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Every Australian must be guaranteed a basic income to assist in public health challenge

Time to guarantee every Australian a basic income

Anglicare Australia is calling for the Federal Government to overhaul its income payments in this time of unprecedented health and economic crisis.

“Every Australian who is currently unemployed or becomes unemployed in this crisis should receive the same assistance from government, and those payments must be much higher than the current poverty trap that is the \$40 a day they get now. We are getting used to seeing “hard headed economics” pitched against social outcomes, but this is one move that will satisfy both” Ms Chambers said. “The rate of Newstart puts everyone living on it as their sole income way below the poverty line – it is widely recognised that this is actually a barrier to people trying to seek work.”

“Last year the ABS reported that Australia now has more employed people without leave entitlements than with. This puts us in an appalling position to deal with the public health crisis facing us. For those people without leave entitlements the decision to go without money - be unable to pay the rent or follow self-isolation directions if necessary will be very real.”

“The saying is, “in crisis, opportunity”. This pandemic is an opportunity for the Federal Government to provide vital economic stimulus and keep Australians healthy and safe, by guaranteeing enough income for those who are most vulnerable, thus protecting the health of everyone. Providing a proper basic income to people doing it the toughest will help them keep roofs over their head, keep them able to pay rent, stay healthy, and spend at their local shops.”

“In the longer term it is clear that we are facing a massive downturn in the economy, not just in Australia but worldwide. The recovery from this will take far longer if people have been forced out of their houses, unable to pay the rent or meet the payments. It is Economics 101 that putting money in the hands of the people with the least keeps that money circulating in the economy. This is stimulus and survival all in one.”

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