David Peetz of Griffith University, 'What do the data on casuals really mean?', which outlines the ways casual jobs allow employers to reduce workers' rights and entitlements.

For these workers, being classed as a casual doesn't mean flexibility. It means fewer rights, no paid leave and lower pay.

With or without loading, casuals suffer a pay penalty compared to permanent employees rather than receiving a premium.

Because of excessive casualisation Australia is on par with the USA with one of the highest proportions of workers with no guaranteed paid sick leave or holidays. Australia lags behind 88 per cent of other high-income countries that require temporary workers to have the same leave entitlements as permanent workers.

Of the 800,000 jobs lost since the beginning of the pandemic, 500,000 were casual workers – insecure jobs were the first to go when the pandemic hit and unfortunately even more are being created during the recovery.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus,

"This report shows that casualisation is a systemic issue in the Australian workforce – the majority of people who are casual should not be and do not receive any of the supposed benefits of casual employment.

"1 in 4 Australian employees do not have any leave entitlements, leaving us lagging behind most other OECD countries. These are the workers who have carried us through the pandemic.

"Casualised jobs with no access to paid leave was our weakest link in our efforts to stop the spread of COVID in our communities. We now need to turn that around, not make it worse.

"The majority of casual workers are working the same hours every week, but with none of the entitlements that permanent workers can rely upon. They are being ripped off. The proposal from the Morrison Government will not only entrench this, it will take rights off casual workers.

"On top of the lower pay and reduced rights, casuals also contend with the constant stress of having no job security.

"Half a million casuals lost their jobs when the pandemic hit. Insecure work meant that these workers and their families had nothing to fall back on during a crisis. We are calling on the Government to work with unions to halve the rate of insecure work."

Media contact: Peter Green 0400 764 200