

IR POLICY AND GOVERNANCE UPDATE



INTRODUCTION

This week we provide members with two templates for communicating to clients and suppliers if you have COVID-19 vaccination requirements for entry into the workplace, the FWO recovers more than \$148m in underpaid wages, new online and text scams just keep coming out this year.

VACCINATION STATUS OF CLIENTS AND SUPPLIERS

Many members have taken a position on whether their employees are required to be COVID-19 vaccinated so as to work onsite. From feedback we have received, most businesses now have high levels of employees who have undertaken such vaccination. Numerous businesses have reported 100% employee vaccination levels.

Another consideration, particularly as states and territories open their borders, are the potential COVID-19 related business risks when clients, suppliers and contractors recommence attending your business premises. To assist members, TRMC has drafted two templates to consider using and providing to clients, suppliers and contractors.

[Supplier Contractor COVID Vaccination Status Correspondence Template](#)
[Client COVID Vaccination Status Template](#)

FWO RECOVERS \$148 MILLION

The Fair Work Ombudsman recovered a record sum of over \$148 million in underpayments and entitlements for almost 70,000 underpaid workers in 2020-2021. These recoveries detailed in the workplace regulator's latest Annual Report are 20 per cent more than that of 2019-2020 and are nearly five times the recoveries in 2017-18.

In 2020-2021, the FWO entered into 19 Enforceable Undertakings with businesses, with 17 relating to self-reported non-compliance from large employers. More than \$81.7 million was back-paid following extensive investigations and Enforceable Undertakings negotiated with the FWO. The workplace regulator also secured agreement for more than \$3.16 million in contrition payments from companies during the year.

There were 76 new litigations in 2020-21, 41% more than in 2019-2020. The agency secured more than \$2.8 million in court-ordered penalties, of which more than \$2 million were in matters involving migrant workers, who can be vulnerable to workplace exploitation.

The FWO continued to increase its use of enforcement tools, issuing 2,025 Compliance Notices in 2020-2021, which led to recoveries of more than \$16.5 million in unpaid wages and entitlements. Fair Work Inspectors also issued 513 Infringement Notices (total fines of more than \$518,000) in 2020-21. The agency resolved 18,696 workplace disputes between workers and employers last financial year.

TRMC's ongoing commitment to provide members with current and appropriate advice, award rates of pay and legislative amendments, and your application of that information into your

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businesses has meant not one member has experienced an FWO visit or dipsute in the last financial year.

FLUBOTS - TEXT AND ONLINE SCAMS SKYROCKET

Since August 2021, Australians have increasingly been receiving scam text messages about missed calls, voicemails or deliveries, particularly Flubots. There are a large number of variants of the Flubot text messages, often they ask you to download an app to track or organise a time for a delivery, hear a voicemail message, or view photos that have been uploaded. However, the message is fake, there is no delivery, voicemail, or photos uploaded and the app is actually malicious software called Flubot. Android phones and iPhones can both receive texts from the Flubot.

Flubot scammers are regularly updating the text messages they send out to try and infect your device with Flubot. Recently, we've received reports of messages relating to Zoom invites, Google verifications and 'thank you' messages from clinics, as well as the major categories set out below.

Flubot text messages include a link which almost always contains a series of 5-9 random letters and numbers at the end of the link. Starting in September 2021, many Flubot messages now talk about a delivery. They usually refer to DHL or Amazon and always ask you to take some form of action in relation to the 'delivery'.

If you receive one of these messages, do not click or tap on the link. Delete the message immediately and or report the scam to the ACCC's [Scamwatch](#) service.

Yet another reason why the printed medium should be considered more trusted than online communication channels.

CONTACT

Any Industrial Relations Member who has a related query should contact Charles Watson, GM – IR, Policy and Governance at The Real Media Collective via email charles@thermc.com.au or mobile:+61 428 568 032.

DISCLAIMER

The content of this update, current at the date of publication, is intended to provide general guidance and consideration for TRMC Members only. The content does not constitute advice and should not be relied upon as such. Specific advice about your circumstances should be sought separately before taking any action. TRMC recommends Members ensure any related decisions are made on current and up to date information.