

NO POVERTY IN A WEALTHY COUNTRY

A liveable income guaranteed for all

Too many people in this wealthy country are living in poverty. While the rich get richer, it's harder for people to find a secure well paid job and harder for small businesses to keep their doors open. Governments are meant to serve the people, yet millions of Australians aren't able to afford basic living costs. People are facing hunger, eviction, and illness, while billionaires get handouts and big corporations pay no tax.

In a wealthy country like Australia, everyone should be living above the poverty line.

We saw during the height of the pandemic that governments can end poverty and ensure a strong social safety net for when people need it. We have an income support system that should be universal, but harsh and punitive measures have made it inaccessible to those who need it most. The Liberals - and now Labor too - have given up on fairness. The Greens will introduce a liveable income guarantee, ensuring support is there for everyone who needs it. We will abolish punitive elements from our income support system so that everyone who needs income can get it, raise rates above the poverty line to \$88 a day, and return provision of employment services back to the Commonwealth. This sits side by side with our plans to build and create affordable homes, increase wages, and reduce the costs of essential services by making them free.

THE GREENS WILL:

- ▲ **Introduce a liveable income guarantee**
- ▲ **Raise income support payment rates above the poverty line to \$88 a day**
- ▲ **Abolish punitive measures from our social security system, so it is genuinely and easily available to those who need it**

PAYING FOR OUR PLAN

By making billionaires and big corporations pay their fair share of tax and winding back handouts to big polluters, we can build a better life for all of us.

1 in 3 big corporations pays no tax and many big corporations and billionaires send their profits offshore tax free.

The Greens will tax billionaires with a new 'billionaires tax', require big corporations making excessive profits to pay a 'corporate super-profits tax' and axe billions of dollars in handouts to the coal, oil and gas giants that are driving the climate crisis.

When big corporations and billionaires pay their fair share, everyone can have the services they need for a better life.

LIVEABLE INCOME GUARANTEE

Our current social security system does not support those that need it. Income inequality is out of control and the current rates of income support payments do not come close to covering the basic essentials.

In a wealthy country like ours, no-one should live in poverty.

The Greens will ensure everybody has the support they need to live truly independent lives and support themselves while studying, caring and looking for work.

We will ensure everyone is supported with a liveable income guarantee.

To ensure that no-one is living in poverty we need to:

- raise the rate of all payments above the poverty line;

- ensure that payments are universally available to everyone that needs them and that no-one falls through the cracks;
- Guarantee access to essential social services ensuring they're available in the places people need them.

RAISE THE RATE TO \$88 A DAY

All across Australia people are having to make impossible choices to figure out how to live on \$45 a day. Young people are barely scraping by on youth allowance, older people are increasingly becoming homeless, and it's harder than ever to access the Disability Support Pension.

The Greens will raise the rate of income support payments above the poverty line, currently set at \$88 a day, to ensure no one lives in poverty.

Who will benefit?

Young people (youth allowance)

A 21 year old, single, with no dependents, who needs to live away from home will be up to \$347 a week better off under the Greens plan.

Jobseekers

People looking for work will be up to \$290 a week better off under the Greens plan.

Disabled people

People receiving disability support pension will be up to \$172 a week better off under the Greens plan.

Age Pensioners

Age pensioners will be up to \$122 per week better off under the Greens plan.

Parenting Payment Single

A single parent, with a 6 year old child will be \$170 a week better off under the Greens plan.

MAKE PAYMENTS UNIVERSALLY AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE WHO NEEDS THEM

Harsh rules prevent many people from getting the support they need. Many tertiary students, for example, are deemed to be dependent on the parents, denying them the ability to live an independent, secure life.

Other measures like mutual obligations and the Targeted Compliance Framework also stop people getting the support they need, while costing the public money to implement. Mutual obligations and conditionality don't help people

to find paid work and have no place in our social security system.

The guiding principle of the 'liveable income guarantee' is that no-one will fall through the cracks and find themselves without an income above the poverty line. The first big step towards this will be to remove measures like the parental income and asset test for those not living at home (those living at home would still be subject to it) and lower the age of eligibility of Jobseeker to 18, ensuring support is universally available to everyone who needs it. The Greens will also remove all punitive measures from our social security system including, mutual obligations and the targeted compliance framework, the Cashless Debit Card, Basics Card, Work for the Dole, ParentsNext, and exploitative youth employment programs like Youth Jobs PaTH. These requirements serve no purpose except to punish people living in poverty. Abolishing these programs will help generate the savings that can go to the services we need.

GUARANTEED ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Access to essential services - such as social services, disability services, mental health, childcare and aged care - is the backbone of a fair society.

Yet not everyone is able to access the essential services they need to fully participate in society. Funding and staffing pressures have resulted in significant unmet demand for community services, especially in regional and remote areas.

The Greens have plans to bring dental and mental health into Medicare, build 1 million affordable homes and remove costs for education.

We need to ensure essential services are available to everyone regardless of their income or where they live.

We will work to identify and map the services and social infrastructure needed to meet the changing and diverse needs of communities.

We will invest \$20 million over the forward estimates to establish a Commonwealth taskforce to work across the public service and the states to put in place community service guarantees.

The Greens will invest \$4 billion to bridge immediate gaps in community service provision, determined in partnership with the community sector.

SUPPORTIVE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Our current employment services system, jobactive, is failing unemployed people. The for-profit sector continues to reap billions of dollars for implementing ineffective and punitive employment programs.

The Greens will return the delivery of employment services back to the Commonwealth over 5 years to ensure all unemployed people get the support they need to enter or re-enter the workforce.

Under our plan, employment services will be responsive, flexible and tailored to an individual's circumstances.

We will ensure not-for-profit providers are funded to provide specialist and intensive wrap-around services for people needing extra support. These services will be available for anyone facing significant barriers to finding work including disabled people, young people, older people, and refugees.

ROYAL COMMISSION INTO ROBODEBT

Robodebt has caused hurt and harm to hundreds of thousands of people. The Greens will invest \$60 million to establish a Royal Commission into Robodebt to uncover who knew what, when and for how long, and to look into all debts. We need to examine the full social and economic costs of this policy failure, so we can make sure failures on this scale don't happen again.

HOW THE GREENS HAVE BEEN FIGHTING FOR YOU

The Greens remain as the only strong voice calling for a fairer system. We stand by our record on opposing punitive measures and supporting increased payments etc.

In the last parliament, it was the Greens who:

- ▲ Ensured that Youth Allowance recipients received the Covid supplement

- ▲ Were the only party to oppose Cashless Debit Card every time and successfully prevented the trial from being made permanent
- ▲ Introduced a bill to increase income support payments above the poverty line

FIND ALL OUR POLICIES:

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