

The Greens (WA) 2020 policy

Workplace Relations

Work should be rewarding, enriching and the basis of our families', communities' and state's welfare and prosperity.

Workplace laws must be fair and protect all workers from exploitation, unjust treatment and unsafe conditions. Industrial laws should facilitate industrial harmony and uphold the rights of workers to organise collectively to negotiate fair pay and conditions.

All workers have the right to a safe and healthy workplace, and the expectation that they will return home from work safe and well. A strong and fair worker's compensation system is necessary to assist workers when they experience workplace illness or injury. Compensation must assist workers to return to work and ensure that they do not suffer disadvantage as a result of workplace illness or injury.

Aims

The Greens (WA) want:

- fair and equitable statutory minimum conditions of employment that reflect the standards of a just society
- a strong, independent and accessible industrial relations tribunal
- an industrial relations system that provides for the timely and efficient resolution of disputes
- workplaces that are free from discrimination
- safe workplaces free from occupational and health hazards, where practical, and those identified well managed
- employers to be legally responsible for workplace death and injury
- a workers' compensation system that is fair, balanced and efficient
- to prohibit the practice of misusing contractor, casual and temporary appointments to fill positions that could be filled by fixed-term contracts, and to prohibit the practice of persistent fixed-term rolling contracts
- to encourage flexible work arrangements which provide for a better work/home life balance within the framework of permanent employment
- a strong effective union movement capable of negotiating constructively for workers' rights and conditions
- to ensure that all share the economic gains arising from the evolving nature of work and employment relationships
- all workers, including casual¹ and gig² workers, must be afforded fundamental workplace rights and entitlements

Measures

The Greens (WA) will initiate and support legislation and actions that:

- ensure a comprehensive award system that provides a genuine safety net of wages and conditions and the genuine right to bargain collectively

- promote workplaces with democratic management and flexible and innovative work practices that can achieve win-win situations for employers and employees
- maintain and enhance a strong independent Industrial Relations Commission to ensure impartial resolution of workplace issues, and with an enhanced capacity to award compensation over a broad range of industrial issues
- provide ongoing state funded education campaigns to inform employees of their rights at work and to ensure employers are aware of their obligations as an employer about appropriate wage and award coverage, occupational health and safety, equal opportunity principles, workers compensation and sound human resource principles
- provide a comprehensive statutory framework protecting the right to collectively bargain, the role of unions to negotiate on behalf of workers and the right of workers to take industrial action
- phase out any form of statutory individual employment agreements in favour of collective agreements
- ensure statutory protection for workers categorised as subcontractors
- amend legislation to clearly define contractor, casual, temporary, fixed term and part time work with a view to preventing abuse of these non-permanent appointments
- reduce the casualisation of the workforce. The industrial relations framework and government policies should promote full employment and job security
- enable contractor, casual, and temporary workers to accrue sick, annual and long service leave across different employers
- require that casual workers are offered permanent work after 3 months
- ensure adequate statutory minimum conditions of employment
- establish equal remuneration for work of equal value
- implement measures to close the gender pay gap (see also The Greens (WA) [Women](#) policy)
- promote pay equity in all sectors of the workforce to ensure that all workers aged 18 and over receive 100% of the adult rate of pay specified in the relevant award
- ensure stronger penalties, including criminal, for deliberate underpayment of wages and wage theft
- ensure that sex workers have the same rights and respect as any other workers, and sex work organisations are consulted on changes to regulations (see also The Greens (WA) Sex Work policy)
- ensure unions have right of entry to workplaces
- establish minimum employment standards for trainees and apprentices and promote incentives and requirements where appropriate for employers to engage and train apprentices and trainees (see also The Greens (WA) [Education](#) policy)
- develop rural and regional employment development programs and strategies in conjunction with rural and regional communities
- ensure reasonable access to common law entitlements, including an evaluation of the impact of impairment assessments, and a revision of common law gateways
- provide support for employers who adopt best practice in workplace health and safety

- ensure a workers' compensation system that is paid for by reasonable of employer premiums which take into account employer performance in providing a safe place of work and return to work programs for workers
- provide support for employers who put in place appropriate injury management policies and procedures
- increase employment protection and retraining entitlements for injured workers to facilitate their return to work
- ensure that culpable employers are held criminally responsible for the death of their workers by creating an offence of Industrial Manslaughter
- implement the recommendations of the Senate Select Committee on the Future of Work and Workers, including the Greens' proposals for strengthening the social safety net and considering the merits of a Guaranteed Liveable Income

Glossary

1. **Casual workers** are employees without a firm agreement between employer and employee as to the duration of employment or the hours or days worked. While casual workers are legally entitled to a casual pay loading and limited leave conditions, they are often subject to irregular, discontinuous or intermittent work patterns, with associated uncertainty and unpredictability.
2. **Gig workers** include those workers who can set their own work hours and who use their own tools and equipment (ie independent contractors), as well as some small business owners. Gig workers may not have any leave or super entitlements, and are not entitled to minimum wages. They may work for multiple people or firms.

(See also the Australian Greens [Employment and Workplace Relations](#) policy)

Workplace Relations policy ratified by The Greens (WA) in 2020

The Greens (WA) workplace relations spokesperson is [Alison Xamon MLC](#)