

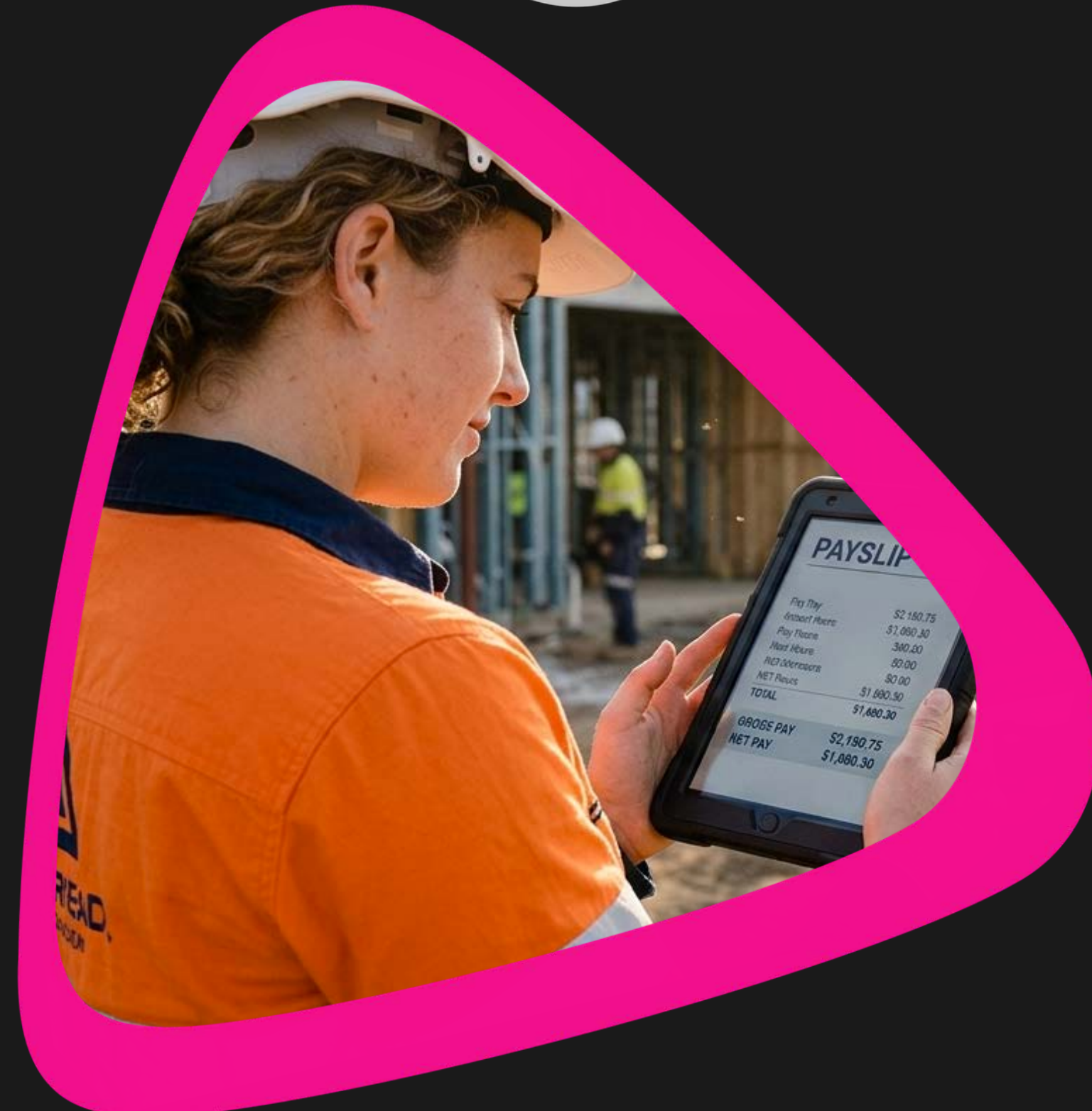


FACTSHEET

THE NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

The straight talk on what's changing
and what you need to do

Prepared for HR Staff n' Stuff clients • Effective 1 July 2026



THE NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

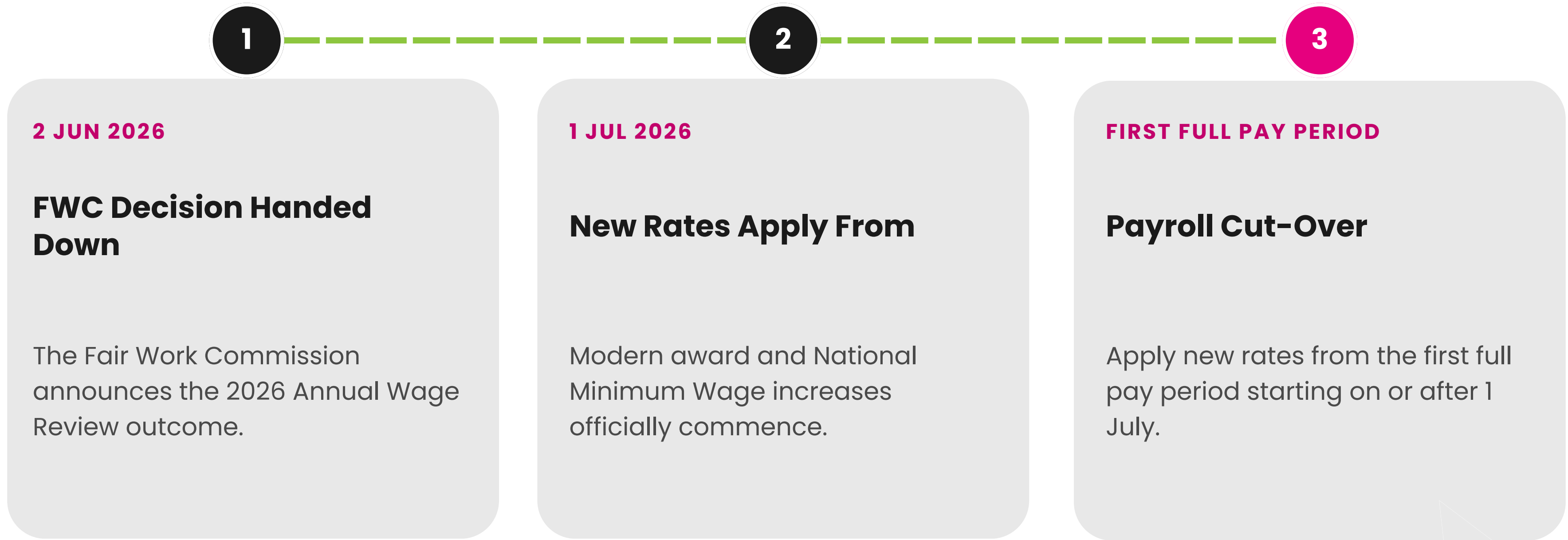
From 1 July 2026, minimum wages went up. The Fair Work Commission handed down its 2026 Annual Wage Review on 2 June, and it's a solid one. Modern award wages rose 4.75% and the National Minimum Wage rose 5.97%.



Casual loading: ALL casuals are entitled to a 25% casual loading on top of the relevant award rate or minimum rate

WHEN DO THESE CHANGES TAKE EFFECT?

The new rates apply from your first full pay period on or after 1 July. For most businesses that's already happened, if your pay cycle runs from the 15th of the month, for example, the new rates kicked in from 15 July. If your cycle starts later in the month, the new rates apply from your next full pay period, whenever that falls.



Rule of Thumb: Whatever your pay cycle, you apply the new rates from the start of your next full pay period, never partway through one.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR TEAM?

1 Award-Free Employees

Their new floor is \$1,004.90 a week (38 hours) or \$26.44 an hour. Casuals still get their 25% loading on top.

2 Award-Covered Employees

For award-covered employees, the new minimum rates are set out in the relevant modern award. The Fair Work Commission has published its determinations, and the Fair Work Ombudsman's Pay Guides and Pay and Conditions Tool have been updated with the new rates, you can check the current rate for your award directly on their site.

ALREADY PAYING ABOVE THE MINIMUM WAGE?

The General Rule

If you're already paying more than the new rates, you're generally fine, no action needed. If you're paying below, you'll need to bump up to match.

