

Friday 2 December 2016

## **ACTU paid family violence leave case concludes in Fair Work Commission**

The Australian Council of Trade Union's case for paid family and domestic violence leave concludes in the Fair Work Commission today.

The ACTU submitted that workers experiencing violence at home should be able to access ten days of paid leave per year to allow them to deal with all the issues that arise out of a family or domestic violence situation, like seeking medical assistance, attending court, relocating or making safety arrangements for themselves or their children.

One million Australian workers already have access to paid family and domestic violence leave negotiated in their agreements. The ACTU's claim would see a further two million workers covered by modern awards eligible for domestic violence leave.

The ACTU calls on all governments to take a strong stand in support of family and domestic violence leave at next week's COAG meeting. The Fair Work Commission is expected to hand down its decision next year.

### **Quotes attributable to ACTU President Ged Kearney:**

"The ACTU's claim includes 10 days paid leave per year and an additional two days unpaid leave. This entitlement can mean the difference between staying in a dangerous situation or going for some survivors.

"Family and domestic violence affects one in six women and two thirds of these women are in paid employment. It is a scourge on society that can no longer be swept away or kept behind closed doors. It is everybody's business, including those of us in the workplace.

"Designated paid leave fills a critical gap for people experiencing family and domestic violence, keeping them in the workforce, maintaining their financial independence and providing real support at a challenging time in their lives.

"Women and men experiencing violence must not have their employment jeopardised. It must not be up to individual employees to fight for recognition of their workplace rights when they are experiencing violence and trauma at home.

"Employer groups who put forward positions against Domestic Violence Leave are on the wrong side of history. They are out of step with the many major Australian employers who already provide family and domestic violence leave and have publicly supported it being adopted across the board.

"We now have the chance to make one of the most important social interventions of our times, that will change cultural attitudes, prevent violence, and save lives. Arguments from employer groups about the cost of implementing this entitlement are grossly inflated and based on exaggerated, flawed assumptions.

"Next week state and federal leaders will meet at COAG and family and domestic violence leave is on the agenda. Governments at all levels must make a clear public statement in support of family and domestic violence leave."

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