

Tuesday, 31 January 2023

Historic day as Paid Family & Domestic Violence Leave to come into force

New laws to provide 10 days paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave will come into force tomorrow for workers in businesses with 15 or more employees after unions campaigned and won the reform for workers leaving a violent relationship.

For workers in small businesses, with fewer than 15 employees, the entitlement will start from 1 August, this year. The Albanese Government made this their first change in workplace laws.

The ACTU marked the occasion by paying tribute to the thousands of survivors who did not have access to this entitlement, many of whom had paid the ultimate price. The union also thanked the millions of workers who had campaigned for change.

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 change that equation and save lives. The ACTU wants all workers to understand their rights under the new laws.

1. All workers – full time, part time and casual – will have access to 10 days leave, regardless of whether they work a 38-hour week, or fewer hours.
2. The full 10-days is available immediately when a worker needs it, rather than accumulating over a period like annual and sick leave does.
3. There are rules in place to keep workers information private including that FDV leave must not be included on an employee's pay slip.
4. Full-time and part-time employees can take paid FDV leave at their full pay rate for the hours they would have worked if they weren't on leave, while casual employees will be paid at their full pay rate for the hours they were rostered to work in the period they took leave.

Workers in small businesses continue to have access to 5 days of unpaid domestic violence leave until their inclusion in the paid scheme from 1 August.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

“From tomorrow, workers no longer must choose between putting food on the table and their safety.

“We pay tribute to unionists who campaigned for over a decade for paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave – their commitment and determination means lives will be saved.

“We congratulate the Albanese government for bringing this entitlement into law.

“Our hearts are with families of those for whom paid family and domestic violence leave has come too late and we remember the women taken too soon.

“Paid Family and Domestic Violence leave builds on the long legacy of the union movement campaigning for and winning new rights for workers, enshrined in our employment laws.”

Quotes attributable to Australian Services Union Assistant National Secretary Emeline Gaske:

“As the union representing domestic violence workers, the Australian Services Union was proud to be first union to enshrine paid domestic violence leave in a workplace agreement, back in 2010.

“Alongside other unions, we have campaigned for this to become a right across our whole community and tomorrow will mark a very proud day for union members.

“With 1 in 4 women having experienced some form of violence since the age of 15 by an intimate partner, Australia has a serious problem with women’s safety and gender equality.

“While this is a huge and historic win, union campaigning for gender equity does not stop here.”

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