

WHO CARES FOR CARERS IN THE 2022 FEDERAL ELECTION?



Building on our [2022 Federal Election Platform](#), Carers Australia has [surveyed](#) the Liberal National Coalition, Labor Party and the Australian Greens seeking to understand the level of financial commitment and other support each party will provide carers in the next term of government. This document is taken directly from and provides an overview of the parties' responses to the survey.

	Liberal National Coalition	Australian Labor Party	Australian Greens
Economic and Financial Security for Carers	<p>“The Morrison Government remains committed to the important role that carers play in our community looking after their family member or friend who may have a disability, medical condition, mental illness or frailty due to their age ... The Morrison Government supports carers through Carer Gateway – a dedicated carer support program and the single biggest reform to carer services in more than a decade.”</p>	<p>“The ALP National Platform states: Those who care for sick and older relatives and people with disability and mental illness deserve acknowledgement and support for the job they do and their selfless contribution to Australia. Labor believes that carers should have rights, choices, opportunities and capabilities to participate in economic, social and community life. Labor recognises that carers take on enormous responsibilities often at both a personal and a financial cost. Many carers experience substantial financial hardship, reduced education and employment prospects, lower levels of health and greater levels of anxiety and depression. Carers need effective employment conditions including transition to work when caring responsibilities change. Labor will consult with carers, their representative peak bodies and service providers to identify and overcome impediments, including inflexible working arrangements, to providing financial and practical support for carers in our community. The Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment should remain an essential part of our social safety net for people who need it. Labor will ensure these payments are properly indexed so they keep pace with the cost and standard of living.”</p>	<p>“As set out in the Australian Greens principles, we believe that: The value of domestic, care and volunteer work in households and communities must be recognised and included in the calculation of national economic and well-being measures”, and that “Carers play an important part in supporting people with differing abilities and have a vital role in helping them to achieve a higher quality of life. Carers must be well supported in their caring role to ensure their health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The Greens plan for a liveable income guarantee includes raising the rate of Carer’s Payment to \$88 a day, meaning Carer Payment recipients will be up to \$122 per week better off under the framework. Our proposal will also increase the income free area to \$300 per fortnight, enabling recipients to earn more before their payment is reduced.”</p>



Carers Australia uses the term ‘carer(s)’ as defined by the [Carer Recognition Act 2010](#) (Cth). The term should not be used loosely and without context to describe a paid care worker, volunteer, foster carer, or a family member or friend who is not a carer. A carer is a family member or friend that cares for someone who has a disability, chronic or life-limiting illness, is frail aged, has a mental illness, alcohol or other drug related condition. Informal carers are distinct from paid support workers who are colloquially also called carers but are under a contract of employment with remuneration all and other benefits of employment. Conversely, family and friend carers perform their caring duties without remuneration.

	Liberal National Coalition	Australian Labor Party	Australian Greens
Economic and Financial Security for Carers			
<i>If YOUR PARTY is elected to form the federal government on 21 May 2022, will you commit to undertake a broad review of economic and financial support for carers through the Productivity Commission?</i>	No specific response to this question.	“Labor welcomed the Productivity Commission inquiry into the economic and social impacts of allowing informal carers to take extended unpaid leave from their work to care for older people who are frail and living at home, announced in February 2022, as a first step in addressing the barriers to carers more fully participating in economic, social and community life. An Albanese Labor Government will consider expanding the terms of reference of this review to better address these barriers.”	“The Australian Greens support the Productivity Commission undertaking a broad review of economic and financial support for carers, including modelling the costs and benefits of providing retirement solutions, reviewing the Carer Payment and Carer Allowance, and conducting a cost of caring and living analysis.”
Strengthen carer recognition and accountability within Government			
<i>The most recent National Carers Strategy lapsed in 2014. If YOUR PARTY is elected to form the federal government on 21 May 2022, will you commit to development of a new cross portfolio National Carers Strategy, and if so in what timeframe?</i>	No specific response to this question.	“Labor recognises that carers have been too often overlooked in policy development and not treated as a vulnerable group in their own right. An Albanese Labor Government will develop a new National Carers Strategy, in consultation with carers, peak bodies and service providers, during its first term of government.”	“The Greens have consistently advocated for better support for carers, including calling for stronger financial support and a consistent approach across government. Regardless of who forms government in the next Parliament, we will continue to advocate for consistent support, including stronger financial support and an approach that supports carers navigating complex systems.”
<i>Will YOUR PARTY commit to strengthening the Carer Recognition Act 2010 (Cth) into a rights-based Act, where the current Act is not binding on any other Act?</i>	No specific response to this question.	“An Albanese Labor Government will review the operation of the Carer Recognition Act and will consolidate coordination of carer policy across government.”	“We have consistently advocated for stronger protection for human rights in law, including for carers, and will continue to do so.”

