

FWO audits Gami Chicken stores

11 April 2019

The Fair Work Ombudsman is conducting surprise audits of popular Korean fried chicken franchise Gami Chicken and Beer today, after receiving concerning requests for assistance from employees.

Inspectors will audit 19 stores across Melbourne, Sydney and Perth owned by both franchisees and the franchisor to check their compliance with Australia's workplace laws.

Fair Work Ombudsman Sandra Parker said the surprise audits are part of its commitment to ensuring compliance in the fast food, restaurants and café sector.

"Fair Work Inspectors are today speaking with Gami Chicken employers, managers and employees to check that workers are receiving their full wages and entitlements. We will review pay records at 19 Melbourne, Sydney and Perth stores to ensure they are complying with important pay slip laws," Ms Parker said.

The FWO has received over 20 enquiries and anonymous reports from Gami Chicken employees variously claiming underpayments, including of penalty rates, and failure to provide pay slips.

"Like many people working in the fast food sector, Gami Chicken and Beer staff are potentially vulnerable due to their age, cultural background or visa status. It is important for us to talk with these workers on the ground so they are aware of their workplace rights and that we can help them," Ms Parker said.

"Australia's minimum pay rates are not negotiable and employers in the fast food, restaurant and café sector should actively check that they are paying their staff correctly. Franchisors must also take responsibility for ensuring that their franchisees are complying with workplace laws."

The hospitality industry was again overrepresented in contacts to the Fair Work Ombudsman last financial year, with 18 per cent of workplace disputes recorded, a third of court actions and almost 40 per cent of all anonymous reports, despite representing just seven per cent of the workforce. More than \$4 million was recovered by the FWO for workers from fast food, restaurant and café businesses.

"We are committed to improving workplace compliance in the hospitality industry, and have a range of free tools to help small businesses understand their obligations. Businesses can call our Small Business Helpline, access our Pay and Conditions Tool, set up a My account profile or complete an Online Learning Course," Ms Parker said.

A report on the campaign's findings will be published once the investigations are completed.

Gami Chicken and Beer was founded in 2006 and began franchising in 2015, with restaurants now in Melbourne, Sydney, Perth and Canberra. The business has promoted opportunities for new locations to open soon in Brisbane and Adelaide.

Employers and employees can visit www.fairwork.gov.au or call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 for free advice and assistance about their rights and obligations in the workplace. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

Information for franchises in Australia, including free advice and resources, is available at www.fairwork.gov.au/franchises (<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/franchises>). Information for the fast food, restaurant and café sector is available at www.fairwork.gov.au/frac (<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/frac>).

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Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

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