

Pharmacies the focus of new national campaign

21 January 2013

The Fair Work Ombudsman is writing to more than 7000 pharmacies around Australia as part of a new national education and compliance campaign.

The campaign will promote the range of free tools, templates and advice the Fair Work Ombudsman makes available to employers to help them comply with workplace laws.

Pharmacy operators can access details of the campaign and a range of user-friendly resources at a campaign webpage, www.fairwork.gov.au/pharmacy.

Information available includes details of the modern award covering the majority of pharmacies, the Pharmacy Industry Award 2010, as well as links to record-keeping and pay slip templates, best practice guides, fact sheets and a self-audit checklist.

The website also has tools and resources, such as PayCheck Plus and an Award Finder, to assist employers to calculate the correct pay for employees.

Fair Work Ombudsman, Nicholas Wilson, said key stakeholders, including employer groups and unions, have been briefed on the campaign and are assisting to promote its objectives to their members.

"This campaign provides a great opportunity for employers to improve their awareness and understanding of workplace laws," Mr Wilson said.

In April, the Fair Work Ombudsman will select a total of up to 400 privately owned pharmacies from across all states and territories for audit.

Fair Work inspectors will check employers are paying pharmacists and pharmacy assistants in-line with minimum wage rates, penalty rates, overtime and minimum hours of engagement.

Inspectors will also check employers are complying with record-keeping and pay slip obligations.

Mr Wilson said the pharmacy industry was selected for a national campaign after considering feedback and intelligence from a range of sources and because it has been a persistent source of complaints.

Between July, 2010 and September, 2012, the industry generated almost 200 complaints to the Fair Work Ombudsman.

Last financial year the pharmacy industry generated more than 2300 calls to the Fair Work Infoline, with the majority of calls coming from employees.

The national campaign follows the Fair Work Ombudsman's campaign focused on the pharmacy sector in Queensland in 2011, which recovered \$194,000 in back-pay for more than 1300 underpaid employees.

Mr Wilson said he was conscious that the pharmacy industry employs tens of thousands of workers nationally, including many young workers.

"It is important that we conduct a national campaign to ensure these workers are receiving their full entitlements," Mr Wilson said.

"In cases where Fair Work inspectors find contraventions, they will aim to educate the employer and assist them to voluntarily rectify any issues and put processes in place to ensure ongoing compliance.

"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."

Employers or employees seeking assistance should contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 or visit www.fairwork.gov.au. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

Employers and employees can sign up to receive the Fair Work Ombudsman's eNewsletter at www.fairwork.gov.au/enewsletter (www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/newsletter/default).

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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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