

JOHN HOWARD'S PLAN TO CHANGE WORKPLACE LAWS

What Does It Mean For You and Your Community?



Communities Will Suffer

The proposals are an attack on our quality of life and the values communities stand for.

- Pay cuts will put stress on families already struggling to keep their heads above water
- Many more workers will be forced to work longer hours, weekends and nights, often for no extra pay
- Longer hours and more weekend work will mean less volunteers for community events and coaching weekend sports
- Ethnic groups, new migrant workers and low paid women workers, who are already more likely to have low paid jobs, will be worse off
- Young people will be exploited in jobs on poverty rates of pay and can expect future jobs with lower standards
- Workers vulnerable to discrimination will lose protection from unfair dismissal and become more vulnerable

- Families will need to think twice before making commitments like buying a house or having children
- Poverty will increase and the gap between the rich and poor will grow

The New Workplace Law Will

- **Cut pay by making it harder for workers to negotiate together for fair pay rises**
- **Freeze and reduce the minimum wage**
- **Remove basic conditions like penalty rates by making it easier for workers to be forced onto individual contracts and removing protections from awards**
- **Make it much easier to sack workers by removing protection from unfair dismissal for most Australian workers**

Pay Packets Will Be Cut

Pay packets will be cut under new workplace law, because it will be easier to get workers onto individual contracts.

Stretched working families will have less money to pay the mortgage and the bills. And it's not just individual contracts which will reduce pay. Loss of overtime and penalty rates will mean even greater pay cuts.

The Lowest Paid Will Get Less

Worst off will be the lowest paid who depend on the minimum wage of \$12.75. The government says the minimum wage is too high and wants to change the way the minimum wage is set.

Thousands of workers who depend on the minimum wage will have their pay frozen or reduced. Do we want to be a US-style society where the minimum wage is around \$5 an hour?

Extra Pay For Extra Hours Will Go

Many working families depend on overtime and penalty rates for working extra hours. With extra pay for extra hours stripped from awards, workers will be left with what they can negotiate.

"Flexible" Hours Will Be the Norm

The government wants a "flexible" labour market. That means more casual and part time jobs and more workers required to work weekends and very long shifts.

Without award protection, you will only have what you can negotiate with your employer. Increasingly there will be nothing to stop employers requiring workers to work any day of the week or simply employing workers on-call.

Benefits Will Be Lower

Reducing the minimum wage and making it harder for workers to negotiate pay rises will mean a lower standard of living for Australians. That must force down the level of benefits.

Along with the government's welfare to work agenda, that will force people who rely on government allowances and benefits into low paid, dead end casual jobs.

What Can You Do?



Across Australia strong opposition is growing to these proposals.

Australians are asking is this way to reward millions of loyal employees who have helped drive our country's biggest boom ever? Is it fair that working families will face pay cuts while executives continue to receive outrageous pay increases?

If you don't like this attack on the quality of life of Australians, you can oppose the changes.

- **Talk to your family, neighbours and workmates about the proposals and the impact on your community**
- **Contact your MP, let them know your concerns and ask them to represent your community's interests by opposing the changes**
- **Write to the paper, ring radio talkback – speak out about your community's right to decent work and quality of life**
- **Look out for opportunities to support local action opposing this attack on Australian communities**

**For more information go to
www.rightsatwork.com.au**