

Thursday 27 September 2022

10 days paid Family and Domestic Violence leave enshrined into law after decade of union campaigning

After a decade of tireless campaigning by unions and activists, the Albanese Government's bill to provide 10 days paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave has passed parliament and been enshrined in the National Employment Standards today.

While successive coalition governments refused to support this entitlement, unions campaigned and won it workplace by workplace and then in awards for an estimated 2.6 million workers. The union movement welcomes the support from the Labor Government and supportive Senators and MPs that voted in favour to make this a universal entitlement. This means a further 8.44 million workers, including casuals, will be eligible to take paid leave to support them with leaving a violent relationship.

On average, it costs \$18,000 to escape a violent relationship in Australia and economic security is a key factor determining whether a person can escape a dangerous relationship. Paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave will save lives.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

"Today we pay tribute to those unionists and activists who campaigned tirelessly for paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave over the last decade. Because of this, lives will be saved.

"For many, today's passing of paid family and domestic violence leave into law has come too late. We remember all the women taken too soon and share the grief of the families still mourning.

"No worker should ever have had to choose between putting food on the table and their safety, and economic security is a key factor determining whether a person subjected to violence at home can escape a dangerous relationship or not. It cannot be understated just how important winning paid Family and Domestic Violence leave in the National Employment Standards is.

"With 1 in 4 women having experienced some form of violence since the age of 15 by an intimate partner, Australia has a critical problem with women's safety and gender equality. While today is a huge and historic win, union campaigning for gender equity does not stop here".

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