

ACT LABOR

**JOB PROTECTION**

**COMMITMENT**



## **ACT Labor's Job Protection Commitment**

ACT Labor is the only party with a plan to reinvigorate our economy and protect local jobs.

ACT Labor stands for fair, safe, secure work for all Canberrans, and will keep delivering strong work health and safety laws and employment conditions.

We know that a secure, well-paid job is about more than putting food on the table or paying the rent or mortgage. It provides meaning, structure, connection and opportunity in people's lives.

We recognise the essential work ACT public servants undertake on behalf of their community – from health, education and municipal services, to policy development – keeping Canberra competitive and innovative. We will continue to properly support high quality public services by protecting jobs and growing our workforce as our city grows.

### **Local job protection and creation**

Labor's message to Canberrans is simple: our focus is, and will be to protect and create local, secure jobs.

COVID-19 has caused a global health and economic crisis.

In these uncertain times, creating jobs will be our number one economic priority over the next four years. We have a comprehensive plan to grow Canberra's employment base to more than 250,000 local jobs by 2025.

We have released a package of renewable energy, emission reducing environmental policies that will create over 2,000 local jobs.

Combined with our significant infrastructure pipeline of large projects – like Light Rail Stage 2, the Canberra Hospital expansion, a new CIT campus in Woden, and new schools – right through to screwdriver ready minor works like footpaths, we are protecting jobs in the construction sector. Our plan includes a \$4 billion investment program to build the infrastructure our growing city needs.

We have stepped in to provide financial support for businesses to keep on staff in our hospitality, tourism and events sectors.

When the Commonwealth excluded certain people from Jobkeeper, like casual workers and visa holders, we gave 500 vulnerable people the opportunity to be directly employed under our Jobs for Canberrans program. Now they're ACT Government employees helping this city rebuild and recover.

We will hire over 400 more health professionals to staff the hospital expansion and new walk-in health centres, and over 400 teachers to staff our new schools being built across Canberra, over the next term.



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Whether you work in health, education, construction, hospitality, tourism, retail, transport, community services, manufacturing, or the public sector – ACT Labor knows that our job is to help protect your job.

### What we have achieved this term

- ACT Labor has protected and created local jobs, driving our unemployment rate to the lowest in the country and keeping it low, despite the global recession.
- We met our 2016 public service jobs guarantee, maintaining the size of the public service to meet the needs of our growing community.
- Maintained ACTPS officials' real wages through good faith enterprise bargaining.
- Retained scheduled wage increases for all non-executive public servants through the COVID-19 pandemic, unlike other states and the Commonwealth.
- Kept key government functions like CIT, ACTION, ICON Water and the Land Titles Office in public hands, while other jurisdictions are selling off their assets and cutting jobs.
- Hired hundreds of new ACT Public Service workers during the COVID-19 pandemic under the Jobs for Canberrans scheme to undertake essential cleaning, maintenance, phone line, environmental and administrative work.
- Directly employed hard working school cleaners to get them off dodgy contracts and into secure, stable and WHS-compliant employment.
- Created the Insecure Work Taskforce, which is moving long-term contracted public servants into secure, stable, permanent employment.
- ACT Labor demonstrated how much we value public school teachers by reaching a new enterprise agreement that has ACT public school teachers as the highest paid in the nation. We also improved teacher safety by working with the ACT Branch of the Australian Education Union to develop and implement a nation-leading occupational violence policy and management plan.
- We introduced the Secure Local Jobs Code, which requires all bidders for ACT Government work to ensure fair pay and conditions for their workers.
- We created a new independent Office of the Work Health and Safety Commissioner to provide even stronger and more transparent enforcement of ACT work health and safety laws, with 12 new full-time equivalent staff.
- We introduced a Labour Hire Licensing Scheme to protect workers in labour hire arrangements, by ensuring licensed companies are transparent and meet their workplace obligations.
- We funded an advice line for young workers to ensure they can access employment information and support.
- We also established the Future Skills for Future Jobs grants program to provide funding for innovative projects that increase Australian apprenticeships; the Mature Workers Grants program to support new services designed to address barriers experienced by mature workers seeking to upskill or re-skill; and the Women in Trades grants program to fund activities that support women embarking on trade apprenticeships.



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## What we will do

Labor's election commitments are focussed on local job protection and creation, including:

- Creating over 2,000 enviro jobs through policies such as: establishing a \$150 million zero-interest loan scheme to install solar panels, batteries and heat pumps; delivering Australia's largest storage battery system (250MW); Purchasing and servicing a fleet of electric buses; and establishing an organic waste pick up and reuse scheme.
- Rolling out a \$4 billion infrastructure pipeline, including building Light Rail Stage 2, the Canberra Hospital Expansion, the CIT Woden campus, and new schools in growth areas.
- Ensuring Canberra's training system is ready to deliver the skills of the future and is contributing effectively to the broader Canberra economy through a four-year VET investment strategy.
- Boosting funding for subsidised training to maintain and enhance training levels in the COVID-19 recovery. We will continue to build industry partnerships and reach out to businesses to ensure training remains current. We will also ensure that Australian apprentices and trainees have the right support to complete their training.
- ACT Labor will work with industry to increase the number of apprentices working on government projects, especially our larger projects. This policy will help ensure that our construction workforce has the pipeline of skills they need from both young workers and those looking to reskill.

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will protect jobs in the ACT public sector by:

- Growing the size of the ACT Public Service to deliver the essential hospital, walk-in centre, school, municipal, and community safety services the growing Canberra community needs.
- Not selling public assets or outsourcing services like ACTION or ICON Water.
- Keeping the CIT in public hands, with at least 75 per cent of total VET funding to be provided to CIT as the primary provider of Canberra's vocational education and training.
- We will bring forward legislation to prevent the outsourcing and privatisation of public sector jobs, in line with our commitment to protect the public service. Under Labor, ACT public servants will continue to maintain real wages.
- We will support ACT public servants in their right to join their union through the ACTPS Union Encouragement Policy, and work collaboratively with unions to ensure workers are protected and supported across the ACTPS.
- We will support the Work Health and Safety Commissioner to keep Canberrans safe, with resources and new and improved safety legislation.
- We will strengthen the ACT Public Service's commitment to fair, secure employment by expanding the role of the Insecure Work Taskforce and continuing to identify opportunities to make jobs permanent.



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- We will continue to fight any Commonwealth efforts to “decentralise” the Australian Public Service, because we know the APS and ACTPS work collaboratively and constructively together when both based in this city.

We will constructively work with unions and worker representatives, to:

- Ensure workers’ rights are upheld and strengthened across the ACT.
- Support the Work Health and Safety Commissioner to keep Canberrans safe, with resources and new and improved safety legislation.
- Enhance and expand the ACT’s Portable Long Service Leave Scheme
- Introduce transmission of business clauses in ACT Government contracts, in negotiation with unions, to ensure that jobs outside the public sector are as secure as possible.
- Establish a public register of infringement notice offences, so workers and the Canberra community are aware of employers who have breached their work health and safety obligations.
- Support better mental health and wellbeing for workers by developing a stronger regulatory response to psychosocial workplace hazards.
- Ensure our work health and safety regulations respond to the impacts and hazards of climate change.
- Introduce stronger workplace regulations to protect tradespeople who are exposed to silica dust.
- Strengthen protections for working people by establishing industrial manslaughter as an offence under our work health and safety legislation.
- Ensure the ACT’s legislation and work safety enforcement capabilities can identify and respond to modern day slavery.
- Work with early childhood educators and their union to develop professional standards and work with Education Council to explore a new national workforce strategy to attract, support and retain a high-quality workforce.



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