

# Victorian Budget 2022/23



## **Tim Pallas MP**

Minister for Industrial Relations

## **Ingrid Stitt MP**

Minister for Workplace Safety

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## **STANDING WITH VICTORIA'S CASUAL AND INSECURE WORKERS**

Victorians who work in casual or other insecure jobs will no longer be forced to choose between a day's pay and looking after their health, thanks to the Andrews Labor Government's *Victorian Sick Pay Guarantee*.

The *Victorian Budget 2022/23* invests \$258.3 million to create fairer conditions and protect workers – including funding Victoria's nation-leading *Sick Pay Guarantee* pilot scheme for eligible casual and contract workers.

Announced in March, the two-year pilot program provides over 150,000 workers with the opportunity to access five days a year of sick or carer's pay at the national minimum wage.

Backed by \$245.6 million in the Budget, the pilot scheme will transform casual and contract work in Victoria by providing eligible workers in insecure work the safety net they need to take time off when they are sick or need to care for loved ones.

The last two years have shown just how difficult the choice between health and a pay packet can be for casual workers. Around one in five casual and contract workers work more than one job to earn a living – many without access to sick and carer's pay.

Occupations covered in the first phase of the pilot include hospitality workers, food trades workers, chefs and kitchen hands, supermarket and supply chain workers, retail and sales assistants, aged and disability care workers, cleaners and security guards.

The Budget also provides \$6 million for Wage Inspectorate Victoria to enforce Victoria's landmark wage theft laws. Last July, Victoria became the first state to introduce wage theft laws, making it a crime to deliberately underpay workers or withhold entitlements.

Education is an important part of the Wage Inspectorate's work for businesses and workers alike. In the past year, it has helped thousands of Victorians understand their obligations and rights through its helpline – 1800 287 287 – while almost 200,000 people have used tools on the Inspectorate's website.

An investment of \$5.6 million goes towards improving conditions for gig economy workers, including planning work for a support service to provide advice on employment status and assist in resolving disputes.

Having commissioned the *Inquiry into the Victorian On-Demand Workforce*, the Government is now getting on with establishing standards to support gig economy workers in consultation with workers, unions, platforms and industry representatives.

Funding of \$1 million will go towards supporting female workers with further research into the gig economy, and to further the work of the Equal Workplaces Advisory Council.

In 2015, Victoria became the first Australian state to develop a Gender Equality Strategy – *Safe and Strong* – with the Equal Workplaces Advisory Council set up as a part of this strategy and charged with promoting gender equality across the public and private sector.

**Quotes attributable to Minister for Industrial Relations Tim Pallas**

*“Every Victorian deserves the security of a decent job with a decent wage – and by investing in decent jobs, we’ll make our state stronger and fairer.”*

*“The gig economy can be a winner for workers, but for too many people – including many women – ‘platform work’ can fail the test of fairness. We’re getting on with improving those conditions in Victoria.”*

**Quotes attributable to Minister for Workplace Safety Ingrid Stitt**

*“The last two years have shown just how hard it can be for casual workers when they’re forced to choose between their health and a day’s pay. We believe they shouldn’t have to make that choice at all.”*

*“We need every worker for the recovery of our economy – the best way to do that is through secure work. Our Australian-first Sick Pay Guarantee will protect more Victorians and give them the support they need when they’re sick or caring for a loved one.”*