

Roxby Downs apprentice short-changed \$6500

6 January 2017

The Fair Work Ombudsman has recovered \$6500 for a young apprentice at Roxby Downs, in northern South Australia.

The apprentice, who was aged under 21, was paid a flat hourly rate of \$15 over a 10-month period in the 2015-16 financial year at a local business in the town.

However, she was entitled to receive rates of up to more than \$18 under the Award that applied to her position.

Fair Work Ombudsman inspectors discovered the underpayment as part of its program of proactive auditing in regional areas.

After inspectors educated the business operator about its obligations under workplace laws, the operator acknowledged that it should have been more proactive about ensuring it was meeting the employee's minimum lawful entitlements.

Inspectors issued the business with a Letter of Caution, placing it on notice that subsequent contraventions could result in enforcement action.

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James says it is not acceptable for employers to pay young workers flat rates of pay that are below minimum Award rates.

"The Fair Work Ombudsman's website has a range of tools and resources to assist small business owners to understand and comply with their obligations," Ms James said.

Ms James says her Agency is particularly focused on assisting young workers because they can be vulnerable if they are not fully aware of their rights or reluctant to complain.

"For a young worker, one of the best defences against being short-changed is an awareness of your workplace rights and the knowledge that you can turn to the Fair Work Ombudsman for free advice and assistance if you have concerns," she said.

Employers and workers can obtain information and advice from the Fair Work Ombudsman by visiting www.fairwork.gov.au or calling the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94.

Small business owners can opt for priority service when calling the Infoline.

The website includes fact sheets and tips for young workers and the Pay and Conditions Tool (PACT) available on the website can assist business owners and workers to calculate pay rates applicable to their workplace.

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?

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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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