



MEDIA RELEASE

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**JOBKEEPER EXTENSION WELCOMED BUT EMPLOYEE
ELIGIBILITY NEEDS ADJUSTMENT**

The nation's peak hospitality body has welcomed the extension of the JobKeeper program, but AHA national CEO Stephen Ferguson said there was one issue the Association wished to work through further with the Federal Government.

Mr Ferguson said the JobKeeper extension would "go a long way towards saving businesses and jobs."

"However, we are concerned as to the effectiveness of JobKeeper for businesses which have suffered long-term shutdowns - as is being experienced in Victoria right now," he said.

"Given the length of forced shutdowns - and the nature of our highly casualised, mobile and often seasonal workforce, we are seeing the continuity of employment starting to break down.

"As JobKeeper is only payable for those employees who were with the employer on 1 March 2020, this would decrease the assistance to those businesses which have been shut down the longest as they are trying to re-open.

"There is a real concern when those businesses do re-open their JobKeeper-eligible staff may have already moved on.

"We will be requesting the Government to provide a re-set of JobKeeper employee eligibility for businesses which have extended periods of shutdown, such as those in Victoria.

"The Government has shown a willingness to move quickly where needed in these fast-changing times and to tackle unintended consequences when they arise.

"Providing a JobKeeper employee eligibility re-set will enable those businesses forced to have closed the longest to re-open their doors and get more people into work in these times of high unemployment."

Media Contact: Jason Bartlett, 0433 95 46 57