

**SUBMISSION TO INQUIRY INTO FAIR WORK AMENDMENT (RIGHT TO WORK
FROM HOME) BILL 2025**

Committee Secretary

Education and Employment Legislation Committee Department of the Senate

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I thank the committee for the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry.

At first glance most people would acknowledge that employees should, wherever possible, have the legal right to work from home. The advantages are obvious, including travel time saved and stress alleviation.

Data Security

However, there is an issue which must be addressed especially with respect to Public Service employees. Most Government workplaces require staff to wear Identity badges; similarly, visitors must be authorised and must wear appropriate badges.

Confidential information is stored in Government buildings and frequently accessed by authorised staff. **The Government has a responsibility to ensure that information is protected and only accessed by authorised staff.**

Working From Home

No doubt the claim can be made that staff 'working from home' will be warned to ensure that work must be done in an area where confidential data is not accessible by unauthorised persons. However, it is simply not possible to ensure that a residential home is as secure as a Government building. Inevitably, there will be times when a spouse or partner expresses an interest in the work. There may well be times when an employee needs to leave a computer screen unattended and a teenage child (or a visitor to the home) walks past confidential data.

Apart from computer data, there will be times when an employee is accessing hard copy confidential documentation. Security over this is just as important as security over computer data. It can be lost or illegally copied much more easily in a home than hard copies in a Government building.

RECOMMENDATION

No public servant be permitted to work from home unless the home security controls with regard to access to data (and information) are at least as strong as in the employee's normal workplace. Those controls must have been formally approved by the Department's security staff.