



Media Release

Ingrid Stitt MP

Minister for Workplace Safety

Minister for Early Childhood



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GIVING BALLARAT CASUAL WORKERS A SICK PAY GUARANTEE

Casual and contract workers in Ballarat and Western Victoria are being encouraged to sign up to the Andrews Labor Government's Sick Pay Guarantee before flu season takes hold – giving them a safety net if they become sick and miss work or need to care for a loved one.

Minister for Workplace Safety Ingrid Stitt today visited Federation University to encourage more people to sign up to the Sick Pay Guarantee and to meet with casual workers who are already benefitting from the program. More than a third of workers who have registered for the Sick Pay Guarantee are young people aged 18 to 25.

One such eligible worker is Louie, a casual chef in Ballarat who admits he's gone to work sick because it was expected of him. Louie says having access to sick and carer's pay will take the stress out of the job for himself and for his family and make it easier for him to recover from sickness.

The \$245.7 million Victorian Sick Pay Guarantee will help eligible workers who are unwell to stay at home and not feel forced to choose between a day's pay and looking after their health. This Australian-first initiative is expected to keep businesses healthier, safer and more productive.

Workers who sign up to the two-year pilot program can apply for up to 38 hours a year of sick and carer's pay at the national minimum wage, fully funded by the Labor Government. More than 150,000 Victorian workers are expected to benefit from the first phase of the pilot.

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

Healthcare and social assistance are the largest industries in the greater Ballarat area, followed by retail and accommodation and food services – all of which are eligible industries under phase one of the Sick Pay Guarantee.

Casual and contract workers are encouraged to check their eligibility and register now at vic.gov.au/sickpayguarantee or use the Service Victoria app.

Quote attributable to Minister for Workplace Safety Ingrid Stitt

"The Sick Pay Guarantee will provide a safety net for casual and contract workers when they are sick, so they can take the time they need to recover. I encourage all casual workers in the Ballarat area to check their eligibility, register now and don't wait until you're not well."

Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison

"This scheme will protect more Victorians and give them the support they need so they don't have to make the choice between a day's pay and looking after their health."

Quote attributable to Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle

"Many casual workers are put in a difficult situation when they get sick - the choice they make isn't wrong, it's that they have to make it in the first place. We're changing that with the Sick Pay Guarantee by giving them a safety net."

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