



Sharon Grierson MP
Federal Member for Newcastle

Media Release
3 March 2010

Support Available for AMEX Redundancy Workers

Federal Member for Newcastle, Sharon Grierson MP, has today offered Federal Government support to the 122 local workers facing redundancy in June when American Express closes its customer service branch in Newcastle, and has called on local employers to assist these individuals in finding new employment or training.

Avarto Direct, the Newcastle-based company employing the workers, announced on Tuesday that the workers will be made redundant.

"For so many workers to face losing their jobs is a terrible thing," Ms Grierson said.

"It is not just the individuals who lose their jobs that are affected – it has a real impact on their families, and those who care about them.

"However, the Federal Government will do all it can to provide assistance to these workers.

All workers who are made redundant or who lose their job as a result of the global recession are eligible for immediate access to personalised employment services at the Stream 2 level with a Job Services Australia provider.

"Workers should register with Centrelink to access this assistance. Centrelink will assess their eligibility for employment services and make an appointment at a nearby Job Services Australia provider of their choice," said Ms Grierson.

Workers may also be able to access training opportunities under the Productivity Places Program. More info can be found deewr.gov.au/Skills/ProductivityPlaces

Further assistance is detailed below.

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Support for Workers

Job Services Australia providers will help workers develop a tailored Employment Pathway Plan to help them find another job as quickly as possible. Job seekers will also benefit from a \$550 Employment Pathway Fund credit. The Employment Pathway Fund can also be used for employment subsidies, equipment and training. More information is available at deewr.gov.au/jobservicesaustralia.

Workers who are made redundant or who lose their job as a result of the global recession are eligible for immediate access to personalised employment services at the Stream 2 level with a Job Services Australia provider.

Services available to these job seekers could include:

- help to develop a résumé and job applications, interview skills and presentation techniques
- advice on searching for a job, various career options and employment programs
- information about job vacancies and access to job search facilities offered by Centrelink and Job Services Australia providers, including JobSearch – jobsearch.gov.au, one of Australia's largest and most popular job internet sites
- referral and placement into employment
- a comprehensive skills assessment
- skills development and training relevant to the needs of the local labour market and identified job opportunities
- referral to education or training opportunities including the Productivity Places Program, the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program, or the Adult Migrant English Program
- help to gain licences, certificates or other qualifications
- work experience opportunities.

Productivity Places Program

Workers who have recently been made redundant may also be able to access training opportunities at Certificate III level and above under the Productivity Places Program, part of the Government's *Skilling Australia for the Future* initiative. Training is delivered by registered training organisations in a wide range of industries and occupations where job opportunities currently exist.

More information

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about the



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Productivity Places Program is available at deewr.gov.au/Skills/ProductivityPlaces

Securing Apprenticeships Program

Apprentices or trainees who have been laid off can get help to stay connected to the workforce and complete their training through the Securing Apprenticeships program. The Securing Apprenticeships wage subsidy is available to employers, including group training organisations, who recommence an eligible apprentice or trainee. More information about Australian Apprenticeships is at australianapprenticeships.gov.au.

New Enterprise Incentive Scheme

The New Enterprise Incentive Scheme provides eligible job seekers with the necessary training, mentoring and support to start running a small business. Job seekers can talk to their Job Services Australia provider to find out if they are eligible.

Special Child Care Benefit

Workers who have lost their job and who are having difficulty meeting child care costs, may also be eligible for the Special Child Care Benefit. For more information workers should contact the Family Assistance Office on 13 61 50.

Information Sessions for Workers

Information sessions can be offered for groups of workers either on-site or at a nearby location to provide information to workers about the assistance that is available to them. These information sessions are held in conjunction with Centrelink and provide advice for workers on how to manage their finances.

Help to Manage Finances

Centrelink offers free, unbiased financial advice about redundancy packages and Government assistance. Please note that eligibility for income support will depend on the personal circumstances of the worker, including income and assets. If workers are eligible for income support, it may not be available to them for a period of time depending on leave and redundancy payments. More information is available at centrelink.gov.au or call 13 28 90

Mortgage Relief

Workers who experience difficulty paying off their mortgage as a result of losing their job during the global recession may be able to postpone repayments for up to 12 months. Workers need to contact their

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financial institution or bank directly to find out if they are eligible. The bank will make an assessment based on the ability to meet new contractual obligations in the long term.

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