

Friday, 28 September 2018

Win for retail workers on penalty rates

People working in retail have had a major win after an application by the SDA to the Fair Work Commission to raise penalty rates for 350,000 casual retail workers working Saturday and weekday evening shifts was upheld.

People covered by the General Retail Industry Award working Saturdays, and weekdays before 5am and after 6pm, will receive a boost in stages over the next several years. This will have a flow-on effect into major enterprise agreements in the industry.

Currently people working under casual arrangements on Saturdays receive 135 percent of the base rate, including a 25 percent casual loading. That will rise from November this year over the next three years.

People who currently get 125 percent of the base rate, including the 25 percent casual loading, for working weekday evenings and early mornings will also get a boost from November 1 over several years.

However, the Commission also decided to cut the penalty rates that both permanent and casual workers receive on Sundays for hours after 6pm and before 5am.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus:

“When people give up their weekends and work late nights and early mornings, they should be paid a bit extra.

“Today’s win by the SDA will boost the pay of people working as casuals on Saturdays and doing early mornings and late nights on weekdays.

“This is a major win by a union who stood up to a concerted and well-resourced campaign by employers to cut the pay of working people.

“But the cuts to Sunday rates, along with earlier cuts show our system is out of balance and gives big business too much power.

“The Fair Work Commission should not be allowed to cut people’s pay. At a time of record low wage growth, when working people are struggling to keep up with the cost of living, we need to make sure people are getting fair pay rises, not pay cuts.

“We need to change the rules so that the Fair Work Commission can protect and advance the minimum standards in awards, instead of being pressured by big business to cut the pay of working people.”

ENDS

Media contact: Lachlan Williams 0447 682 027, ACTU Media: 03 9664 7315