

To whom it may concern,
I would like it to be known in parliament of the issues I have had with 'centrelink's new system'. I am a sole parent bringing up two boys age 12 and 7 years. I also work full time. It all started last year when this new working contracts came about. I have been working full time for at least the past 5 years. I was told that I had to attend an appointment to sign a working agreement. In which I changed to agree with my RDO. The sytem between the time I had made and the appointment , changed it back to the original date or that was what I was told by centrelink. Then I was told that I had to attend or I would be cut off. In which I felt was ridiculous as I had to then take a day off work to sign this piece of paper, inwhich I kicked up about. In my view it is hard enough trying to bring up 2 boys and work full time without being harrassed by centrelink. (employers will get wind of this and it will make it harder for sole parents to get work if they think that time off will be needed to go to centrelink). Finally after I don't know how many phone calls to centrelink (at least 6-8) I was told they would send it out for me to sign. In which I did, however I was sent a 30 hour agreement to sign not knowing what I know now. That the legislation was only for 15 hours and that was all I legally had to sign for. As I work full time I figured that it didn't matter anyway. Then they wanted me to put in a form fortnightly to report my earnings, and of course I can't get to a centrelink office during work hours so after much stress and more phone calls it was finally agreed that I could report my earning as I always had via self service or the phone in the case it was finally agreed that I could report my earning as I always had via self service or the phone in the case of Holidays as it had to entered differently.

UNTIL I took holidays. What a debarkle.

I took Holidays over the christmas period and when I went to call through my earnings it took about 3/4 of an hour on the phone by the time the break down of public hols, time worked and hols taken had been worked out. Later that afternoon I was called back to be told that I would have to go into a centrelink office to report my earnings as I had not woked the agreed 30 hours. At this I was livid, that I had to take time out of my time with my kids to go to centrelink and wait in a que for god knows how long. Then of course having the choice of being cut off or going I went. WHY ARE WE BING DISADVANTAGED FOR DOING THE RIGHT THING. I WORK FULL TIME AND HAVE HAD NOTHING BUT A STUFF AROUND AND EXTRA STRESS.

I reported this to the complaints area of centrelink with only a letter back saying it had been recorded.

Then I was cut off, reinstated with a reem of paper in different letters being sent out. I rang about some and was told to throw them out as the sytem automatically generates them. Then my childcare was taken from the top rate to the bottom which meant another visit to the office. Something needs to be done!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I have been told that this will happen every time I take Holidays and not work the 30 hours. I feel disadvantaged when I take holidays and I don't see any member of parliament having to go into a centrelink office during their holidays, They make me feel like I am not entitled to a break.

yours sincerely

Kerry Leak