

Paid family and domestic violence leave and protections claim

Each week one woman dies as a result of domestic violence in Australia.

ABS figures show that two thirds of the 400,000 plus people (mostly women) who experience domestic violence each year are workers.

Employment and financial stability is critical to escaping a violent and abusive relationship.

Case study

Rose had an AVO against her abusive ex-partner to keep her and her children safe. She had used up all of her personal leave. When she asked her employer for a morning off work to renew the expiring AVO she was refused and told to wait until her day off. Rose had to choose between the safety of her and her children or her job.

If Rose had paid domestic violence leave, she could remain employed and keep her family safe.

Paid domestic violence leave recognises that workers experiencing domestic violence often have exhausted their personal leave entitlements and can least afford to take unpaid leave at a time when financial security is critical.

Domestic violence is a social issue that must be tackled and taken seriously by all members of our community, including employers.

Already more than 1.6 million employees have access to paid domestic violence leave through union negotiated workplace agreements; the ACTU wants to extend this to all employees.

Unions and employers have negotiated over 500 workplace agreements which provide domestic violence leave, across a wide range of industries including finance, telecommunication, health, education, social and community services, retail, hospitality, transport, manufacturing, energy, construction, public sector and local governments.

The ACTU claim:

- Will directly benefit more than six million workers;
- Provides for 10 days paid domestic violence leave for workers to attend court proceedings, counselling, medical or legal appointments, re-location or safety arrangements and other related activities;
- Provides a further two days unpaid domestic violence leave per occasion if a worker's paid leave is exhausted.

Why do we need paid domestic violence leave and protections at work?

- Domestic violence costs the Australian economy \$16.8 billion each year;
- The financial effect of domestic violence includes negative consequences for long term health and well-being, poverty and homelessness;
- Safe and secure employment is a cost effective preventative measure which sends a strong message of cultural intolerance towards violence against women;
- Providing flexibility around working hours will help make the workplace safer for everyone.