



## JOBKEEPER, JOBSEEKER DECISIONS A TEST FOR MORRISON GOVERNMENT

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The Morrison Government's decision on the future of the Jobkeeper and Jobseeker payments must deliver an outcome that adequately supports those who are vulnerable, Catholic Social Services Australia says.

Ursula Stephens, the CEO of the organisation representing dozens of Catholic social service agencies that support hundreds of thousands of Australians each year, says next week's economic update gives the Government the chance to reset one of the country's key safety nets.

"With some 1.4 million people on Jobseeker, the latest lockdowns in Victoria are yet another blow to our economic recovery and for those hoping to get back into work," Dr Stephens said.

"This pandemic has rocked our national confidence. We need our government leaders to do what is necessary to get us through this crisis and, in doing so, give us hope there are better times ahead.

"Australians now more than ever need reassurance that if they get sick they will be cared for, if they lose their jobs the welfare system will keep them afloat."

Dr Stephens said during a time of crisis, many people are looking for a sense of certainty.

"The Commonwealth Government has a unique responsibility – and a duty – to provide that certainty," she said.

Catholic Social Services Australia is calling on the Morrison Government to commit to:

- Leaving the Jobseeker payments at their current levels for at least a further 12 months, during which time it could examine the rate of welfare payments through an independent body. Recent findings from the Australian Study of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) showed that 62 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that our welfare payments system should be set by a body independent of Government.
- Continue the Jobkeeper payment beyond September, to give businesses and their employees some certainty during this economic downturn.
- Australia becoming a full-employment economy, so that everyone who wants a job can get a job.

"The Treasurer's economic update on July 23 will be critical to giving Australians hope during our greatest financial challenge since the Great Depression," Dr Stephens concluded.

***Catholic Social Services Australia is a national network of agencies working in 650 communities, supporting over 500,000 people and employing 15,000 staff and volunteers.***

**Media contact: Gavin Abraham | 0408 825 788**

**The national network of Catholic social services**