

Car detailer back-paid more than \$16,800

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A car detailer in the NSW Hunter Valley has been back-paid more than \$16,800 after years of being short-changed his wages.

The 35-year-old employee was not paid his correct minimum wage or weekend penalty rates for five years.

The worker was paid a maximum of \$16.50 an hour on weekdays, \$24.75 on Saturdays and \$34.89 on Sundays.

He should have received up to \$21.61 on weekdays, \$30.25 on Saturdays and \$38.90 on Sundays.

The casual employee has now been fully reimbursed all outstanding entitlements after seeking assistance from the Fair Work Ombudsman.

After talking to the employer, the business agreed to voluntarily rectify the underpayments - dating back to May, 2011.

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James says the business, near Newcastle, has been appropriately educated about its obligations and given information about the free tools and resources on offer at www.fairwork.gov.au

"Employers in the Hunter region need to be aware that there are minimum wage rates, they apply to all workers, and they are not negotiable," Ms James said.

She says that because the employer has co-operated, agreed to repay all money owed and ensure ongoing compliance with its obligations, it has avoided enforcement action.

"Our focus is on educating employers about their obligations and assisting them to put processes in place to ensure that any errors we find don't occur again," Ms James said.

"Our online tools and resources can assist employers to determine their applicable Modern Award, as well as classification and pay rates, including base pay rates, allowances, overtime and penalty rates."

Employers can ensure they meet their workplace obligations by registering with the Fair Work Ombudsman's 'My Account' feature, a personal workplace relations portal that provides users with information and resources tailored to their business.

In 'My Account' employers can view and save pay rates and awards applicable to their business, seek advice by lodging online enquiries, receive alerts about minimum wage increases, and view recommended industry information about workplace laws in their industry.

Managers can also access the FWO Knowledge Connect feature (Kconnect), a collaborative online space where industry members can share knowledge and experience, engage with other members and contribute to building a culture of compliance with workplace laws in their industry.

Ms James said the Fair Work Ombudsman was striving to build a culture of compliance with workplace laws in Australia by providing practical advice that is easy to access, understand and apply.

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