

Gold Coast apprentice paid less than \$10 an hour

4 May 2016

A Gold Coast apprentice paid less than \$10 an hour has been reimbursed thousands of dollars following intervention by the Fair Work Ombudsman.

The female apprentice was paid a flat rate of just \$9.21 an hour for most of her employment with a local firm.

She contacted the Fair Work Ombudsman seeking assistance after her requests to be paid the lawful minimum wage were rebuffed by her employer.

Fair Work inspectors subsequently determined that as a first-year adult apprentice, the worker was entitled to a minimum of \$15.71 an hour on weekdays, \$17.67 for early morning shifts, \$23.56 on Saturdays, \$31.42 on Sundays and \$39.27 on public holidays.

As a result, she was short-changed more than \$17,000 over almost 12 months.

The employer told Fair Work inspectors he was unaware adult apprentices were entitled to a higher pay rate than juniors.

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James says the business has now been educated about its workplace obligations and the need to pay minimum wage rates.

"Employers must take steps to understand the Award/s that cover their business and the penalties that apply to the hours of work," she said.

Ms James says that given the employer co-operated, agreed to repay all money owed and ensure ongoing compliance with its obligations, it avoided further enforcement action.

Employers with uncertainty about their workplace practices can call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 or visit www.fairwork.gov.au.

Small businesses calling the Infoline can opt to be put through to a priority service for assistance.

The Fair Work Ombudsman's website provides an easy-to-access portal to a wide range of free information aimed at helping both employers and employees understand their respective rights and obligations.

Included on the website is template documentation to use when hiring, managing and dismissing staff, including letters of engagement and probation, timesheet and pay-slip templates, leave application forms and a self-audit check list.

The recently-launched mobile-friendly Pay and Conditions Tool (PACT) can assist business owners to calculate the correct pay for their employees and a series of Best Practice Guides is available on a range of topics, including "Small Business and the Fair Work Act".

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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