

Cuts to social security a heavy blow to migrants

Tuesday's Federal Budget delivered a heavy blow to migrants and permanent residents, increasing the time they must wait to be eligible for social security safety net payments by four years.

This is despite the fact that the Budget relies heavily on migrants for much of the heavy lifting of economic recovery, in terms of population and economic growth, as well as for meeting critical skills shortages.

In the Budget the Morrison Government has announced that new Permanent Residents will have to wait four years to be eligible for social security safety net payments. These include:

- Family Tax Benefit B (previous wait – 0 years)
- Family Tax Benefit A (previous wait – 1 year)
- Carer allowance (previous wait – 1 year)
- Carer payment (previous wait – 2 years)
- Parental Leave Pay/Dad and Partner Pay (previous wait – 2 years)

FECCA CEO Mohammad Al-Khafaji said treating permanent residents fairly benefits all Australians.

“Permanent residents are our future Australians and should be made to feel welcome, secure and accepted. These measures are deeply unfair and hurtful to future citizens.” Mr Al-Khafaji said.

“Supporting migrants to have the best possible settlement outcomes is in the best interests of migrants, their children, and the broader community who will benefit from their contributions to our society and economy.

“With population growth central to our economic recovery, it also doesn't make sense to put in place new disincentives for migrants to choose Australia as their future home, or for permanent residents in Australia to have children.

“What many people may not know is the pathway from migration to permanent residency often exceeds four years. With these changes, the Federal Government will force many migrant families to wait eight years or more before becoming eligible for support.

“This is unacceptable and will hurt families. The unfortunate reality is that many families will defer having children or may not have children at all.

“The increases in wait times for eligibility for the carer allowance and carer payment also does not recognise the value of the substantial care and support provided by carer visa holders to their sponsoring relative.

“FECCA calls on Labor and the crossbench to oppose these changes to support growth, successful settlement and families.”

FECCA is the national peak body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

For media inquiries contact: 0401 125 370 or media@fecca.org.au