

Workers are much less likely to raise concerns at work if their employment is insecure.

Secure Work - Fixed Term



See Fair Work Act s. 333E - 333L for more information

This means that experiences of gender-based violence, sexual harassment and discrimination go unreported because workers on fixed-term contracts and casuals fear they won't get shifts or will get the sack.

Workers are ready for change.

Secure and safe employment is essential to help women feel empowered to take action when something goes wrong at work, without fear they're going to lose their jobs!

I am employed on a fixed-term contract. I don't feel safe to raise concerns because my job is insecure.

You are not alone.

The *Workplaces for Women (WFW) Project* heard from hundreds of women and gender diverse people working in male dominated industries.

Workers told us that they did not feel safe raising concerns with their employer because they are engaged in casual or fixed-term work. **This isn't ok.**

Workers should always feel supported and empowered to raise concerns with their employer, particularly health and safety issues.

I have been employed on rolling fixed-term contracts. Are there supposed to be limits?

Yes. From 6 December 2023 new laws have been introduced which limit how long a worker can be engaged on a fixed-term contract.

Now, workers cannot be engaged:

- on a single fixed-term contract which lasts for more than 2 years; or
- On a contract which is extended more than once.

What happens if my fixed-term contract is extended or is for more than 2 years?

If you are employed on a fixed-term contract outside one of these new conditions, your contract is still valid, except the end date will have no effect.

This means you will become an ongoing worker and your employment will be secure.



Are there any exceptions?

There are some exceptions. Workers can still be engaged on a fixed-term contract if you are:

- In a government funded position
- Contracted to perform a specialised skill
- Engaged for a training program
- Undertaking essential work during peak demand
- Responding to an emergency or during a temporary absence of another worker
- Paid above the high income threshold (\$183,100 1 July 2025); or
- In a board/governance position that is time limited.

Is this discrimination? I think I should be ongoing. I asked my employer questions and now I feel like I've been treated differently ever since.

Limits on fixed-term contracts and the conversion to ongoing employment is a protected workplace right.

Your employer must not do anything to prevent you from accessing it. This includes things like:

- Terminating your employment for a short period and then rehiring you
- Changing some of your work to suggest it is a different contract
- Engaging a different worker on the same fixed-term conditions.

This kind of treatment is called “adverse action” and it is against the law.

If you feel you have been targeted or treated adversely, and you can't find a solution at the workplace level, you have the option to file an application with the Fair Work Commission.

The Commission has new powers to hear and make orders about disputes about fixed-term contracts and casual employment.

The law was changed for a reason. If you feel that you are eligible to be ongoing, let your employer know. You have nothing to lose, and the law is on your side.

Reach out to your union for advice and support.

This project received grant funding from the Australian Government.



“The industry is contract based and often the perpetrators are at the top.”

- Apprentice Electrician

**Workplaces
FOR Women**

EQUALITY RESOURCES



Australian Government



weareunion.org.au/w4w

Join us!

Women make up 48% of the Australian workforce, but much fewer join male dominated industries. The Workplaces for Women Project is promoting and advancing equality in gender segregated industries and is helping to create workplaces where women are safe, respected, included and equal.



Rights at work
resources here

“Because the more of us that get into the workplace, the better it will be for us all. Workplaces and cultures will only change if we can get more women to help us change.”

- Trades Assistant

“I just think women thrive in this industry and we're bloody good at it!”

- Bus Operator