

Help for hiring staff on hand for small businesses

25 March 2014

The Fair Work Ombudsman today launched a guide to hiring new employees for small business, offering straight-forward advice about employing new staff.

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James says the guide was created to give small business operators advice in plain-English about the best way to employ new workers and to outline their workplace obligations in simple terms.

The guide, which offers step-by-step processes and best practice recruitment tips, can be downloaded at www.fairwork.gov.au/hiring (www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/small-business/hiring-employees) .

Federal Employment Minister, Senator Eric Abetz, welcomed the initiative.

"This initiative was foreshadowed in the Coalition's Policy to Improve the Fair Work Laws," Senator Abetz said.

"This new guide will help small business people to navigate the Fair Work Laws and make it easier to employ more people," Senator Abetz said.

Ms James said the guide to hiring new employees will help small business recruit the right people and grow their business by understanding the process of hiring staff.

The guide will be complemented by an interactive online learning course that employers can access for free to improve their skills in hiring and inducting new staff. The course includes an interactive tool to help employers build a profile of the employee they want to hire and a video activity to help them practice their interview skills.

The course will be available at the Online Learning Centre on the Fair Work Ombudsman's website at www.fairwork.gov.au/learning (www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/online-training/default) .

Another course titled 'Difficult conversations in the workplace' has practical tips to assist employers develop the skills and confidence to have a difficult conversation in the workplace and minimise disputes.

"Encouraging communication in the workplace and equipping people with the information they need to resolve workplace issues is important for us," Ms James said.

"By providing employers with reliable and credible tools and resources, we are able to help them better understand their options for resolution and how to work at best practice."

Feedback was sought from a number of representative bodies when creating the guide to hiring new employees and online learning course.

"We're serious about getting input from those who are part of the small business community, and tailoring our services to suit their needs. Consultation is a really important part of our work," Ms James said.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has a particular focus on assisting small businesses to understand and meet their obligations to employees.

"Small businesses often don't have the benefit of in-house human resources and payroll staff, so we place a high priority on assisting them and developing tools and resources to make it easier for them to understand and comply with workplace law," Ms James said.

Earlier this month, the Fair Work Ombudsman met with members of the small business community at a Roundtable in Melbourne to discuss how the Fair Work agencies can better assist small business.

The discussion was co-hosted by the Fair Work Ombudsman, Fair Work Commission General Manager Bernadette O'Neill and Director of Fair Work Building and Construction, Nigel Hadgkiss.

The Commonwealth Small Business Minister, the Hon. Bruce Billson, also attended the forum, spoke to participants and fielded questions.

Ms James said the aim of the Roundtable was to hear first-hand how the small business community could be further supported to make their interactions with workplace laws as straightforward as possible.

"Understanding the perspectives of small business helps us - both as regulators and adjudicators - to assess whether we are adequately supporting the needs of those who require our help," she said.

The Fair Work Ombudsman has recently established a dedicated Small Business Strategy Team that has been tasked with responding to the needs of small businesses.

A dedicated webpage for small business, including free tools and resources, is available at www.fairwork.gov.au/smallbusiness (www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/small-business/default) .

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

Small business employers calling the Fair Work Infoline can opt to be put through to the Small Business Helpline to receive priority service.

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Media inquiries:

Penny Rowe, Media & Stakeholder Relations

0457 924 146

penelope.rowe@fwo.gov.au (<mailto:penelope.rowe@fwo.gov.au>)

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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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