

## Unpaid work

Unpaid work can occur in the workforce in different forms - from vocational placements to unpaid job placements, internships, work experience and trials. They are entered into for a number of reasons. These include:

- to give a person experience in a job or industry
- to provide training and skills and/or work experience as part of formal programs to assist people to obtain work
- to test a person's job skills, or
- to volunteer time and effort to a not-for-profit organisation.

Not paying the person doing the work in some of these arrangements can be lawful. For example, for defined vocational placements, or where a job seeker is not an employee, but rather is receiving benefits from the government and undertaking a work placement as part of a Commonwealth employment program.

In cases where the person is actually an employee, they are entitled to pay and conditions under the Fair Work Act.

If a person is an employee, they may also need to complete formal or informal training to make sure they have the right skills and knowledge to perform their job. This can include on-the-job training, online or formal training courses or team training.

If an employee has to do training as part of their job, they have to be paid the right pay for those hours worked.

Employees also have to be paid the right pay for time spent in team meetings or opening and closing the business, if their employer requires them to be there.

### Example: Payment for training

Joe just started as a sales assistant in a shop. Before his first shift, he had to complete an online course that showed him how to use the cash register and explained all the company policies. This took him 2 hours. When he finished the course he worked 3 hours on the shop floor.

Because the training was compulsory, Joe had to be paid for the 2 hours he spent doing the online training as well as the 3 hours he worked on the shop floor.

Find out about types of unpaid work arrangements and some of the problems that can occur with:

- [Unpaid trials \(www.fairwork.gov.au/pay/unpaid-work/unpaid-trials\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/pay/unpaid-work/unpaid-trials)
- [Student placements \(www.fairwork.gov.au/Pay/Unpaid-work/student-placements\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/Pay/Unpaid-work/student-placements)
- [Work experience and internships \(www.fairwork.gov.au/Pay/Unpaid-work/work-experience-and-internships\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/Pay/Unpaid-work/work-experience-and-internships) .

### What to do next

- Learn more about your rights and responsibilities at work with our [Starting a new job course \(https://www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/online-training/online-learning-centre/starting-a-new-job\)](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/online-training/online-learning-centre/starting-a-new-job)

## Contact us

Fair Work Online: [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://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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