

# EMPLOYMENT NEW ZEALAND



MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,  
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT  
HIKINA WHAKATUTUKI



Welcome to the Employment New Zealand newsletter. Here you will find the latest news and information about employment rights and responsibilities.

You are receiving this email because your business has opted to provide its email publicly on the New Zealand Business Number (NZBN) website or you have subscribed to our newsletter. As a business or a worker, we think you will be interested in hearing about the latest employment news and information. However, if you consider this newsletter not relevant, please unsubscribe at the bottom of this newsletter.



## **Applications for Wage Subsidy close 21 March**

Employers can still apply for the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy March 2021. The subsidy is a payment to businesses so they can continue to pay employees during the recent change in COVID-19 Alert Levels. Applications close at 11:59pm 21 March.

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## What do the upcoming Easter and ANZAC public holidays mean for you?

The employment and trading rules around the Easter and ANZAC public holidays can be confusing. Our handy guide can help you understand if a business is able to trade over the holidays, what happens when a public holiday falls on a weekend and more.

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## Minimum wage increases on 1 April 2021

The adult minimum wage is increasing to \$20 an hour from \$18.90 an hour on 1 April 2021. The starting-out and training minimum wage rates will also increase, from \$15.12 to \$16.00 per hour.

Employment New Zealand publishes up-to-date minimum wage rates on its website.

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## Easier applications for parental leave

Applying for parental leave payments is now easier than ever. Applications can now be completed online and for most parents, the tax records Inland Revenue holds will automatically determine eligibility. This means there is no longer the need for workers and employers to calculate and verify earnings in order to determine eligibility and payments. It also means no more printing, scanning and posting paper forms.

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## Canterbury grower fined \$26,000 after underpaying staff

A Canterbury asparagus grower must pay \$26,000 in penalties after breaching employment law by paying employees below the minimum wage. In addition to underpaying employees, the employer did not provide for public holidays, failed to obtain consent for deductions and did not keep compliant holiday and leave records. The penalty is in addition to the \$54,000 the grower was ordered to repay employees last year.

The case is a good reminder that all employees must be paid at least the minimum wage, including if they are paid on a piece rate or commission.

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