



MEDIA RELEASE – May 9, 2023

For Immediate Release

We Demanded Bread, We Received Crumbs: Federal Labor's Pathetic Budget Betrays People In Poverty

Despite record levels of financial and personal crisis, Labor's second federal budget lifts almost no one out of poverty, while sticking with lavish taxpayer-funded generosity for the big end of town.

Labor's so-called cost-of-living package for job-seekers, students, and sole parents is only one-quarter of what they are spending on the Stage 3 Tax Cuts, which will largely benefit the rich.

Incredibly, Labor has ignored its own experts, by not listening to the Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee, who recommended a "substantial raise" to JobSeeker.

A \$2.86 a day (\$20 a week) raise to JobSeeker is a betrayal to people who have been waiting years for a liveable income. Labor's announcement will leave the payment over \$35 a day (\$250 a week) below the Henderson poverty-line.

Despite skyrocketing rents, the maximum rate of Rent Assistance – which only 40% of people on JobSeeker receive – is only increasing by \$1.68 a day (\$23 a fortnight).

Even sole parents, who will benefit considerably from being eligible for Parenting Payment till their youngest child turns 14 – instead of 8 – will still be well below the poverty-line.

"Labor's budget surplus comes at the expense of Australia's poorest residents. Job-seekers will continue to skip meals, because of Labor's decision to prioritise the tax cuts, concessions, and subsidies enjoyed by property investors, fossil fuel companies, and the super-rich, over the survival of people in poverty", Anti-Poverty Network SA spokesperson Brendan Folwell said.

To organise media interviews with spokespeople, or people on JobSeeker:

Call Duncan Bainbridge on 0434 045 805, David Winderlich on 0401 380 782, or Pas Forgione on 0402 681 352; or e-mail info@apnsa.org.

Further info:

Cost of living

A recent ACOSS Cost Of Living Survey of people on JobSeeker highlighted the extent to which job-seekers are drowning because of skyrocketing living costs:

- More than half (56%) reported paying more than 50% of their income on rent, with 93% reporting 'rental stress' (paying 30% or more of their income in rent)
- 68% have had to eat less, or have had to skip meals
- 81% have had to cut back on meat, fresh fruit, and vegetables
- 54% have had to redirect money from other areas in their budget
- 65% have had to cut their use of heating and cooling

Job-searching

- Lifting JobSeeker will help people look for jobs because they can focus on interviews and applications rather than budgeting to make sure they can survive.
- There is 1 entry-level role, for every 15 jobseekers, and 44 percent of job vacancies require tertiary-level qualifications.
- Over 4 in 10 jobseekers have a diagnosed disability.