

Workers across regional Victoria back-paid

18 June 2014

A number of workers throughout regional Victoria have been back-paid almost \$50,000 in wages and entitlements following recent intervention by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

The biggest recovery was \$20,000 for an Echuca café manager, aged in her 20s, who lodged a complaint after not being paid for extra hours worked over a 12-month period in 2012-2013.

The underpayment occurred because the employee was paid a salary which did not include payment for the extra hours she was required to work to perform duties such as rostering, ordering stock and opening and closing.

Employees should generally be paid for work performed outside their normal hours, such as meetings, training and tasks such as balancing cash registers and opening and closing the business.

"It is important regional Victorian employers are aware of the workplace laws that apply to their business, otherwise they can end up facing back-payment bills they weren't budgeting for," says Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James.

Ms James said the employees were reimbursed without the need for further enforcement action after Fair Work inspectors contacted the employers and explained their obligations under workplace laws.

"We're confident the underpayments were inadvertent and it's pleasing that employers accepted assistance from inspectors to put processes in place to ensure errors aren't repeated," she said.

Other recent recoveries include:

- \$10,900 for an apprentice tradesman at Port Fairy underpaid his industry, tool and special allowance entitlements between 2009 and 2013,
- \$6500 for a Warrnambool truck driver not paid his annual leave and long service leave entitlements upon termination of employment in 2012,
- \$5500 for a Warracknabeal worker not paid his annual leave, overtime rates and living away from home allowances upon termination of employment in 2013, and
- \$5000 for a Mildura fast food worker underpaid the minimum hourly rate and penalty rates for weekend and public holiday work between November 2010 and October 2011, as well as her annual leave entitlements on termination of employment.

Fair Work inspectors also informed employers about the range of free tools and resources available at www.fairwork.gov.au to help them comply with workplace laws.

Employers and employees seeking reliable advice can visit the website or call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

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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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