



Just Work – how the political parties currently view Australian workplaces



Political Party and key policy document	Minimum Pay	Individual Contracts or Awards	Access to Unions and Industrial Action	Unfair Dismissals (UFD)	Independent Industrial Commission to resolve disputes	Standards and Conditions Safety Net
Liberal Party of Australia <i>“Workchoices”</i>	Set by the Fair Pay Commission (FPC). No time period set for pay reviews by FPC – their discretion. New “fairness test” for AWA’s does not cover pay/wages.	Australian Workplace Agreements (AWA’s) to replace all awards and collective agreements. New “fairness test” to ensure workers don’t sign away conditions without compensation. Does not apply to people already on AWA’s.	Limit role of unions in workplace. Union access outlawed as provision in collective agreements. Outlaws most strikes – except in bargaining period. Secret ballots to authorize strikes. Limits on duration and reasons for strike	Abolished for all employees in workplaces of 100 people or less. No UFD if operational reasons given for dismissal. Redundancy pay not available in workplaces of less than 15 people. Can still challenge termination where decision	Fair Pay Commission. No power to settle disputes between workers and employers. FOC sets pay classification scales. Industry wide campaigns to address matters like gender pay equity illegal. Move to uniform, national IR system.	Workchoices removes the basic rights to: * overtime pay, * hours of work * allowances * shift work * annual leave loading * redundancy pay Guarantees only 5 standards: * 38 hour week *4 weeks annual leave *52 weeks unpaid parental leave *10 days personal leave New “fairness test” protects low paid workers from signing away better conditions without proper compensation.



			action.	is based on discrimination – ie. sex, race, disability etc.		
Australian Labor Party <i>“Forward with Fairness”</i>	Fair Work Australia to set minimum wage. Annual minimum wage hearings. Submissions on fair pay setting welcomed by all Australians.	Collective enterprise bargaining agreements. Outlaws AWA’s (those currently on them may choose to see them to conclusion) Awards to include 10 industry specific safety net provisions, in addition to 10 minimum legislated guaranteed conditions.	Freedom to choose whether to belong to a union or not. No discrimination if choose either way. Values union contribution to making workplaces fair. Secret ballots to determine level of support for collective bargaining and strike action. Fair Work Australia to ensure “good faith bargaining” and to approve agreements within 7 days.	Right to sue for UFD: * 15 or more people, must work 6 mths before can claim. * Less than 15 people, must work 12 months before can claim. Fair Work Australia to assist in resolving dispute – regional and suburban offices. Small Business – fair dismissal code.	AIRC and FPC abolished. Creation of “Fair Work Australia” – a one stop shop for workplace matters including understanding pay and entitlements, UFDs, setting minimum pay standards and resolving industrial disputes. Move to uniform, national IR system for private sector, but state governments to control own employees.	10 legislated national employment standards: * 38 hour week * Up to 24 mths unpaid parental leave. * ability to request flexible work for parents * 4 weeks annual leave. * 10 days personal, carers and compassionate leave * Community service leave, ie emergency services * Guaranteed public holidays or penalty pay if required to work. * Information about rights and conditions to be provided to new employees * Entitlement to fair notice and redundancy pay according to years of service. * nationally consistent long service leave provisions. TBA.



			Strike action permitted during good faith collective bargaining. Not available outside this period, ie political rallies outside agreement.			In addition, enterprise agreements will include industry specific safety nets.
Australian Greens <i>“Employment and Industrial Relations Policy”</i>	Legislated minimum standard of pay. National pay equity standard – removing gender pay gap.	Industry wide awards and collective agreements primary means of regulating employment. Abolish AWA’s.	Repeal laws prohibiting union activity. Legislate to protect the right to strike. Prohibit exploitation of foreign workers. No secret ballots.	Protections against discrimination in workplace. Restore UFDs.	Abolish all Workchoices created agencies. State and National IR system	Legislate minimum standards – shorter standard working hours, reverse trend towards unpaid overtime, national parental leave scheme, five weeks annual leave. Full employment and job security. Protection against forced casualisation
Australian Democrats <i>“Workplace</i>	Fair and balanced minimum wage	Individual Contracts and Collective Bargaining.	Secret ballots. Freedom of Association.	Low cost, no-legal UFD process.	National regulator to absorb 3 separate Workchoices	Genuine Safety Net enshrined in legislation and collective or individual agreements.



<i>Relations Policy</i>			Value legitimate role of unions.		created entities. Restore independent AIRC.	Reasonable working hours. Fairer balance between work and family. Flexibility.
Family First <i>“Industry, Business and Enterprise and the workplace”</i>	Promotes a just wage, but values freedom of businesses and markets.	Combination of Awards enterprise bargaining and AWA’s.	Values legitimate role of trade unions.	UFD’s outlawed in workplaces with 20 people or less. Uhappy about “operational reasons” as basis for decision to terminate.	Support for historic IR system.	Legislated minimum entitlements. Concern for work-family balance – flexibility, paid family leave and maternity leave, child care and support for grandparents caring for kids.

