

Canberra businesses earmarked for attention

21 April 2015

The Fair Work Ombudsman will randomly audit dozens of Canberra businesses over the next few weeks as part of its latest education and compliance campaign in the ACT.

Fair Work inspectors will check that employers are paying the correct minimum hourly rates, penalty rates, allowances and loadings and are providing meal breaks.

Compliance with record-keeping and pay slip obligations will also be monitored.

The campaign will focus on businesses from a range of sectors, including retail, hairdressing and beauty services, cafes, restaurants and the take-away food industry.

These are the industries that have generated the most requests for assistance from Canberra employees over the past four years.

Fair Work inspectors will contact employers in the City, Braddon, Dickson, Belconnen, Bruce, Holt and Gungahlin, where there are large numbers of small businesses.

While the ACT generates the lowest number of requests for assistance from employees, a large number are substantiated and require businesses to reimburse workers underpaid their wages and entitlements.

In 2013, about \$280,000 was repaid to almost 500 restaurant and café staff in Canberra after auditing of 179 businesses revealed almost 60 per cent were non-compliant with workplace laws.

Acting Fair Work Ombudsman Michael Campbell says the Agency hopes to find higher levels of compliance this year following recent activity in the ACT.

The ACT has been included in recent education and compliance campaigns on hair and beauty, hospitality, the pharmacy sector, specialised food retailing, the motor vehicle industry, liquor stores and furniture/floor coverings.

Mr Campbell says the aim of the latest Canberra campaign is to ensure employers are aware of their workplace responsibilities and how the Fair Work Ombudsman can assist businesses to access, understand and apply information to build a culture of compliance.

"It's important we check that workers are being paid correctly, but we also want to be pro-active about ensuring employers understand their obligations," he said.

Last financial year the Fair Work Ombudsman's campaigns team pro-actively audited 4567 employers throughout Australia, resulting in more than \$4 million in unpaid wages and entitlements being recouped for 7541 employees.

Employers and employees seeking assistance can contact the Fair Work Ombudsman via the website or call the Infoline on 13 13 94. An interpreter service is also available on 13 14 50.

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

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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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