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ACCOMMODATION HOTELS NEED MORE SUPPORT, AS SECTOR BACKS VACCINATIONS

The state's leading Tourism Accommodation body has written to the NSW Premier outlining the dire situation facing accommodation hotels and the need for continued government support.

TAA NSW CEO Michael Johnson said the current situation is not sustainable for hotel owners and will result in mass redundancies of staff who mostly live in South Western and Western Sydney.

Mr Johnson said a recent survey conducted by TAA NSW found almost 40 per cent of members were unable to receive desperately needed government support.

"NSW hotels have operated under restricted trading conditions for 17 months and most hotels have been closed or operating at sub 2% occupancy since 26 June," Mr Johnson said.

"Greater Sydney members have suffered a decline in revenue of between 70% and 90% compared to July 2019 yet 37% of these businesses are ineligible for any government assistance due to eligibility criteria which does not take into account international ownership arrangements.

"We have a situation where two hotels are on the same street, both suffering the same financial impact, but one can receive government help and the other cannot.

"We are grateful for the assistance the State Government has given the sector so far, and will continue working closely with Government but the reality is while the rooms sit empty the bills keep piling up."

Mr Johnson said the industry also wants the State Government to allow hotels the discretion to mandate vaccination for staff.

"A recent survey of TAA NSW General Managers and their staff found more than 80% believe a vaccinated workforce is vital for the safety and wellbeing of employees and guests," he said.

"67% of respondents reported they would feel unsafe at work if other employees were unvaccinated and 81% thought it should be a requirement for all hotel employees to be vaccinated."

TAA NSW has requested the NSW government implement a public health order allowing accommodation hotels the discretion "to have the right to mandate vaccination" with an exemption for those with a valid medical reason.

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