

End policy-induced poverty

Research by Professor Anne Summers AO shows that as many as 60 per cent of single mothers are single because they fled violence.

Whitlam-era reforms for single mothers

In 1973, the Whitlam government introduced the Supporting Mothers Benefit, providing all single mothers the same welfare that widowed mothers received.

Howard's 'Welfare to Work' legacy

Howard's reforms required single parents to get a job once their youngest child turned eight – pushing them to the lower payment that is now JobSeeker.

It also introduced mutual obligations for single parents when their youngest child turned six, requiring 30 hours per fortnight of approved activity to be exempt from job applications.

Eliminating punitive mandatory programs will give single mothers time to focus on raising their children. It will also save significant administrative costs.

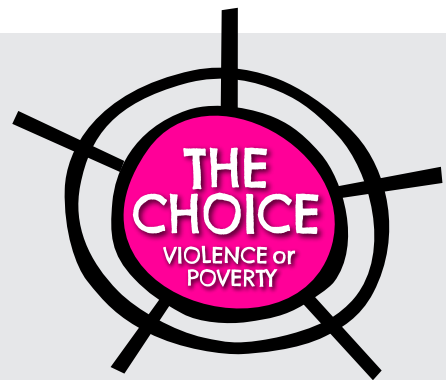
Policy extended by Labor governments

In 2023, single mothers are less supported than they were 50 years ago. They often cannot pay their rent, or their phone bills or register their cars. They go without meals.

The government may not be able to stop domestic violence, but it could stop poverty.

Every year, thousands of women in Australia are forced to make the choice between remaining in an abusive relationship, or leaving and facing a 50 per cent chance of living in poverty due to current government policies.

Help to change the lives of thousands of Australian women in the May 2023 budget



We call on the Albanese government to restore single mothers to the dignity and financial security they deserve by:

- Restoring eligibility for the Parenting Payment Single (PPS) allowance to all single parents until their youngest child reaches 16 or is still in high school
- Abolishing the Mutual Obligations requirements for parents of school-aged children (currently imposed once the youngest child turns six)
- Increasing PPS to equal the Age Pension single rate
- Indexing and benchmarking the PPS the same as pensions

These recommendations are endorsed by the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce, Unions NSW, the National Council of Single Mothers & their Children and the National Council of Women of Australia.

Your stories are one of the most persuasive tools to effect change.

Tell the government decision makers listed here of your own experiences.

Expenditure Review Committee:

The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister
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The Hon. Dr. Jim Chalmers MP
Treasurer
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Senator the Hon. Katy Gallagher
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Minister for the Public Service
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The Hon. Stephen Jones MP
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Minister for Financial Services
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The Hon. Richard Marles MP
Deputy Prime Minister
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Senator the Hon. Penny Wong
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The Hon. Mark Butler MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care
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The Hon. Catherine King MP
Minister for Infrastructure,
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and Local Government
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The Hon. Michelle Rowland MP
Minister for Communications
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Other contacts:

The Hon. Amanda Rishworth MP
Minister for Social Services
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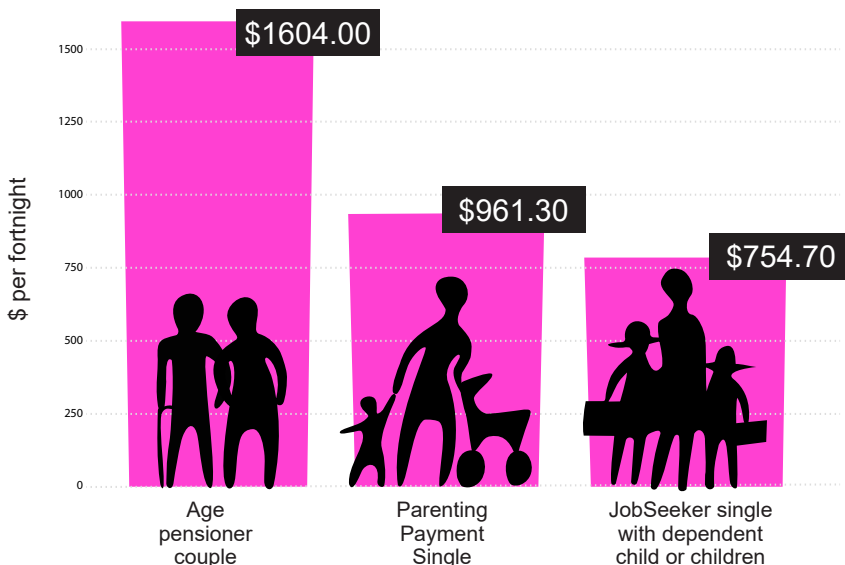
Senator Jacqui Lambie
senator.lambie@aph.gov.au

Senator David Pocock
senator.david.pocock@aph.gov.au

Government payments - base rates*

*Recipients may also be eligible for supplementary payments to cover energy, pharmaceuticals and the cost of children.

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Messages to include:

- Condemn the policy-induced choice between violence and poverty that hundreds of thousands of women face each year
- Restore single mothers and their children to the level of income support they were provided 50 years ago by the Whitlam government
- Give single mothers and their children a better chance by ending mutual obligations and keeping parents on PPS while their children are in school



Compiled by UTS Centre for Social Justice & Inclusion from *The Choice: violence or poverty (2022)* by Prof. Anne Summers AO, and information provided by the Council of Single Mothers and their Children and Micah Projects.