

## Adelaide Chinatown eateries face workplace audits

15 April 2021

The Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) is making surprise visits to restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets in Adelaide's Chinatown precinct this week, including the Adelaide Central Market.

At least 60 businesses face audits with Fair Work Inspectors speaking with business owners, managers and employees to check that workers are being paid correctly.

The regulator is acting after receiving intelligence from a range of sources, including requests for assistance, our [Anonymous report tool \(www.fairwork.gov.au/tipoff\)](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/tipoff) and various stakeholders, indicating potential breaches of workplace laws by some businesses in the area.

Fair Work Ombudsman Sandra Parker said the audits will include a focus on employers that have sponsored visa holders.

"Our intelligence indicates that Adelaide's Chinatown precinct employs many workers on visas who may also have limited English skills, which can lead to vulnerability and exploitation," Ms Parker said.

Ms Parker said protecting vulnerable employees such as visa holders and young workers, and improving compliance in the fast food, restaurant and café sector were ongoing priorities for the FWO.

"All employees should be receiving their lawful entitlements regardless of nationality and visa status. We will hold employers to account if they are not meeting their lawful obligations and consider enforcement action where appropriate. We will also educate workers about their workplace rights."

The Chinatown audits are part of a national program that has previously targeted cheap eat precincts in Melbourne, Brisbane ([www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/2020-media-releases/september-2020/20200904-food-precincts-melbourne-brisbane-and-food-retail-report-media-release](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/2020-media-releases/september-2020/20200904-food-precincts-melbourne-brisbane-and-food-retail-report-media-release)), Sydney ([www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/archived-media-releases/2016-media-releases/november-2016/20161124-glebepointroad-campaign](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/archived-media-releases/2016-media-releases/november-2016/20161124-glebepointroad-campaign)), Adelaide and Perth ([www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/2019-media-releases/december-2019/20191206-over-300-000-returned-to-fast-food-restaurant-and-cafe-workers](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/2019-media-releases/december-2019/20191206-over-300-000-returned-to-fast-food-restaurant-and-cafe-workers)). Earlier this month, the FWO released its findings of audits targeting popular food precincts in Hobart ([www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/2021-media-releases/april-2021/210401-hobart-food-precincts-audits-media-release](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/2021-media-releases/april-2021/210401-hobart-food-precincts-audits-media-release)), with more than \$580,000 in unpaid wages recovered for 376 workers.

"In previous activities, we have found that cheap food has come at the expense of workers receiving their lawful wages. Any workers with concerns should contact us for free advice," Ms Parker said.

Fast food, restaurant and café matters accounted for 50 per cent of the Fair Work Ombudsman's new litigations in 2019-20. The FWO secured court ordered penalties of \$1,877,162 from 13 litigation decisions in this sector in that financial year. Visa holder workers were involved in 44 per cent of all litigations in the same time frame.

The FWO has an agreement with the Department of Home Affairs where visa holders can ask for our help without fear of their visa being cancelled. The FWO has free information and targeted resources for [visa holder \(www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/visa-holders-migrants\)](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/visa-holders-migrants) workers.

The FWO also has targeted [interactive tools \(www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/fast-food-restaurants-cafes\)](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/fast-food-restaurants-cafes) to help employers and employees in the fast food, restaurant and café industry, as well as for any [franchisees \(www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/franchises\)](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/franchises). Employers can also use FWO's [pay calculator \(https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/findyouraward\)](https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/findyouraward) and [Small Business Showcase \(www.fairwork.gov.au/small-business-showcase\)](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/small-business-showcase).

Call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 or a free interpreter service on 13 14 50. Know a workplace not doing the right thing but don't want to get involved? [Report it anonymously \(www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/how-we-help-you/anonymous-tipoff\)](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/how-we-help-you/anonymous-tipoff) – in your language.

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**Page reference No: 10132**

## Contact us

Fair Work Online: [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au)

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

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

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