

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
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VICTORIA CALLS FOR A REAL INCREASE TO MINIMUM WAGES

The Allan Labor Government is calling for a pay rise for workers on the minimum wage – delivering much-needed cost of living relief for these hardworking Victorians.

Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney today joined Victorian workers to unveil the Labor Government's submission to the Fair Work Commission's Annual Wage Review.

Fair Work's Annual wage determination affects the pay of millions of Australians. As part of its submission, the Government is calling for a real wage increase for minimum and award wage workers, who are largely employed in our retail and hospitality sectors.

The Government is also calling on the Commission to modernise apprentice and trainee pay. These Victorians are increasingly older and more likely to be living independently.

As part of its submission, the Government proposes shifting younger apprentices to adult apprentice wages at a set age and adopting a competency-based progression system for fairer, more consistent pay.

The Labor Government recently accepted all recommendations of the Apprenticeship Taskforce Report, which identified apprentice wage increases as a top priority.

The submission also asks the Commission to consider how changes to minimum wages could improve the gender pay gap and wage outcomes for women, younger workers and older workers.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 23 per cent of Australian employees are reliant on minimum award wages – with women making up 60 per cent of these workers, earning on average \$117.40 less per week than men.

Today's submission sits alongside the Albanese Labor Government's submission, which also calls for a real wage increase for Australian workers.

That's in stark contrast to Peter Dutton's Liberals – who have never once advocated for a wage increase for Victorian workers.

In fact, the Liberal Party have admitted that low wages have always been a "deliberate design feature" of their economic policy. Last year, their Federal Shadow Finance Minister even claimed a real wage increase would be "the worst thing for Australians".

Confirming a cut to Victoria's infrastructure funding earlier this week, the Leader of the Opposition has already earmarked the thousands of jobs at risk under his watch.

The choice at this election couldn't be clearer: a pay increase for the workers who need it most – or under the Liberals, working longer for less.

Quote attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney

"Apprenticeships have changed – and their wages should too. In a nationwide skills shortage, we need to make it easier for Victorians to finish their apprenticeship – not harder."

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Quote attributable to Minister for Industrial Relations Jaclyn Symes

“With inflation heading in the right direction – it’s time for minimum and award wage earners to get a real increase.”