

Fair Work inspectors join O-Week to help university students understand workplace rights

14 February 2011

The Fair Work Ombudsman will again join O-Week activities around the country to educate university students about their workplace rights.

Fair Work Ombudsman Executive Director Michael Campbell says knowledge is the best defence for young workers.

“Money can be tight when you’re a student, so it’s important for students taking on part-time or casual work during their studies to understand what their entitlements are,” he said.

“University students who want to learn more about their workplace rights are encouraged to talk to our inspectors at O-Week stalls at 19 campuses.”

The Fair Work Ombudsman will attend:

- Canberra: Australian National University, February 16
- Sydney: University of NSW (Kensington campus), February 22
- Sydney: University of Western Sydney (Parramatta campus), February 28
- Wagga: Charles Sturt University, February 21
- Bendigo: La Trobe University, February 23
- Melbourne: Monash University (Clayton campus), February 22
- Brisbane: University of Queensland, February 23
- Gold Coast: Griffith University, February 23
- Toowoomba: University of Southern Queensland, February 23
- Townsville: James Cook University, February 16
- Cairns: James Cook University, February 22
- Rockhampton: Central Queensland University, February 23
- Adelaide: University of Adelaide, February 22
- Adelaide: Flinders University, February 21
- Perth: University of Western Australia, February 25
- Perth: Curtin University, February 23
- Bunbury: Edith Cowan University, February 23
- Fremantle: University of Notre Dame, February 24
- Darwin: Charles Darwin University, February 23

Mr Campbell says inspectors will provide students with young worker fact sheets, give them tips about workplace rights and answer any questions they have.

Inspectors will have a fact sheet specifically tailored for international students.

“Students living in Australia for the first time are unlikely to be familiar with their Australian workplace rights, so inspectors will be looking to speak with as many international students as they can,” he said.

Mr Campbell says issues students should be aware of include:

- Unpaid work trials are generally unlawful
- You should be given a pay slip within one day of being paid
- It is a good idea to keep your own record of your shift hours, meal breaks and pay - it will help you check you’ve been paid properly and will be invaluable in settling any dispute
- Your boss cannot deduct money from your wages if customers leave without paying or if the cash register is short
- You should be paid for all hours you work, including trial shifts or probation periods, meetings, training and opening and closing the business
- Your employment can’t be terminated for asking your employer about your pay and entitlements or for contacting the Fair Work

Ombudsman

- If you are paid in cash, check your pay slip to make sure tax has been taken out of your pay. Your employer must take tax out of your pay
- If you are worried about the consequences of complaining - be aware that complaints can be made with the Fair Work Ombudsman confidentially.

For more information, 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.

Any employer or employee, including students, seeking assistance can also call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 for free information and advice. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

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Contact us

Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

Need language help?

Contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50

Hearing & speech assistance

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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