

New guides to help apprentices get off to a good start

9 August 2017

The Fair Work Ombudsman has launched two new guides to assist apprentices and their employers to understand their rights and obligations in the workplace.

The guides - one for apprentices and one for employers - set out essential information about workplace rights and responsibilities including apprentice pay, rules around hiring apprentices and tips for resolving workplace issues.

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James said that her agency wanted to ensure that the apprenticeship experience is a productive and positive one for both apprentices and those who hire them.

"Hiring an apprentice is a great way to build a business and cultivate the next generation of workers, but it comes with responsibilities," Ms James said.

"It is important that employers seeking to take on an apprentice make sure they are aware of relevant laws and meet their obligations with regard to pay, entitlements and training."

Ms James said that apprentices were an ongoing focus for her agency due to their vulnerable status.

The results of the Fair Work Ombudsman's [National Apprenticeship Campaign \(www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/2017-media-releases/march-2017/20170331-apprentices-campaign-report-mr\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/2017-media-releases/march-2017/20170331-apprentices-campaign-report-mr), released in March this year, showed that one in three businesses audited failed to pay their apprentices correct wages.

"Factors including age and limited work experience make apprentices particularly vulnerable in the workplace," Ms James said.

"Despite accounting for less than three per cent of the Australian workforce, apprentices make up a disproportionately high amount of dispute lodgements with my agency, at seven per cent.

"Our new guide for apprentices will help them to understand their rights and entitlements as they commence their employment, and equip them with the information they need to resolve workplace issues and seek support during their apprenticeship."

The guides can be accessed at our [Apprentice entitlements \(http://www.fairwork.gov.au/apprentice-entitlements\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/apprentice-entitlements) and [Hiring employees \(http://www.fairwork.gov.au/hiring\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/hiring) pages. They complement an existing range of tools and resources already available at www.fairwork.gov.au, including fact sheets, best practice guides and an online course about hiring staff, including young workers.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has also joined forces with state government bodies including the [South Australian Department of State Development \(www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/2017-media-releases/april-2017/20170420-sa-dsd-mou\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/2017-media-releases/april-2017/20170420-sa-dsd-mou) and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority to help improve compliance with federal workplace laws relating to apprentices and trainees.

Employees and employers who are unsure about their workplace rights and obligations can visit www.fairwork.gov.au or contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50 and information on the website is translated into 30 different languages.

The Record My Hours smartphone app is aimed at helping young and migrant workers to keep records of the hours they work using geo-fencing technology and is available for download from iTunes and the Google Play store.

Follow Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James on Twitter [@NatJamesFWO](https://twitter.com/NatJamesFWO) (<http://twitter.com/NatJamesFWO>), the Fair Work Ombudsman [@fairwork_gov_au](https://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au) (http://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au) or find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au (<http://www.facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au>).

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Contact us

Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

Need language help?

Contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50

Hearing & speech assistance

Call through the National Relay Service (NRS):

For TTY: 13 36 77. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline 13 13 94

Speak & Listen: 1300 555 727. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline 13 13 94

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