

# Media Release

**The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP**

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Minister for Industrial Relations

Minister for Women

Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence

Friday, 31 August, 2018



**DELIVERING  
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

## EQUAL PAY DAY BOOST FOR WORKING PARENTS

The Andrews Labor Government is building stronger career pathways and helping working parents in the public service achieve a better work life balance.

Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins today announced \$278,000 for 'Grace Papers', an online support program which will be implemented in the Victorian Public Sector.

Grace Papers empowers expecting parents to make informed decisions about parental leave and the transition back to work, and is already use in a range of private sector organisations.

Supporting parents to stay in the workforce and progress their careers is essential to close the gender pay gap. This includes negotiating flexible return to work arrangements which encompass both the workplace and home.

Returning to work after parental leave is a critical time for many parents and has a significant impact on their career and retirement. Data shows that many women return to work part-time or not at all after taking parental leave.

Research shows that supporting workers as parents helps businesses retain talented people and is beneficial to their bottom line. Despite this, data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics showed a drop in the use of flexible working arrangements between 2011 and 2017, particularly in the use of part-time work.

Grace Papers' online program supports parents-to-be and their managers navigate pregnancy, parental leave, and return to work.

It helps managers have constructive career planning conversations with staff, including fathers who are primary carers.

The program will complement reforms underway to close the pay gap in the public sector. Role modelling best practice for gender equality in the public service is a key action of Victoria's gender equality strategy, *Safe and Strong*.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Women, Natalie Hutchins

*"This Equal Pay Day, we must acknowledge that supporting workers as parents is critical to closing the gender pay gap and finding a good work-life balance."*

*"Providing flexible work and holistic parenting support directly addresses the causes of the gender pay gap."*

### Quotes attributable to Chair of the Equal Workplaces Advisory Council, Liberty Sanger

*"This is a terrific initiative. I have met and spoken with many employers and employees who are yearning for practical solutions on how to make parental leave work for everybody. This is the program that will fill that gap."*

*"Women shouldn't be suffering a 'motherhood tax' when undertaking caring responsibilities and men need to be better supported to undertake caring responsibilities."*

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