

Ignorance is No Excuse

Small businesses face crippling penalties under the new Fair Work Act. In a recent example, a company with two employees was fined \$282,000 for non-compliance.

A director was fined \$29,700, and his company \$148,500, for underpaying two employees \$20,984.

A director and company were fined \$62,000 for underpaying an apprentice \$4,426.

Failing to follow correct procedure when dismissing an employee could bring fines of more than \$33,100.

The new law makes it harder for employers to refuse more flexible working hours, and can face fines of up to \$6,600 for non-compliance.

The Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) is auditing tens of thousands of businesses as well as responding to employee complaints. Given the highly active FWO and the ease with which employees can make complaints, the chances of businesses being prosecuted for

workplace relations breaches are greater now than ever before.

Is your business compliant with the new Fair Work Act? If not, huge penalties can apply. For example, paying correct wage entitlements (including obligations to pay new minimum wages, overtime, penalty rates, etc. under the correct modern award); how you manage redundancies, employee requests for more flexible working hours, poor performance, and ensuring that your employment contracts are legally compliant.



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