

# Piecework arrangements employer checklist

## For employers hiring pieceworkers under the Horticulture Award

Under the Horticulture Award (the Award), there are requirements that an employer must follow when engaging pieceworkers.

These include:

- a minimum wage guarantee for each day that pieceworkers work
- a way to calculate piece rates according to the average competent pieceworker
- a requirement for employers to create piecework records for their pieceworkers
- an obligation for employers to record the number of hours their pieceworkers work and the piece rate that applied.

There are also rules around how employers advertise jobs. If you are advertising a pieceworker position where the employee would also be entitled to a periodic rate of pay (for example, an hourly or weekly rate), you need to:

- specify the periodic pay rate that applies, or
- state in the ad that a periodic pay rate will apply.



**Important:** Make sure you're using the latest version of this resource. Download it from our Pay and piece rates page at [horticulture.fairwork.gov.au/pay-and-piece-rates](https://horticulture.fairwork.gov.au/pay-and-piece-rates)

## Who this checklist is for

This checklist is for employers making piecework arrangements under the Award.

## How to use this checklist

Employers can use this checklist to:

- ensure the piecework requirements under the Award are met
- ensure piecework records comply with the Award and workplace laws
- understand what to do once a piecework record commences.

**Check out our other resources at [fairwork.gov.au/horticulture](https://fairwork.gov.au/horticulture)**



Use our [Piecework record template \(Word\) \(PDF\)](#) to quickly and easily create a piecework record that meets the requirements of the Award.



Use our [Piecework timesheet template \(Word\) \(PDF\)](#) to help record your pieceworkers' hours of work, outputs and piece rates.



Use our [Piecework reconciliation template \(Word\) \(PDF\)](#) to check that the amount you're paying your pieceworkers meets the minimum wage guarantee.



Use our [Piecework rules have changed information sheet \(Word\) \(PDF\)](#) to help explain the changes that applied from April 2022.

# Employer checklist



## Summary

This checklist will take you through the following key steps:

### Understand your obligations

- ☐ **Step 1** – Familiarise yourself with your obligations
- ☐ **Step 2** – Explain piecework rules to your employees

### Create a piecework record

- ☐ **Step 3** – Create your piecework record
- ☐ **Step 4** – Check the piece rates are compliant
- ☐ **Step 5** – Be clear about what work is covered by the piecework record
- ☐ **Step 6** – Help your employees understand their piecework record
- ☐ **Step 7** – Give the piecework record to your pieceworker **before they start**
- ☐ **Step 8** – Keep a copy
- ☐ **Step 9** – Review your rates
- ☐ **Step 10** – What if I need to make changes?

### Pay piece rates

- ☐ **Step 11** – Record all hours worked by your pieceworkers and applicable piece rates
- ☐ **Step 12** – Check the minimum wage guarantee
- ☐ **Step 13** – Check if any other entitlements apply.

Information on each step is included below.

## Understand your obligations

### ☐ **Step 1** – Familiarise yourself with your obligations

Understand what your obligations are and ensure your business has adopted any necessary changes.



For information on the rules about piecework arrangements visit our Horticulture Showcase at [fairwork.gov.au/horticulture](https://fairwork.gov.au/horticulture)

Keep up to date with any changes by subscribing to our email updates at [fairwork.gov.au/emailupdates](https://fairwork.gov.au/emailupdates)

## ☐ Step 2 – Explain piecework rules to your employees

Talk to your pieceworkers about the rules. Key messages can include:

- there is a minimum wage guarantee for each day that pieceworkers work
- the piece rate has to allow for a pieceworker working at the average productivity of a competent pieceworker to earn the equivalent of at least 15% above the minimum hourly rate for the employee's classification. For casuals, the rules specify that the minimum hourly rate includes the casual loading, so the 15% calculation is done on top of the casual loading
- a piecework record must be given to a pieceworker before they start a piecework task
- hours of work will need to be recorded each day along with the piece rate that applied to those hours worked.



Our Consultation and cooperation in the workplace best practice guide can help you plan your consultation approach with best practice suggestions. Download a copy at [fairwork.gov.au/bestpracticeguides](https://fairwork.gov.au/bestpracticeguides)

### Create a piecework record

## ☐ Step 3 – Create your piecework record

You must give your pieceworker a written piecework record signed by you, the employer, before they can start a piecework task for you. A piecework record can cover more than one piecework task, for example, picking strawberries, packing apples or pruning grape vines.



Use our [Piecework record template \(Word\) \(PDF\)](#) to quickly and easily create a piecework record. Download a copy from our Pay and piece rates page at [horticulture.fairwork.gov.au/pay-and-piece-rates](https://horticulture.fairwork.gov.au/pay-and-piece-rates)

Other piecework record templates are acceptable. If you create your own, it must be in writing and signed by you, the employer. At a minimum, it must include the:

- ☐ date and time the piecework is to commence
- ☐ task for which the piece rate will be paid
- ☐ amount of the piece rate
- ☐ hourly rate for the pieceworker (including the 25% casual loading if the employee is casual)
- ☐ statement 'Under the Horticulture Award 2020 a pieceworker must be paid for each day on which they work no less than their hourly rate under the award (including the 25% casual loading for a casual pieceworker) multiplied by the number of hours worked on that day.'

## ☐ Step 4 – Check the piece rates are compliant

When you set a piece rate, you must ensure it allows a pieceworker working at the average productivity of a pieceworker competent at the piecework task to earn at least 15% more than they would if paid the applicable hourly rate. The rules specify that the applicable hourly rate for casuals includes the casual loading.



