

# An open letter to customers from Centrelink staff

Dear Customers,

We work for Centrelink because **we want to do worthwhile work that contributes to Australia** and our communities. But this work is getting harder every day.

As Centrelink employees, we put ourselves at risk by speaking to the media or commenting in public about what is happening at our workplace.

But it's been a difficult year and **there's some things we need to tell you.**

We need to tell you that we see your pain and acknowledge your fear. **We know you are angry and we are too.** We know that the people of Australia deserve better.

**We know that the automated debt notices are unfair, unjust and callous.** We acknowledge that in a great many cases, they are not your debts.

**Many of us warned the Department of Human Services that the debt system wouldn't work.** Despite our combined hundreds of years' experience in welfare systems, the Department is still not listening.

**Debt notices are only the beginning – Centrelink is in crisis** and the only way to fix it is for the Turnbull Government to make it possible for us to help you. **Minister Tudge needs to take responsibility for this crisis** and offer the Australian public real solutions.

5,000 jobs have been cut from the Department of Human Services in 5 years. We need to fix that. **We need more staff who are permanent and well-trained,** and who are genuinely consulted about how things work so they can help you.

We will do our best to be there for you today when you come in or call, and yes, we are sorry for the wait.

Yours sincerely,  
Centrelink staff and the Community and Public Sector Union

Find out more at [proudtobepublic.org.au/DHScuts](http://proudtobepublic.org.au/DHScuts)



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