

New resources to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to navigate workplace rights

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The Fair Work Ombudsman has launched a suite of new resources aimed at helping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and employers to understand their workplace rights and responsibilities.

The resources have been developed in response to research which showed that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities had a limited awareness of their workplace entitlements.

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James said that she hoped that the new culturally-specific resources would encourage more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to engage with her agency.

“My agency is committed to making it easy for everyone working or running a business in Australia to access the information they need about Australia’s workplace laws,” Ms James said.

“We found that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees may not fully understand their workplace rights, and may lack the confidence to ask about their entitlements or to take action when something is wrong.

“We recognised that there was more that the FWO could be doing to ensure that our resources are culturally relevant and are reaching those who need them.”

In addition to re-issuing existing fact sheets and guides to reflect a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, additional resources have been developed to address key cultural issues.

For example, a new online video provides guidance for employers and employees on how to resolve issues at work including negotiating time off work for Sorry Business, a period of mourning that follows the loss of a family or community member in many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The resources can be accessed at <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/indigenous> (www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people) .

Ms James said that as well as equipping workers and employers with the information they need to understand their workplaces rights and obligations, the new resources reflect her agency’s commitment to building respect, acceptance and understanding between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider Australian community.

“One of our aims in developing these resources is to contribute to building and supporting a culturally diverse and inclusive workforce in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is understood and appreciated,” Ms James said.

“This goal has particular relevance as we celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples during NAIDOC Week.”

Employers and employees can seek assistance at www.fairwork.gov.au or by contacting the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94.

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Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

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