Full-time employees

Due to the impacts coronavirus is having on the community, a number of unions and employer associations (www.fairwork.gov.au/website-information/related-sites/unions-and-employer-associations) are applying to the Fair Work Commission to increase award flexibility.

This may affect the entitlements on this page.


A full-time employee:

- usually works, on average, 38 hours each week
- is a permanent employee or on a fixed-term contract.

The actual hours of work for an employee in a particular job or industry are agreed between the employer and the employee and/or set by an award or registered agreement.

Changing from full-time to part-time or casual employment

When the employer and the employee agree to change

An employee and an employer may agree to end an employee’s full-time position and change to part-time or casual employment.

When changing from full-time or part-time to casual the usual rules for ending employment apply, including:

- giving or paying the employee the required notice
- paying out leave and any other entitlements owed.

When the employee doesn’t agree to change

An employer may be able to change an employee’s full-time employment to part-time or casual employment without agreement from the employee.

Important factors to consider are:

- Does the employment contract, registered agreement (www.fairwork.gov.au/Dictionary.aspx?TermID=2034) or award let the employer change the employee’s work hours without the employee agreeing?
- Does the change make a new employment contract or change an existing contract?
- What entitlements, such as annual leave or redundancy, need to be paid out?
- How much notice does the employer need to give the employee?

We’re unable to provide advice about employment contracts, including changes to an employee’s hours. You will need to seek legal advice (www.fairwork.gov.au/website-information/related-sites/related-sites) to find out more about your situation.

An employer can’t change or end an employee’s employment:

- for a discriminatory reason
- because the employee has exercised a workplace right
- for another reason protected by law.

Read about Protections at work (www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/protections-at-work/default) to find more.

Think a mistake might have been made?

Mistakes can happen. The best way to fix them usually starts with talking.

Check out our Help resolving workplace issues (www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/how-we-help-you/help-resolving-workplace-issues/default) section for practical advice on:
• figuring out if a mistake has been made
• talking to your employer or employee about fixing it
• getting help from us if you can't resolve it.

What to do next:
• Find pay rates using our Pay Calculator (http://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/findYourAward)
• Check to see what award applies using Find my award (www.fairwork.gov.au/awards-and-agreements/awards/find-my-award/)

Help for small business

You might also be interested in:
• Paying wages (www.fairwork.gov.au/Pay/paying-wages)
• Payslips and record keeping (www.fairwork.gov.au/Pay/pay-slips-and-record-keeping/default)
• Tax and superannuation (www.fairwork.gov.au/Pay/tax-and-superannuation)

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