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Research shows insecure work, age, gender divides in impact of virus

People in insecure work and with lower incomes are more likely to face unemployment or being stood down without pay as a result of the pandemic, with women, young workers and those over 65 also over-represented, according to new research conducted for the ACTU.

The data shows that 37 per cent of workers who have lost their job due to COVID-19 have been stood down without pay, but the situation is worse for those aged 18-34 (43 per cent) or over 65 (42 per cent).

24 per cent of effected workers are no longer getting shifts at their job, despite not formally being stood down but the situation is worse for women, and those in insecure work.

27 per cent of women who have lost work say they are still technically employed but are not being given shifts at work, compared with 19 per cent of men.

68 per cent of effected casual workers who had been in their current job for less than 12 months have lost shifts. These workers are also not currently eligible for JobKeeper payments.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

“This virus has laid bare the longstanding problems in our industrial relations system. Women, young and older workers, as well as those in insecure work are falling through the cracks.

“The extremely high rates of insecure work, in which young people and women are over-represented, mean that we have large numbers of people in this country without secure employment and decent rights, and they are being hit incredibly hard by this crisis.

“This research shows that the groups the Morrison Government has chosen not to support – especially those on short-term and casual contracts, are facing the highest rates of joblessness.

“The treasurer has the power to expand JobKeeper to give assistance to the people who need it most and he should do so.

“The recovery from this crisis must include a reversal of the government’s policy to use insecure work and the government must expanded rights for all working people.”

ENDS

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