

EMMA MCBRIDE MP
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR DOBELL
YASMIN CATLEY MP
SHADOW MINISTER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE AND DIGITAL
DAVID HARRIS MP
SHADOW MINISTER FOR THE CENTRAL COAST
DAVID MEHAN MP
MEMBER FOR THE ENTRANCE
LIESL TESCH MP
MEMBER FOR GOSFORD

Young workers on the Central Coast ignored

Central Coast Labor MP's and the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association, Newcastle Branch (SDA) have called for more support for Central Coast workers aged 16-39 who are being ignored by the NSW Government.

Many young people work in essential services like supermarkets, restaurants and retail and have been forgotten in the pandemic response by not having access to test and isolate payments or vaccinations. Many of these young people cannot choose to 'work from home.'

NSW Labor called for the 'test and isolate' payment to ensure workers including casuals and those without appropriate leave benefits were able to isolate and stop the potential further spread of COVID. But given the virus has moved well beyond Sydney and into regional and rural NSW, the payment should apply to every single resident of NSW who is eligible regardless of location.

With exposure sites increasing on the Coast and growing Covid cases being locally identified, young workers are being left to financially fend for themselves. They are more than likely employed on a casual basis and are being asked to give up their shifts without the compensation that is offered to their counterparts in Greater Sydney.

The Central Coast Labor MP's are calling on the NSW Government to remember the young workers on the Coast. Extend the test and isolate payments to Regional NSW and prioritize vaccines for young workers and for those work who can't work from home.

Emma McBride, Federal Member for Dobell said "Frontline workers on the Central Coast should be a priority when it comes to vaccines. Whether it's aged care workers, disability workers, early childcare staff and teachers or retail workers, they all deserve to be protected.

"They have frequent contact with some of the most vulnerable people in our community, and we cannot risk further transmission of this virus on the Coast. They need to be given priority access to vaccines now."

Yasmin Catley, Member for Swansea “I have been contacted by young people frustrated they cannot access the vaccine despite the daily lectures from the Premier to get vaccinated.

“These young workers feel they have been abandoned by the Berejiklian Government and who can blame them. It is time the Premier expanded vaccine access on the Coast and gave our young workers the same financial security afforded to those in greater Sydney.”

David Harris, Member for Wyong said “Our young people, particularly casual workers, have been working on the frontline helping to keep open retail and take away businesses since the pandemic began and these workers should be properly supported by government not penalised for following the rules.

“They should be prioritized for vaccination as they risk being infected everyday they go to work.”

David Mehan said “We expect them to keep working but they have no priority for vaccination or paid leave if they need to test and isolate.

“Parents and young workers want to get a vaccine and be protected in their workplace but the NSW Government has ignored them.”

Liesl Tesch, Member for Gosford said “Whilst the Premier is on the TV encouraging young people to get vaccines, the reality on the Central Coast is very different, as vaccine access is unreliable.

“I commend the fantastic work of young people who are on the front line, and encourage them to continue to persevere in their application to be vaccinated.

“Young people playing very important roles as income earners in their families, especially as we are seeing so many small businesses closed across the Central Coast.”

Barbara Nebart, Secretary of the Newcastle and Northern Branch of the SDA, the trade union representing retail and fast food workers said “Young essential retail workers, working in fast food and big supermarkets are on the front line of this pandemic, ensuring our community gets the food and supplies they need.

“The Government should return the favour by ensuring these workers get the vaccine’s they need, when they need them and have financial support if they are required to test and isolate.”

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DATE: 31 August 2021

MEDIA CONTACTS

MCBRIDE:

CATLEY: 0488 059 927

HARRIS: 0429 935 114

MEHAN: 0419 973 858

TESCH: 0413 730 136
NEBART: 0409 453 881