

Waikerie business back-pays three workers \$26,000 after regulator investigates

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The Fair Work Ombudsman has recovered \$26,000 in back-pay for three Waikerie workers.

Inspectors audited the horticultural business when workers lodged complaints after they were made redundant.

The investigation found the workers were underpaid their severance pay and in some cases time-in-lieu of notice.

One of the workers was owed \$16,900.

Fair Work Ombudsman South Australian Director Carey Trundle says the employer promptly reimbursed the three after the underpayments were discovered and would face no further action.

Ms Trundle says the underpayments were inadvertent and resulted from a lack of understanding by the employer of its legal obligations.

"That's why we place such a strong emphasis on educating employers and assisting them to understand and comply with workplace laws," she said.

In most cases, the Fair Work Ombudsman does not prosecute employers for accidental breaches of workplace laws.

"We have a flexible, fair approach and our preference is always to work with employers to educate them and help them voluntarily rectify any non-compliance issues we identify," Ms Trundle said.

"However, employers need to be aware that they can face fines of up to \$33,000 per breach if we do take matters to court."

The Fair Work Ombudsman can help employers to understand their rights and obligations under the new National Employment Standards and Modern Awards, which took effect on January 1.

The Agency has a range of user-friendly resources on its website, including Best Practice Guides, fact sheets and templates.

The Fair Work Ombudsman promotes harmonious, productive and co-operative workplaces. It also monitors compliance and investigates breaches of national workplace laws.

Employers or employees seeking assistance should contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 or visit www.fwo.gov.au For translations call 13 14 50.

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Contact us

Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

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Call through the National Relay Service (NRS):

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

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