

## Tips for young workers starting a new job

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Young people starting a new job can now access a new online learning course with helpful tips and advice on employment issues that affect them.

The interactive online course has been developed by the Fair Work Ombudsman to assist new employees settle quickly into their workplace and become a valued member of staff.

Starting a New Job assists young people to understand their rights at work, what questions to ask about their entitlements and appropriate behaviour in the workplace.

The course allows users to “practice talking to their new boss” and runs through a checklist of things they need for their first day on the job.

There is also a dedicated section for parents and guardians where they can get helpful hints and advice on how to support young people entering the workforce for the first time.

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James says that starting a new job should be an exciting time, but it can also be a little nerve-racking for first-time workers.

“We want to help make the experience a positive one,” she said.

“It’s important young people get off to the best start, become productive employees and make the most of their opportunity.”

Ms James says many workplaces have “rules” that young people may not be used to and the new program assists them to understand the importance of adhering to them.

These include punctuality, dress codes, use of social media, emails and mobile phones and other obligations.

“Similarly, the new learning module recognises that young people can be vulnerable if they are not fully aware of their workplace rights, and assists them to understand where they can go for information and advice,” Ms James said.

Available at [www.fairwork.gov.au/learning](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/learning) ([www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/online-learning-centre](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/online-learning-centre)), it is one of a number of interactive courses developed by the Fair Work Ombudsman as part of its educative role.

Ms James says education plays a key role in avoiding disputes in the workplace. “Having a positive workplace culture is the best employment protection anyone can surely find,” she said.

Starting a New Job covers topics and issues such as:

### Pay

- Knowing how to find out what your entitlements are
- Understanding the difference between part-time and casual employment
- Whether you should be getting paid superannuation
- What to do if you don’t think you’re getting your proper entitlements

### Start times and location

- Checking your start time before your first shift, and whether you need to arrive early to complete any paperwork
- Confirming the address of your workplace, especially if there is more than one site
- Knowing who to report to when you arrive on your first day

### Understanding your duties

- The importance of checking that you understand what your main duties are
- Knowing what to do if it’s quiet or who to speak to if you have any questions about your job
- Finding out about, and adhering to, workplace policies around email, social media and personal phone calls

### What to wear

- Knowing the dress code and whether there is a policy about piercings, tattoos or hairstyles

- Enquiring about whether there's a uniform
- If there is, checking whether it will be provided or you will be reimbursed for buying it
- Finding out if there are any safety rules about clothes, shoes or jewellery

### What to do if you are sick or running late

- Knowing who to contact if you are sick or running late
- Being aware of how to contact that person, i.e. is text or email ok, or do you need to call
- Knowing if you're required to provide a medical certificate or statutory declaration if you take sick leave

The course also canvasses some common workplace myths that young workers may believe to be acceptable and be reluctant to question.

- MYTH: Employees don't need to be paid for time spent opening and closing a store or attending training and meetings outside normal work hours.
- FACT: Employees must be paid for all the time that they are required to work. For example, if an employee is required to be at work at 7.45am to prepare for an 8am store opening, they need to be paid from 7.45am.
- MYTH: Employers can make deductions from an employee's wages to cover losses arising from cash register discrepancies, breakages and customers who don't pay.
- FACT: Unauthorised deductions from an employee's pay are unlawful. Deductions can be made only in very limited circumstances.

The Fair Work Ombudsman's new website - which will be launched this month - allows people to search for the answers they need, save them to their own account and then access them at any time, including on their mobile.

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