

National education and compliance campaign to focus on clerical workers

28 September 2011

The Fair Work Ombudsman has written to more than 40,000 employers in the accounting and recruitment industries as part of a new national education and compliance campaign focusing on clerical workers.

Fair Work Ombudsman Nicholas Wilson says the campaign provides a great opportunity for employers of clerical workers to improve their understanding of workplace laws.

“Most employers try to do the right thing by their employees, but we do receive about 2000 complaints from clerical workers each year, so we believe this is an area that requires some attention,” he said.

“We have excellent resources available to assist the large number of employers of clerical workers to ensure they provide workers their full entitlements.”

Mr Wilson says the campaign is specifically focusing on the 40,000-plus businesses in the accountancy, book-keeping, labour-hire, employment placement and recruitment services sectors in Australia.

“We are aiming to improve awareness and compliance of workplace laws in these sectors, thereby equipping employers to provide some guidance on workplace laws to the many businesses they interact with, and the response so far has been very positive,” he said.

The Fair Work Ombudsman is identifying 1500 employers in these sectors throughout Australia and asking them to supply employment records for audit. Locations selected for audit include areas in and around:

NSW/ACT: Canberra, Sydney, Castle Hill, Chatswood, Epping, Potts Point, Campbelltown, Blacktown, Bankstown, Penrith, Fairfield, Parramatta and Liverpool; as well as Newcastle, Gosford, Maitland, Lismore, Wagga, Singleton, Tamworth, Wollongong and Port Macquarie.

VIC: Metropolitan local government areas including Melbourne, Greater Dandenong, Frankston, Hobsons Bay, Whitehorse, Kingston, Yarra, Maroondah, Knox, Maribyrnong, Wyndham, Monash, Port Phillip and Stonnington; as well as Bairnsdale, Wangaratta, Bendigo and Shepparton.

QLD: Brisbane, Loganholme, Caloundra, Ipswich, Redland Bay, Wynnum, Springwood, Bowen Hills, Milton and Stafford; as well as Cairns, Mackay, Sunshine Coast, Townsville, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Gold Coast, Whitsunday, Toowoomba and Warwick.

WA: Perth, Balcatta, Stirling, Kalamunda, Alfred Cove, Booragoon, Burswood, Maddington, Myaree, South Perth and Victoria Park; as well as Albany, Port Hedland and Kununurra.

SA: Adelaide, Burnside, Eastwood, Frewville, Fullarton, Goodwood, Hazelwood Park, Hyde Park, Kensington, Leabrook, Malvern, Norwood, Parkside, Unley and Wayville; as well as Port Pirie, Renmark and Mount Gambier.

TAS: Hobart, Launceston, Ulverstone and George Town.

NT: Darwin, Alice Springs, Katherine and Nhulunbuy.

Employers will be selected for audit through a combination of using intelligence from various sources and some random selection.

Fair Work inspectors will check that employers are paying workers correct minimum rates of pay, penalty rates, loadings and allowances and are complying with their record-keeping and pay slip obligations.

“If inspectors find minor or inadvertent contraventions, our first approach is to educate the employer and assist them to voluntarily rectify the issue,” Mr Wilson said.

“Obviously in those cases where a contravention is blatant or employers are not willing to promptly resolve an issue, we may escalate the audit to a full investigation.”

A key focus of the campaign is on promoting the range of tools, templates and advice specifically relating to clerical workers available in the ‘Industries’ section of the Fair Work Ombudsman’s website - www.fairwork.gov.au.

User-friendly information is available on the Clerks – Private Sector Award 2010, which covers clerical workers in a wide range of industries.

This includes information on matters including the types of businesses covered by this Award, the pay rates and classifications that apply, hours of work, rosters, breaks and leave entitlements.

Key stakeholders, including employer groups and unions, have been briefed on the campaign and are assisting to promote the campaign to their members.

Employers or employees seeking assistance can also contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. 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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