

Media Release

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NSW GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO MATCH WAGE RISES AND FUND FRONTLINE SERVICES

Peak social services body, NCOSS, welcomes the Fair Work Commission's 8.6 percent increase to the minimum wage and 5.75 percent increase in the award minimum wage and now is calling on the NSW Government to make sure it is implemented fairly.

Specifically NCOSS is calling for assurance that the NSW Government will fund the wage increase as well as the 0.5 per cent increase in the superannuation guarantee levy from July 2023.

"We're calling on the NSW Government to step up to the plate and protect services for the most vulnerable in the state at the time they are needed most," said NCOSS Acting CEO, Ben McAlpine.

"The NSW social service sector goes above and beyond to support vulnerable individuals, families and communities and we absolutely welcome better pay for sector's female dominated workforce which, for too long, has been undervalued.

"Only adequate indexation from the NSW Government will help the sector to meet the costs of industrial obligations, ensure fair pay for workers and ensure continued service provision."

Mr McAlpine said the sector was still reeling after a series of rolling crises which have driven an exodus of staff to industries which offer better pay and conditions, and where the work is much less demanding. Meanwhile, frontline services are struggling to meet escalating demand.

"Without additional funding to cover wage increases – and, with inflation sitting at well above 6 per cent, the other rising costs of doing business – these services will be struggling to keep the doors open," he said.

"We need the NSW Government to provide the additional necessary funding for providers of services to people who are homeless, households who cannot afford to put food on the table, women and children fleeing violent situations, and people struggling with serious health issues.

"The historic failure of previous governments to pass on adequate indexation has meant that, in real terms, funding for frontline services has been eroded over time. We are calling on NSW Treasurer, the Hon Daniel Mookhey, to make sure that this does not continue under his watch.

"With inflation at record highs, we need indexation to keep pace with the real costs of providing services, so the sector doesn't continue to go backwards.

"Our sector needs to know the NSW Government values its work and is committed to ensuring people looking for support are able to access the services they need."

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