

## South Australians back equal pay for community sector workers

**On the final day of Fair Work Australia’s hearing of the landmark Equal Pay Case, new polling indicates South Australians overwhelmingly support equal pay for community sector workers.**

“South Australians are raising the flag for community sector workers with 89% of South Australians indicating that these workers are underpaid and should be better rewarded for the work they do. The challenge is now on for the South Australian Government to show their commitment to full funding of equal pay for community sector workers” said Ross Womersley, SACOSS Executive Director.

“All demographics indicate support for equal pay. 32% think that community service workers should be paid more and 59% think they should be paid about the same as workers doing similar jobs in other industries” Ross Womersley said. “Community sector employees work with the most vulnerable people in Australia in some of the most challenging environments. It’s time they are recognised with adequate remuneration”.

“Today the full bench of Fair Work Australia will retire to make the landmark decision about equal pay for community sector workers. If the claim is successful, hundreds of thousands of these workers could see a pay rise of 30 per cent. Federal and state governments will be squarely faced with the decision of how to fund this pay rise, given they are largely responsible for funding the work of the sector”, Mr Womersley said.

The complex debate for a wage increase in the female dominated community service sector has occupied the full bench of Fair Work Australia since March last year. More than 150 exhibits, 30 submissions, 20 site visits and 10 days of hearings constitute the canon of arguments for and against the pay increase for community sector workers. The equal pay case being run by the Australian Services Union is setting out to show that undervaluation of the community sector is due to the industry being female dominated. The ASU is seeking a remedy for the undervaluation, in the form of an order for increased pay rates.

*Q. People who work in community services such as disability, aged care, family support, mental health and counselling are predominantly female and tend to be paid less than workers doing similar jobs in other industries.*

*Do you think that workers in community services should be paid more, less or about the same as workers doing similar jobs in other industries?*

<b>National</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Vote Labor</b>	<b>Vote Lib/Nat</b>	<b>Vote Greens</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Age 18-34</b>	<b>Aged 35-54</b>	<b>Aged 55+</b>
<b>Paid more</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Paid about the same</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Paid less</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>2%</b>

SA results	
Paid more	23%
Paid about the same	66%
Paid less	5%

Don't know	6%
N=	90

Poll conducted by Essential Media Communications

**For further comment, please contact  
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