

Thursday 20 July, 2017

## **Just five cents a day: The real cost for business to provide paid family and domestic violence leave revealed**

The Turnbull Government has refused to ensure Australian women have access to paid domestic and family violence (FDV) leave, despite new evidence that it would cost bosses just five cents a day.

New analysis from the Centre for Future Work at the Australia Institute has found the average cost of extending access to 10 days paid Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) leave across the workforce would average less than five cents per worker, per working day.

The Centre estimated that the cost to employers of extending access to 10 days paid leave to all paid employees in Australia would equal between 0.015 per cent and 0.02 per cent of existing compensation costs – and likely less.

Given average earnings in Australia – equal approximately \$60,000 per annum across the workforce – this translates into an average extra cost of \$9 to \$12 per worker, per year – or just four to five cents per working day. Based on the experience of major employers (both private sector and public sector) who have already implemented paid FDV leave, the actual cost will likely be much lower.

Despite the Fair Work Commission knocking back the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)'s proposal to provide a minimum 10 days paid FDV leave for all Australian workers, the ACTU's Executive has this week committed to continue campaigning until every Australian worker has access to a minimum of 10 days paid FDV leave in the future.

FDV leave allows people experiencing family violence to undertake documented actions (including medical, legal, or relocation) to resolve or escape their violent situations. The Fair Work Commission found all Australian workers on modern awards should have access to leave in these circumstances, but not paid leave.

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

“Australian Unions unequivocally demand that people experiencing family and domestic violence be guaranteed access to a minimum of 10 days paid leave to escape or resolve the violence they have experienced. Nothing less than a minimum of 10 days paid leave is acceptable.”

“This new analysis from the Centre for Future Work shows that the cost of keeping working people in paid employment while they escape or resolve FDV is next to nothing for employers – five cents a day.

“It's critical that survivors and people experiencing family and domestic violence to stay in work and have financial security. Evidence has shown this is crucial in helping them escape. We will campaign, rally and do what is necessary to achieve paid family and domestic violence leave for all.

“Paid FDV leave is essential in ensuring that those experiencing FDV do not have to use other leave entitlements or unpaid leave to attend court, meet with police or seek medical treatment.”

“Too often people experiencing FDV lose their jobs in the process of surviving an abusive relationship because they do not have a sufficient amount of leave. This has to end.

“Employer groups like the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) failed in their arguments that FDV leave is not a workplace issue. ACCI also hyper-inflated their estimates of the costs of paid FDV leave by hundreds of millions of dollars, a shameful insult to the workers experiencing this type of violence.

“The rules for work are broken when making sure survivors of domestic and family violence can lead productive happy lives is somehow considered less important than saving employers a few cents per day. The rules need to change now.”

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