

Regulator asks NSW young workers - are you missing out?

12 February 2010

University students are being urged by the Fair Work Ombudsman to know their workplace rights to ensure they're not missing out on money in their pay packet.

Fair Work inspectors will visit students at University of Sydney, University of Newcastle and Charles Sturt University as a part of O-Week activities to answer young workers' questions and provide information about their workplace rights and responsibilities.

Fair Work Ombudsman Nicholas Wilson says that knowledge is the best defence for young workers against being unwittingly taken advantage of.

"Money can be tight when you're a student, so it's important to make sure you're not missing out on pay and entitlements. Even one or two dollars less in your hourly rate of pay can make a difference," he said.

Mr Wilson says that all students should visit the O-week stalls, especially international students who are new to Australia and may not know their workplace rights and obligations.

"Students, especially those who are living in Australia for the first time, can be vulnerable to exploitation as they are often unaware of their right to minimum wage conditions, penalty rates and leave entitlements," Mr Wilson said.

Mr Wilson says young workers need to be aware that they should receive a payslip, that unpaid work trials are generally against the law and having money deducted from your wages if the cash register is short or customers have damaged stock is illegal.

"Students can visit - www.fairwork.gov.au/youngworkers (www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/young-workers-and-students/default) - or chat online with a Fair Work Adviser for information and advice," he said.

The Fair Work Ombudsman will visit 16 universities across Australia during O-Week to raise awareness among students of their workplace rights.

In NSW, the Fair Work Ombudsman will be on campus at the following universities:

- 22 February – Charles Sturt University (Wagga campus)
- 23 February – University of Newcastle
- 24-26 February – University of Sydney (City campus)

In January last year, more than 1700 young people were back-paid a total of \$634,000 after a national audit campaign by the Ombudsman found they had been short-changed at work.

For more information students can call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 for free information and advice.

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Contact us

Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

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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

Speak & Listen: 1300 555 727. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline 13 13 94

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