

Tuesday 20 November 2018

Super plan no substitute for paid family domestic violence leave

The peak body for working people says a Morrison Government plan to allow women escaping violence to dip into their superannuation and take on debt to fund the significant cost of leaving is inadequate.

The ACTU is campaigning for 10 days' paid family and domestic violence leave, saying that such leave is necessary on both social and economic grounds for women who want to escape violence.

Today Minister for Women Kelly O'Dwyer will announce a plan that will see women escaping violence expected to dip into their superannuation and take out micro-finance loans instead of having a guaranteed right to access paid family and domestic violence leave.

Women currently retire with 47 percent less super than men on average, according to the ASU and Per Capita's *Not So Super for Women* [report](#).

Paid family and domestic violence leave would cost only five cents per employee per day and has been included in a number of public and private sector industrial agreements, including all NSW Government employee awards.

Both the ALP and the Greens support the ACTU call for 10 days' paid family and domestic violence leave.

The ACTU welcomed some other aspects of Ms O'Dwyer's announcements, including the restoration of the ABS time use survey and changes that will prevent people who have experienced family and domestic violence being cross-examined by their abuser in court.

The changes to paid parental leave are a small step in the right direction. The ACTU has called for the abolition of primary and secondary carers' leave and for 26 weeks' leave to be granted to expecting parents to be used however the family chooses.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

"Women experiencing family and domestic violence need leave to be able to leave. It's long past time for 10 days' paid family and domestic violence leave.

"In 2018 women escaping violent relationships should not have to choose between their income and their safety. And they should not have to spend their retirement savings or take on debt.

"Our broken system already sees women retire with 47 percent less than men. Forcing women to dip into their super is likely to make worse women's already inadequate retirement savings.

"Paid family and domestic violence leave is vital for women escaping violence. It's the right thing to do, and every major party except Ms O'Dwyer's recognises that it's time to write it into law."

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