

Ensure a 'gift' of festive fairness at work

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The Fair Work Ombudsman has 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.

"While most people are looking forward to a break this festive season, many people will be working, and it's important they receive the correct wages."

Underpayment of penalty rates can happen over holiday periods if employers are unaware of their workplace obligations.

"Unfortunately, this can result in hefty bills for back-payment of wages down the track – bills that employers were not budgeting for," Ms James says.

She says the Fair Work Ombudsman website www.fairwork.gov.au is the ideal starting point for workers and employers seeking assistance.

Ms James says anyone with a work-related query can take advantage of the wide range of tools, resources and videos on the website to assist them in determining their entitlements and obligations.

The website also features a dedicated section for calculating the applicable public holiday pay rates in each State and Territory at www.fairwork.gov.au/publicolidays (www.fairwork.gov.au/leave/public-holidays/default)

Advice includes 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.

Ms James says young people taking their first job over the summer holidays should also visit the website to ensure their pay rates are correct.

"One of the best defences for young people against being treated unfairly at work is an awareness of their workplace rights," she said.

The Fair Work Infoline is available on 13 13 94 during the holiday season. A free interpreter service is available on 13 14 50.

The Infoline will operate on Christmas Eve from 8.30am to 12.30pm and on December 29-31 from 9am to 5pm.

"I urge everyone to visit the website," Ms James says. "Why wait on the phone when the answers to your questions might already be waiting for you online."

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) or find us on Facebook 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

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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