

FAIRNESS AT WORK UNDER ATTACK

There is already a long list of attacks on worker rights.

ACC

ACC is not broke – but the scheme is under constant attack. This means less protection for workers. There have been cuts to physiotherapy support, cuts to counseling programs for sexual abuse victims, reduced entitlements for vulnerable workers injured at work such as seasonal workers, requirements to use your holiday pay up before receiving full weekly compensation) and there is also the threat of privatisation.

Four weeks annual leave

We have only just got this entitlement but there are plans for the 4th week to be able to be exchanged for cash. Other changes could reduce holiday payments for some workers.

Appeal against unfair dismissal and unfair treatment at work

This right has been removed for workers in their first 3 months in an enterprise of fewer than 20 workers. Now there are plans to extend this to other workplaces and to weaken appeal rights for all workers against unfair dismissal and unfair treatment at work.

Rest and meal breaks

A new Bill would make the length and timing of rest and meal breaks negotiable.

Cuts in public services

As well as the cuts in public services, there has been an increasing number of layoffs of public service workers, and attempts to limit any pay increases. This hits morale and quality of services.

Tax changes

A 20% increase in GST is on the cards. This will impact badly on those making ends meet on low incomes. Even if there is some compensation for the rise in GST, it is unfair if the tax cuts – once again – benefit those on high incomes while low income workers miss out. This is not the time to be cutting taxes in any case. The government needs revenue to keep the economy moving and to pay off debt. Otherwise they will have to cut public services.

Fair pay for women

Fair pay for women is off the agenda – the Pay Equity Unit which audits the pay gap and makes recommendations has been axed.

Minimum wage

The latest increase in the minimum wage was just 25 cents to take it to \$12.75. Yet the cost of living is rising and we are falling even further behind Australian pay rates. A \$15 minimum wage is needed.

Funding for night classes axed

The Government axed most of the funding for night classes. This deprives people of affordable opportunities outside work hours to lift their skills.



NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL OF TRADE UNIONS
Te Kauae Kaimahi