

Minimum wages fact sheet

Overview

A minimum wage is an employee's base rate of pay for ordinary hours worked. It's generally dependent on the industrial instrument that applies to their employment. For example, an award or enterprise agreement.

Employees can't be paid less than their applicable minimum wage, even if they agree to it.

What is the current National Minimum Wage?

From 1 July 2026 the National Minimum Wage is \$26.44 per hour or \$1004.90 per week before tax.

This is the adult minimum rate for employees not covered by an award or enterprise agreement. Casual employees covered by the National Minimum Wage also get a 25% casual loading.

Different types of minimum wages

Employees with disability may receive a lower rate if their disability affects their productivity. Lower rates may also apply to juniors, apprentices and trainees.

Pay rates for award and agreement free apprentices and trainees are based on the Miscellaneous Award. All other entitlements come from the Fair Work Act, including the National Employment Standards.

Employees covered by an award

Most employees in the national workplace relations system are covered by an award. Awards contain the minimum wage, as well as other terms and conditions, for employees in particular industries and occupations.

Minimum wages under awards may include:

- pay rates for adults, in some cases, at different rates according to experience and qualifications
- pay rates for juniors, employees with disability, and employees to whom training arrangements apply
- casual loadings
- piece rates.

Award rates are sometimes lower than the National Minimum Wage. For example, introductory rates might apply for a limited time after an employee starts their job.

An employee can't agree to be paid less than the minimum pay rates that apply for their job.

For more information on awards, see our Awards section at fairwork.gov.au/awards

To find the minimum wage under an award, use our Pay Calculator (PACT) at fairwork.gov.au/pact

Who determines minimum wages?

Every year, the Fair Work Commission's Expert Panel reviews the minimum wages received by employees in the national workplace relations system.

The review considers:

- written submissions from interested organisations and individuals
- consultations before the Expert Panel
- research commissioned by the Expert Panel.

At the end of this review, the Fair Work Commission issues their Annual Wage Review Decision, which includes a National Minimum Wage Order. Any required changes to employees' pay usually apply from the first full pay period on or after 1 July each year.

What is a National Minimum Wage Order?

A National Minimum Wage Order outlines the National Minimum Wage for that year. It only applies to award and agreement free employees

The National Minimum Wage Order must set the following wages for award and agreement free employees:

- a National Minimum Wage for adults
- a special National Minimum Wage for:
 - trainees, apprentices and junior employees
 - employees to whom training arrangements apply
 - employees with disability
- a casual loading.

For more information about the Annual Wage Review and the National Minimum Wage Order, see sections 285–299 of the Fair Work Act.

Contact us

Fair Work online: fairwork.gov.au

Fair Work Infoline: **13 13 94**

Need language help?

Contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on **13 14 50**

Help for people who are deaf or have hearing or speech difficulties

You can contact us through the National Relay Service (NRS).

Select your [preferred access option](#) and give our phone number: **13 13 94**

The Fair Work Ombudsman is committed to providing you with advice that you can rely on. The information contained in this fact sheet 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.

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