

MAKE WORK FAIR

WINNING FAIR PAY AGREEMENTS



Fair Pay Agreements could be the best change for workers in decades. Fair Pay Agreements will be a new form of collective bargaining, covering not just one employer, but a whole industry. Workers will be able to negotiate one set of minimum industry-wide standards that can be improved on through single-employer or multi-employer bargaining.

Fair Pay Agreements could give workers a real say in their industries. They could slow the 'race to the bottom' that sees employers competing for contracts by keeping wages and conditions down. They could bring better democracy to our workplaces. It's about getting a fair go.

The Government has written legislation to make Fair Pay Agreements law and it will be going through the parliamentary process soon. Our job is to win public support for the policy and to educate our friends, family, workmates, and the public about how transformative decent Fair Pay Agreement legislation would be for our working lives.

It's about more than pay packets

Different workplaces have different needs, from adequate training, to job security, to health and safety. These needs can be addressed in Fair Pay Agreements so workers secure fairness and equity for the work they do.

One good example is the practice of welfare checks in the security industry. While some major security employers periodically check to ensure their staff are safe (a condition usually negotiated by unions), many smaller firms do not. A safety requirement in a Fair Pay Agreement will ensure a level playing field where all guards are kept safe in their potentially high-risk roles.



Advantages for working people

Fair pay and conditions make a huge difference in the lives of workers, their families, and whole communities. Having an industry-wide bargaining process gives vulnerable workers better access to fair negotiating processes.

Instead of individuals or groups of workers negotiating with a single employer, often delivering poverty wages, workers in an industry will be able to address sector-wide issues. This impacts on the future of work for all New Zealanders.

Advantages for everyone

Many businesses report that they would like to pay higher wages, but they cannot afford to because other companies will undercut them on wages and provide cheaper goods and services as a result. This can be described as a 'race to the bottom' – an incentive to pay the lowest wages possible. Reducing poverty and inequality in New Zealand depends on regulation that prevents this.

Minimum industry-wide standards delivered through Fair Pay Agreements take competition around wages for the lowest paid, out of the equation. It means that decent employers who want to do right by their staff are not undercut by exploitative employers. It means that business competition can be based on the best delivery of services, quality performance, or the best products, instead of the lowest possible wages.

What's next?

2022 is an incredibly important year for Fair Pay Agreements. Early in the year the government will create the legislation and put it to the house for the first vote. After that vote, the public will be able to make their submissions on the law and, if they want, appear at a parliamentary select committee to speak to them.

It is unlikely that the legislation will be perfect. And there will be some powerful interests who will try to make it worse for working people.

Because of this, working people will need to stay at the front of the campaign to make sure the legislation is as strong as possible, and wins the support of the wider public. To do this we need to make the case for why working people deserve better. In our workplaces, in the media, and in parliament.

That means telling our stories about our work about what it means to our lives and our families. It means showing really clearly why we need this law and how it will be good for so many New Zealanders.

This legislation will help hundreds of thousands of working people. It's up to us to make sure that it is strong.

In the meantime, here's what we know:

- Inequality is endemic in our society and must be addressed.
- Low wages and exploitative work conditions are a contributor to inequality.
- Workers have better wages and conditions when they are in unions and have collective agreements.
- Most workers in low wage industries are not in unions or on collective agreements.
- Industry-wide bargaining will improve wages and conditions for low paid workers.
- Industry-wide bargaining will create an even playing field for employers taking wages out of competition.
- The development of Fair Pay Agreements will be one of the best opportunities to transform New Zealand's low paid economy and the lives of workers, families and communities currently suffering from inequality and deprivation.

Take action to support Fair Pay Agreements at makeworkfair.nz



“I’m hoping that Fair Pay Agreements can get back the good pay and jobs we baby boomers had. Especially for the young ones.”

**Syd
Trade Unionist**

makeworkfair.nz

