SNP Manifesto 2021
What we’re doing for workers

We want Scotland to be the best place to live and work and do business. We believe that fair work is the foundation for this. Covid has highlighted that too many people are still stuck on exploitative contracts, often zero-hours, that leave them with little security.

Without the powers of independence, we are limited in what steps we can take, but where we can act to improve employment security and enhance the quality of work, we will.

Re-elect the SNP to:

- **Promote fair work**
  Our Fair Work First programme makes adoption of fair work practices part of the criteria for winning public contracts and receiving grants. It uses the financial power of government to make fair work the norm. We will now build flexible and family friendly working into the programme, learning lessons from working practices during the pandemic to make it easier for women, particularly single parents, to return to work and also encourage a more equal share of childcare responsibilities.

  The principles of Living Hours – ensuring workers get the hours they need to make ends meet – are reflected in Fair Work First good practice and promoted through Fair Work First where this applies to grants or procurement. If re-elected, we will go further and support a specific accreditation programme for Living Hours in the same way we have supported Living Wage accreditation.

  The SNP shares the ambition of the Fair Work Convention for Scotland to be a Fair Work Nation by 2025.

- **Freeze Income Tax**
  Scotland has the most progressive income tax system in the UK, with more than half of taxpayers paying less than they would if they lived in England, Wales or Northern Ireland.

  Having only introduced this new system in 2018, and with a need now to focus on recovery, we will aim for stability over the next Parliament. While it is important for any government to have flexibility to respond to a change in circumstances, our aim is to maintain current Income Tax rates for the duration of the parliament and increase thresholds by a maximum of inflation.

- **Support new ways of working**
  Covid-19 changed the way we work almost overnight. As we recover from the pandemic, we want to do more to support people achieve a healthy work-life balance. We also want to keep the total number of people in employment high. As part of this, we will establish a £10 million fund to allow companies to pilot and explore the benefits of a four day working week.
We will use the learning from this to consider a more
general shift to a four day working week as and when
Scotland gains full control of employment rights.

We will also identify additional employment
opportunities and assess the economic impact of
moving to a four day week.

More widely, we will support a review – in partnership
with trade unions and businesses – of how working
practices could and should be adapted to meet the
needs of the future economy.

**Invest in green skills and jobs for the future**

We will invest an additional £500 million over the next
parliament to support new jobs and reskill people for the
jobs of the future.

Our National Transition Training Fund will support
workers whose jobs are at risk and provide retraining
opportunities in high tech, high skilled jobs and
the provision of green skills to support Scotland’s
transition to net zero. As part of this, we will take
action to tackle inequality, supporting those who have
been disproportionately impacted by Covid such as
women, people from minority ethnic communities and
disabled people.

We will establish a new Green Jobs Workforce Academy
to help people secure work in the low carbon economy.

Over the next five years we will invest £100 million in
our Green Jobs fund, investing alongside businesses
and organisations to support new and increased
opportunities for green job creation across Scotland.

We will also invest £60 million to decarbonise our
industrial and manufacturing sectors – helping them
grow and diversify, helping deliver net zero by 2045,
and creating more new jobs.

**Create opportunities for all**

We will continue our Young Person’s Guarantee to
ensure that every young person aged between 16
and 24 in Scotland has the opportunity, based on their
own personal circumstances and ambitions, to go to
university or college, get a place on an apprenticeship,
training or work experience programme, secure a job or
participate in a formal volunteering programme.

We were on track to meet our target of 30,000 Modern
Apprenticeships starts by 2020 – however, Covid
affected new apprenticeship starts as employers had
to review, delay and pause recruitment plans. As part of
the recovery, we will build back up to 30,000 starts and
assess demand to see how much further we can go.

**Equality at work**

We will expand the specific duties that require a listed
public authority to publish gender pay gap information
to disability and ethnicity reporting and ensure these are
included within Equal Pay Statements.

We will develop an ethnicity pay gap strategy to go
alongside our existing strategies on disability and gender
pay gap.

**Demand more powers**

We will continue to call for the devolution of
employment law so that the Scottish Parliament can
protect workers’ rights, increase the living wage and end
the age discrimination of the statutory living wage.

We have been pressing the UK government to act on
companies using fire and rehire tactics to undermine
wages and conditions, but it has so far refused to take
the necessary steps to ban these exploitative practices.

We will continue to call for powers to allow us to act, but
in the meantime we will do all we can with our limited
powers to protect employees from these practices in
Scotland. We will review our Fair Work First criteria for
contracts and government support grants to include
specific reference to fire and rehire tactics.