

Tuesday 23 May 2023

## Casual workers earn \$11.59 less per hour than permanent employees

Casual workers are falling further behind their permanently employed counterparts, new research by the ACTU shows.

Across the board, casual employees earn \$11.59 less per hour than their permanent counterparts: \$28.95 per hour versus \$40.54. This is a pay gap of 28.6% which has been growing steadily since 2016 and is now the highest on record.

When comparing workers at the same skill level or within the same occupation, the pay gap between casuals and permanents is between \$3.55 to \$3.84 an hour or about 11%. This is despite casuals being owed an additional loading of up to 25%.

New ACTU research also shows that 50% of casual workers now report being financially worse off than they were 12 months ago, up from 36% recorded a year earlier.

Up to 2.6 million workers in Australia – or just under one in four – are on casual work arrangements. Women comprise 55% of all casual employees; and the sectors with the highest rates of casualisation include retail, accommodation, food services, health care and social assistance, accounting for 55% of all casual employees.

The ACTU is calling for Morrison-era changes to the law to be scrapped, and a commonsense definition of casual work to be introduced as part of the Government's further IR reforms.

### Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

“Too many casuals are casual in name only. Too many jobs that are actually permanent jobs have been made casual, denying workers both pay and rights. The majority of casuals work regular hours, week in, week out and have been in their job for more than a year. Changes made by the Morrison Coalition Government in early 2021 made this erosion of job security completely lawful.

“Australian workers deserve reliable jobs so they have reliable incomes. Big business has used loopholes in our work laws to make what should be secure jobs into casualised, insecure work. It is a way of driving down wages and putting all the stress onto workers.”

“We need to close these loopholes so workers who are misclassified as casuals and underpaid can gain job security and have jobs they can rely on.

“We also need to empower the Fair Work Commission to sort out a dispute over who is and who isn't a casual quickly – rather than leaving it to expensive, drawn-out litigation, where those with the deepest pockets usually win.”

**ENDS**

**Media:** Gareth Hathway 0499 878 782