

Newcastle workers back-paid almost \$20,000

18 January 2012

Two workers at Newcastle in regional NSW have been back-paid a total of \$19,300 following intervention by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

The biggest recovery was \$10,500 for a cook.

The male employee lodged a complaint with the Fair Work Ombudsman after his employer failed to register his apprenticeship paperwork with the appropriate authority but continued to pay him apprentice pay rates for 10 months.

After a Fair Work inspector contacted the business and explained that apprenticeship pay rates can only be paid to registered apprentices, the worker was reimbursed all money owed without the need for further action against the employer.

In separate case, a retail worker in Newcastle has been back-paid \$8800 after she was underpaid the minimum hourly rate for two years.

Fair Work Ombudsman Nicholas Wilson says it is important that employers do not delay lodgement of apprenticeship agreements for employees.

The Newcastle businesses have now corrected the errors that led to the underpayments and put processes in place to ensure they will not happen again.

Mr Wilson says the Fair Work Ombudsman's Assisted Voluntary Resolution team is now achieving resolution of about half its referrals within the first month.

The Fair Work Ombudsman recovered a total of \$8.215 million back-pay for 4182 underpaid workers in NSW last financial year. Nationally, the Agency recouped \$26.7 million for 17,360 employees.

Workers or employers seeking support should get in touch with the Fair Work Ombudsman via the website - www.fairwork.gov.au - or call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

A section of the website devoted to providing information on workplace laws specifically relating to apprentices and trainees.

The website also has a number of tools and resources, including PayCheck Plus and an Award Finder, to assist business-owners calculate the correct pay for their employees.

An 'Industries' section on the website provides extra, specialised information for employers and employees in the retail, cleaning, clerical, hair and beauty, security, horticulture, fast food and hospitality industries.

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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

The Fair Work Ombudsman is committed to providing advice that you can rely on. The information contained on this website is general in nature. If you are unsure about how it applies to your situation you can call our Infoline on 13 13 94 or speak with a union, industry association or workplace relations professional. Visitors are warned that this site may inadvertently contain names or pictures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have recently died.