

Greens NSW

Work and Industrial Relations Policy



Revised May 2014

Principles

The Greens NSW believe that:

1. Work must be safe, socially useful and personally rewarding - these criteria are just as important as profitability and efficiency.
2. All workers are entitled to fair minimum wages, secure employment, strong safety standards, to be free from discrimination, workplace intimidation and bullying, and to have access to training and development.
3. There must be equal pay for equal work.
4. Everyone has the right to engage in paid employment if they choose.
5. Work must provide people with enough money to meet their needs, keep up with increases in the cost of living, and have a reasonable lifestyle.
6. The workplace and employment standards promoted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) should be endorsed and implemented.
7. Migrant and temporary workers are entitled to the same workplace rights as other workers.
8. Non-traditional forms of work such as volunteer, community and unpaid domestic work should be recognised and valued no less than paid work.
9. People must have the option to spend less time in paid employment and more time working in voluntary, community and creative activities such as caring for children, self-fulfilment, and providing services to the community through social, environmental and cultural projects.
10. As technology and more efficient work practices reduce the need for specific types of labour, it is necessary for our society to examine ways of sharing the

existing amount of paid work on a more equitable basis and explore new opportunities for work and community ventures.

11. Workers are entitled to democratic participation in deciding the future direction and development of the organisation for which they work.
12. Everyone has the right to be a member of a union that is free, independent, democratic and effective and which enforces and defends members' rights at work.
13. The right to strike, to collectively bargain, to withhold labour, and to organise are each essential to achieving a sustainable, equitable and democratic future.
14. Increased profits must not come at the expense of the wages and conditions of workers or the environment.
15. Effective processes of conciliation and arbitration before an independent tribunal free from executive intervention are necessary elements in any fair and effective industrial relations system.
16. Fair and comprehensive workers compensation rights are essential to protect workers.
17. Industrial manslaughter is a crime.
18. All workers are entitled as a minimum to long service leave after 10 years of work, regardless of change of workplace, industry or employment status.

Aims

The Greens NSW will work towards:

19. Mandated shorter standard working hours without loss of pay, the elimination of imposed and unrewarded overtime, a fairer sharing of paid work, and a reversal of current trends towards increased unpaid overtime.
20. Ensuring workplaces are free from discrimination and intimidation and that employers take all reasonable steps to ensure workplaces are accessible to all potential employees.
21. Closing loopholes in anti-discrimination legislation, including those related to gender, age, disability, marital status, sexuality, race, ethnicity or religion, that create barriers to equal access to work and equal pay.
22. Eliminating the gender pay gap.

23. A more equitable distribution of corporate income between management and employees.
24. Reform of the income support system to ensure a guaranteed adequate income for all, including simplification of pensions and allowances into a universal guaranteed adequate income (GAI) scheme.
25. Increased public holidays to bring New South Wales into line with other states, and a re-composition of existing holidays to reflect Australia's independent and culturally diverse identity.
26. Requiring all employers to inform new and existing employees that they are entitled to join a union, and of the unions responsible for the sector.
27. Confirming the right of unions to undertake industrial action to promote and protect the economic, social and environmental rights of their members as well as those of the community and third parties.
28. Legislating for strong right of entry powers for unions to protect workplace safety and workplace rights.
29. Supporting the protection of unions and workers from common law actions.
30. Legislating to protect the right of trade unionists to have their union dues deducted from their wages directly.
31. Ensuring that relevant training and skills development is made available to all workers, including apprentices, trainees, part-time and casual employees, without loss of pay or cost to workers.
32. Increasing casual loadings to seek to reverse the trend in casual labour, and the enforceable ability for casual employees to convert to permanent part-time work after three months of continuous employment.
33. Improving minimum employment standards for trainees and apprentices.
34. Legislating to stop the exploitation of contracted staff, out-workers, casual workers and those employed through labour hire.
35. Providing resources to grassroots and democratic organisations of the unemployed to give them an effective voice in society and enable the establishment of a union, or unions, of the unemployed.
36. Ensuring, if people are provided with work as part of a welfare scheme, that such work must be meaningful, non-coercive and paid at minimum award wages with industry standard conditions of employment.
37. Providing that voluntary, community and creative activities attract relevant work experience credits for the purpose of career progression and advancement.

38. Introducing a State Low Income Card so that low income workers not receiving welfare assistance are able to access state government concessions.
39. Ensuring a strong and viable public sector, with the state government and local councils setting the standard for best practice wages and conditions across New South Wales.
40. Repealing the unfair and arbitrary public sector pay-freeze legislation and returning wage setting powers to the Industrial Relations Commission.
41. Ensuring, where it is not possible or practical for the public sector to provide a public service or public work, that successful tenderers for the provision of these works or services provide their workers with wages and conditions that are at least the equivalent of public sector workers.
42. Ensuring that any for-profit organisations that receive state funding for the provision of services or infrastructure provide their workers with wages and conditions that are at least the equivalent of public sector workers.
43. Restoring the autonomy NSW Industrial Relations Commission as the independent umpire in industrial disputes.
44. Legislating for a mandatory minimum of five weeks paid annual leave for all workers covered by the state's industrial relations system.
45. Ensuring a minimum 26 weeks paid parental leave in addition to any minimum federal payments.
46. Implementing a workers compensation scheme that promotes the recovery of workers from workplace injuries through the payment of adequate and timely benefits including medical support and provides return-to-work pathways where appropriate, including training and work adjustment support.
47. Providing protection for workers injured at work through a universal workers compensation scheme that ensures fair compensation for any ongoing loss of income, permanent impairment, and pain and suffering together with lifetime cover for reasonable and necessary medical expenses.
48. Extending workers compensation benefits to cover workers injured on a journey to or from work.
49. Reinstating workers compensation benefits lost by injured workers as a result of legislative reforms introduced by the state government in 2012.
50. Restoring injured workers' lump sum benefits under the Workers Compensation Act based on a statutory formula that considers the individual worker's actual loss and damage, including psychiatric loss and damage, as assessed by an independent tribunal member with the benefit of independent medical opinions.

51. Ensuring that payments from the workers compensation statutory fund are made and administered by a public authority in the public interest and not by private insurers acting as independent agents.
52. Ensuring that Injured workers have a right to have their claims for compensation heard before an independent tribunal, to be legally represented, and to be awarded compensation that allows them to live with dignity and in comfort.
53. Providing one consistent and simple mechanism for determining fault-based damages including access to damages based on the Civil Liability Act.
54. Establishing and maintaining industry trust funds for the comprehensive protection of all workers' entitlements in the event that their employer becomes insolvent.