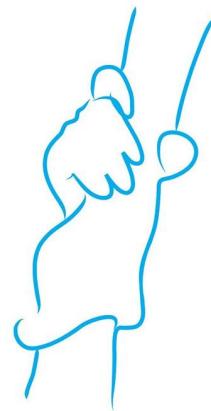


ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK SOUTH AUSTRALIA



29/03/2022

MEDIA RELEASE: People In Poverty Under Enormous Strain – This Budget Offers Them Only Crumbs

The latest federal budget will do very little for the 1 in 6 children and 1 in 7 adults living in poverty, who are facing skyrocketing increases in rents, food, bills, and other basic expenses.

The government's cost-of-living payment will only have the most meagre impact on the finances and health of people living in poverty.

The \$250 once-off payment – equating to a temporary increase of \$5 a week for job-seekers, students, pensioners, sole parents, and others receiving Centrelink payments – will be quickly absorbed, and of little meaningful, long-term benefit.

This is exactly what our members, all on low incomes, and struggling right now to keep a roof over their heads and put food on the table, have told us.

JobSeeker is \$46 a day – slightly over half the Henderson Poverty-Line, of \$88 a day – and is \$34 a day lower than it was during 2020, when the temporary COVID Supplement lifted millions of people on JobSeeker and other Allowances out of poverty.

When it comes to this country's housing affordability emergency, there is no investment in public housing, despite Vinnies estimating that an extra 800,000 public homes are needed.

The government's extension to the 'first-homebuyer' scheme is poorly-targeted, and will do little to halt unprecedented increases to housing costs. In fact, if anything, it will likely exacerbate our housing affordability catastrophe.

Those most struggling with their housing costs – low-income renters, light-years away from being even remotely close to affording a deposit – have once again been forgotten.

Finally, when low-income people are experiencing such intense financial stress, it staggers belief that the provision of free Rapid Antigen Tests for concession-card holders is being ended.

Quick Facts On JobSeeker

(From Anti-Poverty Network SA's July 2021 survey of 282 people on JobSeeker and other payments)

- *Just over half (53.4%) have \$7 a day or less (\$50 a week or less), after paying rent*
- *1 in 5 (19.8%) have between \$7-\$14 a day (\$50-\$100 a week), after paying rent*
- *1 in 4 (23.8%) said they have been skipping at least 7 meals a week*
- *3 in 4 (77.4%) said they have been skipping at least 1 meal a day*
- *2 in 3 (68.5%) said the 2021 cuts to JobSeeker have had either a 'significant' (32.3%) or 'extreme' (36.2%) impact on their ability to cover medicines and specialists*

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