

## Don't wait – check holiday pay rates now

15 December 2014

The Fair Work Ombudsman today urged employers and employees to check the pay rates and entitlements that apply over Christmas and the New Year.

“Whether you are an employer gearing up for a busy festive trading period, or an employee working through the holidays, it’s important you are aware of your workplace rights and obligations,” says Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James.

Many businesses continue to trade over Christmas and New Year and staff working over these holidays will be entitled to applicable penalty rates.

In most cases, the Fair Work Ombudsman finds that underpayment of penalty rates is the result of employers failing to understand their obligations.

“This can result in hefty bills for back-payment of wages that they were not budgeting for,” Ms James says, and encouraged employers to find out penalties and leave arrangements should they be closing down over the holidays.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has updated the [public holidays section of its website \(www.fairwork.gov.au/leave/public-holidays/list-of-public-holidays/default\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/leave/public-holidays/list-of-public-holidays/default) with a list of holidays in each State and Territory and information about pay rates for employees working on these days.

The website also has advice on how to request or decline work on public holidays, what employers need to pay on public holidays that fall during annual leave, shutting down a workplace over Christmas and New Year and other frequently asked questions.

“We’ve updated our website to help employers and workers understand and comply with their rights and obligations with a minimum of stress this festive season,” Ms James said.

Workers and employers seeking assistance can also call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94, with a free interpreter service available on 13 14 50.

Ms James says the Fair Work Infoline typically receives a rise in calls at this time of year from employers and workers seeking advice about their rights and obligations.

“Our Fair Work Infoline Advisers are fully equipped to provide information and advice on workplace queries related to the festive season,” she said.

The Infoline will close at 12.30pm (local time) on Christmas Eve. It will be open from 9am to 5pm (local time) each day between Christmas and New Year, except on public holidays.

Small business employers calling the Infoline can opt to receive priority service by being put through to the Small Business Helpline.

It has already assisted more than 150,000 callers since its launch 12 months ago.

Follow Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James on Twitter [@NatJamesFWO](https://twitter.com/NatJamesFWO) (<http://twitter.com/NatJamesFWO>), the Fair Work Ombudsman [@fairwork\\_gov\\_au](https://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au) ([http://twitter.com/fairwork\\_gov\\_au](http://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au)) or find us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au](http://www.facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au) (<http://www.facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au>).

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## Contact us

Fair Work Online: [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://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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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.