

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP

Minister for Industry and Innovation
Minister for Manufacturing Sovereignty
Minister for Employment
Minister for Public Transport



Thursday, 5 January 2023

VICTORIA LEADS NATION ON SICK PAY FOR CASUAL WORKERS

More than 55,000 Victorian casual and contract workers have signed up to the Andrews Labor Government's Sick Pay Guarantee – so they can stay at home when they are sick or need to care for a loved one.

Minister for Employment Ben Carroll today announced the Australian-first program has so far supported more than 80,000 claims from Victorian workers.

Casual and contract workers without sick leave entitlements can access up to 38 hours of sick and carer's pay each year, paid at the national minimum wage.

Retail and sales assistants, hospitality workers and aged and disability care workers currently make up the highest percentage of workers registered for the program.

Casual and contract supermarket and supply chain workers, cleaners, laundry workers, security guards, food trades workers, cooks, bakers, fast food workers and kitchen hands are also eligible for the program.

The Labor Government's \$245.7 million Sick Pay Guarantee is a two-year pilot program aiming to reduce workplace illnesses and injuries and keep businesses safer and more productive.

The pandemic showed us just how many casual and contract workers have been forced to choose between a day's pay or their health. Around one in five casual and contract workers work more than one job to earn a living – many without any access to sick and carer's pay.

The program is delivering sick pay to workers in industries with the highest rates of casual and contract workers whose work hours are often unpredictable and low-paid, and where people facing disadvantage are overrepresented, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women and young people.

Casual and self-employed contract workers are encouraged to check their eligibility and sign up now via the Service Victoria app or at vic.gov.au/sickpayguarantee. Information is available in 19 languages on the Sick Pay Guarantee website.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Employment Ben Carroll

"Workers shouldn't feel forced to go to work sick because they can't afford to miss a day's pay – that's why we're ensuring it's a choice they never have to make through our nation-leading Sick Pay Guarantee."

"This scheme creates more security for Victorian casual and contract workers, supporting them when they're sick or caring for a loved one."

Quote attributable to Zetta Florence Retail Manager Melanie Neal

"We encouraged our team to register for the program so they don't need to worry about taking time off when they're unwell, protecting their fellow team members from illness."

Media contact: Mike Dolan 0474 909 471 | mike.dolan@minstaff.vic.gov.au