

Charities welcome proposed JobKeeper 15% recognition

CCA is pleased the government has recognised the invaluable work being undertaken by 1.3 million Australian charity workers in proposed changes to the JobKeeper Payment going to Parliament this week.

The Treasurer Josh Frydenberg has tonight announced that; ***“the JobKeeper legislation we are introducing into Parliament on Wednesday will see charities registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC) eligible for JobKeeper Payment if they have a turnover decline of 15% or more. This will apply to all registered charities, including those with a turnover of more the \$1 billion.”***

CCA Chair Rev Tim Costello said; ***“this is very welcome news for charities across Australia. Many are already doing it tough, having to stand down staff, close down services. We are very pleased that the government has recognised the special role charities play across Australia. This acknowledgement through concessional access to the JobKeeper Payment means more charities will be able to keep supporting their communities. We are going to need as many charities as possible surviving through this crisis and helping rebuild Australian communities into the future, and these measures will help deliver that outcome.”***

CCA CEO David Crosbie said; ***“thousands of staff have lost jobs in the charities sector over the past month. With the downturn in fundraising, closure of events and meetings, closure of volunteer run shops and other services, loss of fees from training, education and other programs, many charities are struggling to stay open. Some charities had been able to move some of their services on-line, but in many cases this has not been possible. The loss of volunteers has translated into higher costs at a time when many front line charities are experiencing higher need. Being able to access the JobKeeper Payment after demonstrating a 15% loss of turnover will be the difference for thousands of charities and their staff.”***

CCA had previously written to the Prime Minister, the Treasurer, and to Assistant Minister for Charities Zed Seselja, calling for greater recognition and inclusion of the charities sector in government support packages. When the first government stimulus package was announced, business was able to access support, but not charities. Since then, the government has extended access to all business support programs to charities. This latest proposal to allow charities access to JobKeeper Payment at a lower threshold indicates the government is aware of the critical role played by charities in holding communities together, particularly in a crisis.

Many groups across the charities sector including ACOSS, Catholic Social Services, and the Australian Council for International Development have also written to the Prime Minister and Treasurer about the need for charities to receive targeted support.

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