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## Insecure jobs forcing hundreds of thousands to work through injuries, illness

37 per cent of workers in insecure jobs – including fixed-term and independent contractors, casuals and gig economy workers – report having gone to work while injured according to a new survey conducted by the ACTU.

The pandemic exposed the serious public health risks posed by Australia’s extremely high level of insecure work, with a third of workers not able to access paid sick leave. This survey shows that the problem also extends to physical injuries, with significant parts of the workforce unable to take time away from work to recover.

The survey shows that women are over-represented in insecure work and that young people are more likely to be exposed to a wide range of workplace hazards, including repetitive work, manual work, noisy work, working with solvents or harmful chemicals, worked unsafe hours and bullying, and were also more like to report skipping breaks that they were entitled to.

### Quotes attributable to ACTU Assistant Secretary Liam O’Brien:

“This survey paints a grim picture of what work is like for millions of Australian workers whose insecure employment means they face impossible choices between recovering from illness or injury and keeping the lights on.

“No one should have to go to work sick or injured because they cannot afford to stay home and recover. We need to change our workplace laws to reduce the rate of insecure work and ensure that all workers have the right to a healthy and safe workplace.

“The level of insecure work we have in Australia is not normal, we have the third highest rate of non-standard employment in the OECD. This level of insecurity is the direct result of policy decisions by successive coalition Governments which have shifted power to employers and attacked the rights of working people.”

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