**For example:** For adult employees at a Level 1 classification under the Award, the applicable hourly rate from 1 July 2025 would be:

- **\$24.28 per hour** for full-time or part-time employees
- **\$30.35 per hour** (\$24.28 + 25%) for casual employees.

For your piece rate calculations, you would need to apply the **15% on top** of these rates. This would mean that your pieceworker, when working at the required productivity, would need to earn at least:

- **\$27.92 per hour** (\$24.28 plus 15%) if they are full-time or part-time, or
- **\$34.90 per hour** (\$30.35 plus 15%) if they are casual.

**Remember:** Minimum pay rates are reviewed annually and any increases usually apply from the first full pay period on or after 1 July each year.

Check award rates using our Pay guide at [fairwork.gov.au/payguides](https://fairwork.gov.au/payguides)



It's good practice to keep a record of how your piece rates are calculated. This includes details of the average productivity of a pieceworker competent at the piecework task (that is, a worker with at least 76 hours experience).



Find more information on how to calculate these amounts on our Pay and piece rates page at [horticulture.fairwork.gov.au/pay-and-piece-rates](https://horticulture.fairwork.gov.au/pay-and-piece-rates)

There are also further examples on this page to help you apply the minimum wage guarantee.

#### ☐ **Step 5 – Be clear about what work is covered by the piecework record**

If your pieceworker does any work in addition to the piecework task(s) mentioned in their piecework record, make sure you pay them for this additional work at their hourly rate.

#### ☐ **Step 6 – Help your employees understand their piecework record**

If an employee's understanding of written English is limited, it's best practice to help your employee understand their piecework record. This may include translating it into their language.



The Horticulture Showcase has information that can be translated into multiple languages by selecting the language in the top right-hand corner, such as Chinese, Spanish or Vietnamese.

For information on piecework arrangements in other languages, visit [fairwork.gov.au/horticulture](https://fairwork.gov.au/horticulture)

### ☐ Step 7 – Give the piecework record to your pieceworker before they start

You must give your pieceworker the signed piecework record **before** they begin any piecework task. Give them a chance to ask any questions they might have about it.

### ☐ Step 8 – Keep a copy

You must keep a copy of each piecework record given to a pieceworker as an employee record.



Complete our Record-keeping and pay slips course to learn more about your record-keeping obligations at [fairwork.gov.au/learning](https://fairwork.gov.au/learning)

### ☐ Step 9 – Review your rates

It's your responsibility as the employer to ensure the piece rates you pay are compliant at all times.

Piecework rates should be reviewed and adjusted in line with:

- changes to the Award rates
- changes in the workforce, crop or business that may affect productivity.



Check the Award at [library.fairwork.gov.au/award/?krm=MA000028](https://library.fairwork.gov.au/award/?krm=MA000028)



Sign up for our emails and keep up to date with important workplace issues relevant to you, such as pay and award changes at [fairwork.gov.au/emailupdates](https://fairwork.gov.au/emailupdates)

### ☐ Step 10 – What if I need to make changes?

**Make any changes in writing.** If you want to change your employee's piece rates, you must first give them a new piecework record that includes the new rates.

## Pay piece rates

### ☐ Step 11 – Record all hours worked by your pieceworkers and applicable piece rates

In addition to your other employment records, make sure you keep a record for each pieceworker that includes:

- ☐ the hours they worked each day
- ☐ their output (that is the amount picked, packed or pruned)
- ☐ their piece rate and hourly rates for the work they perform (set out in their piecework record)
- ☐ the total amount you paid them.



You can use our [Piecework timesheet template \(Word\) \(PDF\)](#) to help record your pieceworkers' hours of work, outputs and piece rates. Download a copy from our Pay and piece rates page at [horticulture.fairwork.gov.au/pay-piece-rates](https://horticulture.fairwork.gov.au/pay-piece-rates)

## □ Step 12 – Check the minimum wage guarantee

Each day a pieceworker works they have a minimum wage guarantee. This means that pieceworkers have to be paid the **higher amount** of either:

- what they earned for their day's work under the piece rate; or
- what they would have earned for the day based on their hourly rate, that is their minimum hourly rate (including any casual loading) under the Award multiplied by the number of hours they worked that day.



**Good record-keeping** will help you to ensure you meet the minimum wage guarantee.



You can use our [Piecework reconciliation template \(Word\) \(PDF\)](#) to check that the amount you're paying your pieceworkers meets the minimum wage guarantee. Download a copy from our Pay and piece rates page at [horticulture.fairwork.gov.au/pay-piece-rates](https://horticulture.fairwork.gov.au/pay-piece-rates)



**Examples** to help you apply the minimum wage guarantee can be found on our How to use piece rates page at [horticulture.fairwork.gov.au/use-piece-rates](https://horticulture.fairwork.gov.au/use-piece-rates)

## □ Step 13 – Check if any other entitlements apply

You should check the Award to make sure you understand all your obligations in relation to pieceworkers and their entitlements. You can find the award at [library.fairwork.gov.au/award/?krm=MA000028](https://library.fairwork.gov.au/award/?krm=MA000028)

**For example – a pieceworker:**



will be paid **200% of their piece rate** for work on a public holiday



can still be paid some allowances such as first aid or wet work allowances but not a meal allowance.



Check our Horticulture Showcase for information on Award provisions at [fairwork.gov.au/horticulture](https://fairwork.gov.au/horticulture). We encourage you to check it regularly for further updates.

The Fair Work Ombudsman is committed to providing you with advice that you can rely on.

The information contained in this template is general in nature. If you are unsure about how it applies to your situation you can call our Infoline on 13 13 94 or speak with a union, industry association or a workplace relations professional.