	Liberal National Coalition	Australian Labor Party	Australian Greens
Strengthen carer recognition and accountability within Government (cont.)			
<i>Will YOUR PARTY appoint a designated Minister for Carers to lead a whole of government approach to carer recognition, inclusion and support? Will you commit to establishing a designated Office for Carers, including the appointment of a Commissioner for Carers, reporting to the Minister for Carers?</i>	No specific response to this question.	As above.	As above.
Equitable access to respite			
<i>Does YOUR PARTY have a specific policy on respite services for carers across different sectors and including community-based options? If so, please outline details of the policy and services available.</i>	No specific response to this question. Note: "The Morrison Government has also continued to increase respite for carers, with funding increasing from \$44 million in 2018-19 to \$78 million in 2023-24."	"Labor recognises that access to appropriate forms of respite which reflect the needs of both carers and the people they care for is an essential part of enabling carers to more fully participate in economic, social and community life. Labor's approach to improving access to respite care will be informed by the lived experience of carers and an evidence based approach.	"The Greens will continue to advocate that the Government supports equitable access to respite. We will commission a review of current respite provision, including a demand and needs analysis for respite among carers, and journey mapping to better understand the needs and resources available."
<i>Will YOUR PARTY commit to supporting equitable access to respite, regardless of relationship to funding or portfolio?</i>	No specific response to this question.	Labor's commitment to properly resource important programs in health, aged care and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will help to relieve pressure on carers so that they can have a greater opportunity to participate in economic, social and community life."	"As part of our proposal to provide a billion dollars in funding annually to ensure access to essential services, we will invest funding in respite services, to increase respite offerings in community settings and within the home."
<i>Will YOUR PARTY commit to undertake data collection improvements across settings and sectors to capture respite utilisation and satisfaction of outside of residential type facilities?</i>	No specific response to this question.		"We will also advocate that the Government improve data collection across settings and sectors to understand respite offering, utilisation and satisfaction outside of residential type facilities."

	Liberal National Coalition	Australian Labor Party	Australian Greens
Advocacy and navigation support for carers			
<i>Will YOUR PARTY commit to fund Carers Australia and the National Carer Network to provide rights-based independent and confidential advocacy services to carers?</i>	No specific response to this question.	“Labor recognises that under the Liberal Government carers have had to take on a much greater role in negotiating and managing care for their loved ones, particularly as a result of the inadequate resourcing of the NDIS, Aged Care, Centrelink and the Carer Gateway and the adversarial mindset the Government has imposed on agencies that should be focussed on helping vulnerable Australians. An Albanese Labor Government will defend and fix the NDIS and increase support for disability advocacy. An Albanese Labor Government will improve care standards and accountability in aged care, including capping home care administration and management fees and introducing clear monthly reporting of fees charged and services delivered. An Albanese Labor Government will keep Centrelink’s network of shopfronts open and ensure they are adequately staffed. Labor will consider the need for greater support for carers to undertake these negotiation and management roles in the light of these reforms and in considering the review of the operation of the Carer Gateway. A Labor Government will give Australia’s 2.65 million carers the recognition and support they deserve.”	“The Australian Greens will continue to advocate for the increase support that carers need as the hidden ‘care coordinators’, to enable them to complete their significant roles in coordinating, negotiating and managing care across complex sectors and systems. That must start with funding of \$25m over three years to fund Carers Australia and the National Carer Network to work with government and provide independent and confidential advocacy services to carers.”

To view all of Carers Australia’s election advocacy, [click here](#). For questions or feedback about this document, please email policy@carersaustralia.com.au.