

ALERT

23 JUNE 2011

Changes to the General Retail Industry Award 2010

After three rounds of arbitration, on Monday this week Fair Work Australia (**FWA**) granted an application brought by the National Retail Association (**NRA**) to vary the General Retail Industry Award 2010, allowing for greater flexibility in minimum shifts for student casuals. The ruling provides for a one-and-a-half-hour minimum engagement for student casuals working in the retail sector, as opposed to the previous minimum period of three hours.

FWA set down certain conditions that restrict the application of the ninety-minute engagement period. The employee must be a full-time student; the hours worked must be between 3pm and 6:30pm on a school day; and both the employee and their parent or guardian must agree to the shorter period. The employee must not be able to work a longer shift either due to the operational requirements of the employer or the availability of the teenage employee.

While FWA did not grant in full the NRA's application to vary the Modern Award, most of the flexibility sought in the application has been instituted. The decision should help promote greater employment opportunities for students looking to work in the retail industry after school hours.

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