

Media Release

Mr Tim Pallas MP

Treasurer

Minister for Economic Development

Minister for Industrial Relations



Thursday, 13 May 2021

BACKING WORKERS IN OUR GIG ECONOMY EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

In a national first, the Andrews Labor Government is taking action to protect the rights of gig workers to make sure these Victorians are getting the fair deal they deserve.

Minister for Industrial Relations Tim Pallas today released the Labor Government's response to the Inquiry into the Victorian On-Demand Workforce, including \$5 million in funding support delivered as part of the *Victorian Budget 2021/22*.

Funding will help work begin immediately on implementing the Labor Government's response to the twenty recommendations of the Inquiry's report – including setting principles-based standards to provide fairer conditions for on-demand workers and ensure platforms operate transparently.

That includes early work on options for government support to give platform workers and businesses alike easy access to clear advice around work status, rights and entitlements, while also helping to resolve disputes.

Fair conduct and accountability standards will be developed together with industry and unions to establish shared principles on work status, fair conditions and pay, worker representation and safety.

All too often, gig economy workers have found themselves in a situation that looks and feels like an employment relationship. However, existing mechanisms to determine one's work status – such as courts and tribunals – are often slow, costly and inaccessible.

In a sign that change is on the horizon, we're seeing some progress. Menulog recently announced it will trial an employment model, offering its delivery workers a full suite of employment entitlements.

The Inquiry, and many people who participated in its consultation, called for change to be led at a national level through reforms to national work laws. The Victorian Government fully supports this recommendation.

The Inquiry was commissioned by the Labor Government in 2018 following widespread concerns from workers and the union movement over the wages and conditions offered to gig workers, chaired by former Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James.

The Inquiry found that many workers have an uncertain work status, impacting their superannuation and rights to accident compensation. It also found that advice about work status is often limited and fragmented.

The Government supports, in full or in principle, twenty recommendations made by the Inquiry into the Victorian On-Demand Workforce. More information is available at <https://engage.vic.gov.au/inquiry-on-demand-workforce>

Quotes attributable to Minister for Industrial Relations Tim Pallas

"Every person deserves to feel safe and secure at work, especially gig workers who so many of us relied on throughout the pandemic."

"With a leadership vacuum in Canberra, Victoria will lead the way with more focused support for the on-demand workers and businesses who need it."