

MEMBERS UPDATE



**FEBRUARY
2021**



In this month's members update we look at:

- Stage 3 of Modern Award increases
- Changes to overtime for casuals under Aged Care Award
- Fair Work Commission Modern Award Pay (MAP) database
- ACT to extend COVID-19 Payroll Tax exemptions to 30 June 2021
- JobMaker Hiring Credit Update
- Changes to unpaid parental leave entitlements

Welcome to the February 2021 member's update

There are no signs that 2021 will be a quieter year than 2020, with Stage 3 of the Modern Awards coming into effect this month and more changes to overtime for casuals under the Aged Care Award effective from the start of March. The FWC has provided a useful tool to help us track all these Award rate changes over the last 6 years which is worth exploring. Fair Work have also announced towards the end of last year some specific changes for unpaid parental leave entitlements.

Due to Covid, there are still changes in relation to Payroll Tax, in particular in ACT and the government has released details on the JobMaker Hiring Credit as part of its economic stimulus package.

Stage 3 of Modern Award increases

The new minimum wages will start in 27 Awards from the first full pay period starting on or after 1 February 2021, including Fast Food Industry Award, General Retail Industry Award, Nursery Award. The Fair Work Commission announced a 1.75% increase to minimum wages for all Award wages. This is the final Group Award increases, with the FWC taking a staggered approach beginning with Stage 1 from 1 July 2020 and Stage 2 from 1 November 2020.

For a full list of the Awards impacted:

<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/website-news/the-commission-has-announced-a-1-75-increase-to-minimum-wages#group-3>

Changes to overtime for casuals under Aged Care Award

Whilst most of the changes to overtime casual rates started the first full pay period on/after 20 November 2020, the changes under the Aged Care Award will not take place until the first full pay period on or after 1 March 2021.

Here is a link to the determination with more details:

<https://www.fwc.gov.au/documents/awardsandorders/html/pr723844.htm>

Fair Work Commission Modern Award Pay (MAP) database

The Fair Work Commission has created MAP (Modern Award Pay database) that details the dollar values for the minimum rates of pay, allowances and penalty rates in all awards for the last 6 years.

The data for each modern award is divided into 5 spreadsheets:

- Awards

- Classifications
- Wage-related allowances
- Expense-related allowances, and
- Penalty rates

Here is the link: https://www.fwc.gov.au/awards-agreements/awards/modern-awards/modern-awards-pay-database?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=1%20Announcements%20-%20publish%20modern%20awards%20data&utm_content=1%20Announcements%20-%20publish%20modern%20awards%20data+CID_32bfad777107b4832ae6c5a001ae8ed4&utm_source=campaign%20monitor&utm_term=Modern%20awards%20pay%20database

ACT to extend COVID-19 Payroll Tax exemptions to 30 June 2021

The Determination applies to wages paid or payable by eligible employers for a specified period—any of the months in the period of 1 December 2020 to 30 June 2021. This instrument commences retrospectively on 1 December 2020 to ensure application to wages paid during December 2020.

Here is the link to the Determination with more details:

<https://legislation.act.gov.au/di/2021-10/>

JobMaker Hiring Credit Update

The ATO has announced details on how to register for the scheme (through the Business Portal). The scheme will see eligible employers to be able to access up to \$200 per week for each eligible additional employee aged 16 to 29 years, and up to \$100 per week for each eligible additional employee aged 30 to 35 years. Eligible employers can claim payments for eligible employees (must meet all the criteria) from the ATO in arrears from 1 February 2021. Once registered, employers will need to add new employees by running a payroll event through STP enabled payroll software (similar to claiming Jobkeeper payments).

More information including eligibility and details on how to register and reporting through STP:

<https://www.ato.gov.au/General/JobMaker-Hiring-Credit/>

Changes to unpaid parental leave entitlements

On 26 November 2020, the Fair Work Act was amended to include new unpaid parental leave entitlements for parents who experience traumatic events during or ahead of their unpaid parental leave. This includes up to 12 months' unpaid parental leave:

- stillbirth
- death of a child

Employers cannot direct parents to return to work (that is, they can't cancel any unpaid parental leave) after a stillbirth or death of a child. Parents may still choose to return to work after a stillbirth or death of a child.

Parents who experience premature births or other birth-related complications that result in the newborn baby having to stay in hospital or being hospitalised immediately after birth can now agree with their

employer to pause their unpaid parental leave. This means that while their baby is hospitalised, parents may return to work and the period where they are back at work won't be deducted from their unpaid parental leave.

More information available here:

<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/website-news/changes-to-unpaid-parental-leave-entitlements>



Please join us for our February's members webinar where we will be discussing **"Payments following the death of an employee"** to be held on **Tuesday 23rd February at 1pm.**

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER