

Young workers urged to know their rights this summer

19 December 2013

The Fair Work Ombudsman is encouraging young workers taking up part-time and casual jobs this summer to learn about their workplace entitlements to ensure they receive their full pay.

Acting Fair Work Ombudsman Michael Campbell said many young workers will enter the workforce for the first time or start a new casual job this summer and knowing what their minimum entitlements are will help them to check they're being paid correctly.

"Young workers who aren't aware of their workplace entitlements are at greater risk of being underpaid this summer without realising it," Mr Campbell said.

"For young workers, every cent counts, so it's important to know what you are entitled to, including minimum hourly rates and extra pay for overtime, weekend and public holiday work.

"An awareness of your workplace rights is the best defence against being underpaid or treated unfairly at work."

Other key things for young workers to be aware of include:

- You should get a pay slip within one day of pay day that details how much you're getting paid and what hours you're getting paid for.
- It's likely you're entitled to meal or rest breaks at specific times, so check your modern award or agreement for further details, or ask your employer if you're not sure.
- Unpaid trials aren't okay. Demonstrating a skill, such as making a coffee, is OK - but you should be paid for all hours you work, including trial shifts, probation, meetings, training and opening and closing the business.
- Your employer can't take money out of your pay if customers leave without paying, if the cash registers are short or if you accidentally break something.
- You can't be sacked or treated adversely for asking about your pay, conditions or contacting the Fair Work Ombudsman for advice.

Mr Campbell said keeping a diary with a record of the dates of shifts worked, start and finish times and meal breaks can help workers check that their pay slips and pay add up correctly.

"Parents can help by encouraging their children to keep a record of events that can be referred to at a later time if their child feels they are being underpaid," Mr Campbell said.

The Fair Work Ombudsman's website - www.fairwork.gov.au/youngworkers (www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/young-workers-and-students/default) - contains a range of online tools to help young workers determine their workplace rights and entitlements.

You can also find the Fair Work Ombudsman on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au)  (<https://www.facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au>)

Mr Campbell said employers also need to ensure they are aware of the pay rates that apply to their workplace this festive season to avoid inadvertently underpaying staff.

Employers, workers and parents of young workers with questions about workplace rights or obligations should visit www.fairwork.gov.au or call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

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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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