

Thursday 4 May 2023

## Would you like fines with that? McDonald's franchisee admits to union busting

The McDonald's franchisee in Murray Bridge, South Australia, has admitted to unlawfully discouraging workers from joining their union and paid a penalty of \$275,000.

The SDA, the union which brought the case, believes it is a world-first that a McDonald's franchise has admitted to engaging in an unlawful campaign to deunionise its workforce.

The franchisee's tactics included unlawfully persuading workers not to join their union and instructing managers to dissuade staff from joining. The franchisee also provided a resignation template, and senior managers falsely and unlawfully told workers they could not be promoted if they were SDA members. All of these are breaches of workplace rights.

One McDonald's worker talked of witnessing a manager tell another worker they would be demoted if they didn't resign from the union. A former manager said she was told "the business owner didn't like workers being in the union" and was approached more than once about cancelling her membership. Both said they felt pressured into resigning from the union. One said her hours were cut after raising a safety concern.

### Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

"The McDonald's Murray Bridge franchise has admitted to unlawfully discouraging workers from joining their union and inducing them to resign from their union as part of an unlawful five-year campaign to deunionise its workforce. The franchise threatened workers with demotions and reduced hours if they stayed in their union.

"All workers have the right to join a union, and this significant settlement, in which the McDonald's franchisee admitted to wrongdoing and paid the price, reinforces that legal right.

"The case, brought by the SDA, sends a strong signal to employers who attempt to intimidate or interfere with their workers' right to join and be part of a union that there are real consequences."

**ENDS**

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