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Anglicare finds minimum-wage hospitality workers can afford 0.7% of rentals in Australia

Only 338 of 48,776 advertised homes met affordability and suitability tests for the full-time worker Anglicare modeled

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An adult hospitality worker on Australia's minimum award wage could afford just 0.7% of rental listings nationwide, according to an Anglicare Australia report released Thursday, November 5, a finding that points to the scale of the housing squeeze facing lower-paid workers in the sector.

Anglicare said only 338 of 48,776 advertised rentals met its tests for both affordability and suitability for the worker it modeled. The benchmark was a single adult employed full time and paid under the hospitality award, with the calculation based on weekly after-tax income using wage rates in effect from July 1, 2026.

The figures show a slight deterioration from 2025, when the national share was 0.8%. Anglicare said the 2026 result was down 0.1 percentage point from a year earlier, showing that access to rental housing remained extremely limited even under the assumption of steady full-time work.

The pressure was especially severe in the Northern Territory, where the report found no rental listings that were both affordable and suitable for the modeled hospitality worker. That result was down 1.4 percentage points from 2025.

The snapshot is based on rental advertisements collected on March 14 and March 15, not a fresh reading of the market in November. Anglicare used those listings to test how many homes a worker could realistically rent under current pay settings. The report is designed as a measure of housing access rather than a count of labor demand or job openings.

That distinction matters for a hospitality industry that has repeatedly raised concerns about attracting and keeping staff. The Anglicare data do not show how many workers turned down jobs because of rent, and they do not measure recruitment outcomes. But they do show that a worker paid at the minimum rate for the sector would have almost no room in the private rental market in much of the country.

Because the model assumes full-time hours, the result may understate the difficulty faced by workers whose income is less stable. Hospitality employment often includes variable rosters, part-time work, and casual shifts. Anglicare’s approach instead tests the position of a worker in a more secure, full-time arrangement and still finds that affordable rental options are scarce.

The report also highlights that pay increases alone have not closed the gap between earnings and housing costs. The wage rates used in the model took effect on July 1, months after the listings were gathered, yet the number of homes deemed affordable and suitable remained very small. That suggests rents were already running well ahead of what a worker at the bottom of the hospitality pay scale could reasonably cover.

Housing affordability has become a broader economic issue across Australia, with rising rents affecting workers in sectors that rely on relatively low wages. For hospitality employers, that can translate into added pressure in tourist areas and major cities where accommodation is tight and staff often need to live close to workplaces with early, late, or weekend shifts.

Anglicare’s findings were recirculated by industry coverage on Monday, November 9, but the underlying statistics come from the organization’s earlier report and press release published on Thursday, November 5. The charity said the numbers should be read as an estimate of whether a full-time hospitality worker can access rental housing, not as evidence of the number of vacancies in the sector or a direct measure of hiring

conditions.