



# GET THE RIGHT START

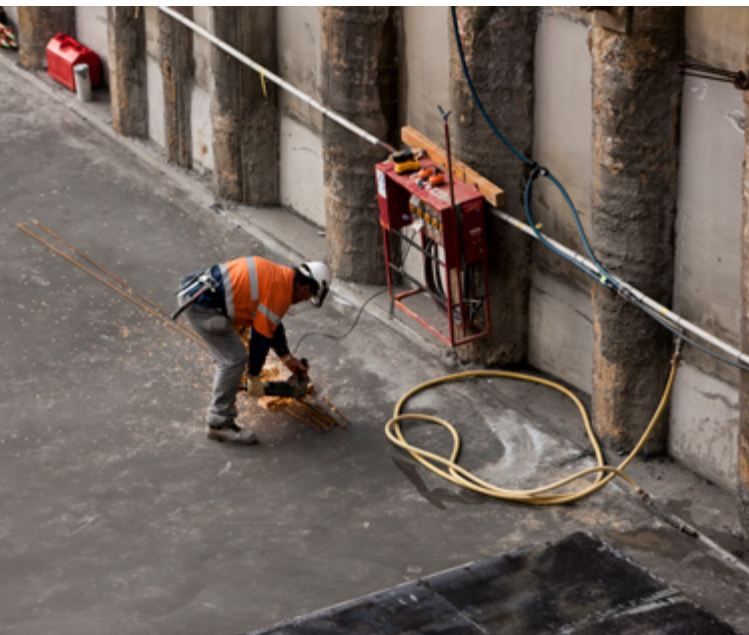
in the building and  
construction industry

## HOW THE ABCC CAN HELP YOU

The Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC) is an Australian Government agency responsible for ensuring building work in Australia is carried out fairly, efficiently and productively—for the benefit of all employers and workers in the industry, and for the benefit of the Australian economy as a whole.

If you feel you are being discriminated against, coerced in to doing something you don't feel comfortable with or are not being paid the correct wages and entitlements, the ABCC can help.

Email us at [enquiry@abcc.gov.au](mailto:enquiry@abcc.gov.au) or call 1800 003 338. You can remain anonymous by filling out a form at [www.abcc.gov.au/contact/anonymous-reporting-form](http://www.abcc.gov.au/contact/anonymous-reporting-form)



## WHAT ABOUT LEAVE?

Apprentices should receive annual leave, sick leave, public holidays and breaks, just as other employees do.

Check your award or registered agreement which may also contain specific entitlements or rules. You can do that on the FWO website: [fairwork.gov.au/awards-and-agreements](http://fairwork.gov.au/awards-and-agreements)



## IT PAYS TO KNOW

As an apprentice, just like all building and construction workers in Australia, you have lawful rights to be paid for the work that you do.

The ABCC can help you understand the rates, conditions and entitlements that apply to apprentices.

The ABCC can also help resolve any pay issues you have.



[abcc.gov.au/wages](http://abcc.gov.au/wages)



1800 003 338

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## BEING TREATED RIGHT ON SITE

No one likes to feel like they are being disadvantaged because of things out of their control. Australia's workplace laws protect your workplace rights and protect you from discrimination when you are at work.

### WHAT ARE WORKPLACE RIGHTS?

Workplace rights are protections for people in the workplace. It's unlawful for an employer, fellow employee or a union to coerce an employee to exercise, or not exercise, their workplace rights.

Workplace rights include:

- Making a complaint or enquiry about your employment; like, asking your boss, if your pay is correct.
- Your entitlements under your award or enterprise agreement.
- Your right to vote on a new enterprise agreement to apply to your work.

### WHAT IS DISCRIMINATION?

Discrimination involves taking adverse action against someone in the workplace or a potential employee because of their:

- race
- colour
- sex
- sexual preference
- age
- physical or intellectual disability
- marital status
- family or carer's responsibilities
- pregnancy
- religion
- political opinion
- national extraction
- social origin

### WHAT ARE YOU PROTECTED FROM?

If you are protected by a workplace law, you cannot be subject to adverse action or threatened adverse action. For example, this means that you cannot:

- be fired, or rejected from a job during the interview process for a discriminatory reason
- be fired, or threatened to be fired for enquiring with the boss, the union or the ABCC about your pay
- be fired or demoted because you have lawfully taken sick leave.



## JOINING A UNION – IT'S YOUR CHOICE

All employees have the right to join (or not join) a union. This is called freedom of association. Employees cannot be coerced by a union or by their employer to make a decision about joining, not joining or leaving a union. If they do they may be breaking the law.

Rights regarding freedom of association are protected under the *Fair Work Act 2009*.

It is unlawful for an employer to fire or threaten to fire an employee for:

- being (or not being) a member of a union
- not engaging in industrial action (such as going on strike)
- choosing to be (or not to be) represented by a union.



## ATTENDING A RALLY

If you're rostered to work and want to attend a rally you should get permission to take time off work from your employer. Employers must not unreasonably refuse requests by employees to take paid annual leave.

If you don't get prior written permission from your employer to leave rostered work you may be taking unlawful industrial action, which could lead to monetary penalties.

The maximum individual penalty for unlawfully going on strike is \$42,000. Don't risk it.



**Australian Government**  
**Australian Building and  
Construction Commission**

## CONTACT US

1800 003 338

[abcc.gov.au](http://abcc.gov.au)

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