



UNION FOR SEX WORKERS

The union offers legal advice (one free consultation) and representation at discount rates, should this be required. Sexworkers are encouraged to contact the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union (LHMU) for initial advice even if you are not a member. Members' benefits include holiday homes available to members at cheap rates and discounts at Friendlies Chemists and other retailers.

The union will publicly advocate on behalf of sex workers to achieve better conditions and protect your rights. Union fees are tax deductible. These are some of the things the union can offer now, however if more sex workers were to join the union could do much more. One of the most important things that the union would like to achieve is to set up an award for sex work, as the LHMU has done in Victoria. In Victoria, this award which has been ratified by the Industrial Relations Commission, sets down minimum standards and conditions for working and covers such things as rates of pay, hours of work, occupational health and safety, superannuation and equal opportunity.

If an award can be set up in WA the union would endeavor to enforce the conditions set down in it and could represent members on a wider range of work related issues and with more clout than it currently can. The union does not get any money apart from what it receives from members dues so it can't do things like work on setting up an award unless it has the money to pay someone to do that. The union would need at least 50 sex workers to join to be a more effective fighting force.

In what ways would Workers benefit from being union members?

The union has resources and services available when you need help, such as if you've been sacked unfairly, harassed by an employer, not been paid properly, forced to work in unsafe conditions and workers compensation.

With things like rates of pay the union would take a "slowly, slowly" approach. Recently they've been able to achieve minimum rates of pay for people in the weight loss industry. But these things don't happen overnight and we need to remember that good old saying that the union is "only as strong as our membership is" Workers have to be prepared to fight for themselves as well which at the very least means joining the union.

For more information contact:

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Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union

<http://www.lhmu.org.au/wa>

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Source: MWU Caroline Smith and Magenta Educators November 2003