

**Submission
No 287**

INQUIRY INTO NSW WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME

Organisation: Katoomba Neighbourhood Centre
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workerscompinquiry - Workers Comp. Inquiry

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Date: 5/18/2012 9:17 AM
Subject: Workers Comp. Inquiry

I am writing to express my concern about the changes that the NSW Government is proposing to cut the entitlements of those who are injured at work.

Workers and their families need to be adequately compensated for any injuries that do occur in the workplace. I oppose the following proposed changes.

WORKERS COMPENSATION WILL NO LONGER COVERS TRAVEL TO AND FROM WORK

If you are injured on your way to or from work you are currently covered by Workers Compensation. The government proposes to remove this provision. Claims for compensation arising from travel to or from work account for only 2.6% of all claims

REDUCTION IN WEEKLY PAYMENTS FOR INJURED WORKERS

Under current NSW law most injured workers can receive their normal pay for six months then drop to \$432.50 per week until they are able to return to work. The government now proposes that after 13 weeks this rate of pay should be reduced to \$432.50 after just 13 weeks.

FOR MOST INJURED WORKERS YOUR PAYMENTS WILL STOP AFTER 2½ YEARS

The Government plans to stop weekly income for the majority of injured workers after two and a half years. Under the current laws most injured workers already have their weekly pay cut to \$432.50 before tax. That's below the poverty line. An injured worker who unreasonably refuses to return to work can already have their payments terminated.

YOUR MEDICAL TREATMENT WILL STOP AFTER 2½ YEARS

The Government intends to place a cap on most injured workers receiving medical treatment and claiming ongoing medical expenses beyond two and a half years. Many injured workers are working, but need follow-up operations or medical treatment for many years. It's already the case that all medical expenses must be certified as necessary. To cut injured workers off from medical support is unjust, heartless and will put a huge strain on families.

COMPENSATION FOR PAIN AND SUFFERING WILL END

Under the current system, workers who suffer horrific injuries such as burns, loss of limbs or eyesight are able to claim for pain and suffering. Under the proposed changes these rights will be removed.

IT WILL BE SIGNIFICANTLY HARDER TO PROVE EMPLOYER NEGLIGENCE

The Government intends to make it harder to prove employer negligence in lump sum claims, reducing the ability of seriously injured workers to make provision for their future.

THE RIGHTS OF DECEASED WORKERS' PARTNERS WILL BE CUT

Under the current system, if you have lost a loved one through a workplace accident and you are diagnosed as suffering from nervous shock, you are able to claim compensation. The proposed changes will remove this right.

Miriam Bevis
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