



Govt must act on maternity leave: survey

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Forty-five per cent of women say they are not in a position to meet their mortgage repayments if they take time off to have a baby without government funded maternity leave, a new survey shows.

The survey by leading marketer to women, The Heat Group, says it has become impossible to pay off a mortgage on a single salary.

Those in the traditional child-producing years of 25-40 appear to be most at risk with 49 per cent reporting they cannot afford the mortgage and a baby pause, the online survey of 855 women found.

"It's become a case of baby or the house and it's simply a decision women should not have to make," Heat Group managing director Gillian Franklin said.

"We should at least be offering 14 weeks paid maternity leave at an employees current salary to not disadvantage women and to continue to support our economy."

Employers facing skills shortages and retention issues would benefit by increasing the participation rates of women, Ms Franklin said.

The move would also improve the personal and household incomes of women.

"The Australian government cannot sit on the sidelines for much longer.

"Without paid maternity leave, the cost of living continually increasing, interest rate hikes and petrol price hikes, there is no doubt there will be a steep decline in births over the foreseeable future."

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