A few employers lock in a set percentage above minimum in a contract or enterprise agreement, but that's the exception, not the rule.

! A Note for Above-Award Employers

Don't assume your above award policy covers everyone.

The 4.75% bump could push some classifications past what you're currently paying. Check every classification against the new rates, don't guess.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO UNDERSTAND

1 **Getting it wrong has real consequences.**

Wage theft has been a criminal offence since January 2025. Underpaying staff can mean serious fines and, in bad cases, criminal charges, no matter how big or small your business is.

2 **Modern awards set the floor.**

Most Australian employees are covered by one. Rates vary by role, seniority and when the work happens.

3 **Enterprise agreements don't get you out of it.**

You can't pay below the award base rate, even under an EA. Many EAs also have their own built in wage clauses.

4 **Juniors and apprentices move too.**

Their rates are a percentage of the minimum rate or the assigned award classification. Check your award for the updated numbers.

WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOUR NEXT PAY RUN



Work out which awards cover your team



Check current rates against the new minimums, classification by classification



Look for contract clauses tying pay to a percentage above award



Check your enterprise agreement for base rate obligations



Get payroll updated from your first full pay period after the new rates take effect



Don't forget juniors and apprentices, review separately

NAVIGATE WAGE CHANGES WITH HR STAFF N' STUFF

Wage increases are one more thing on the pile. You don't have to sort it alone. Whether you've got one employee or one hundred, we can help you get it right.

1

HR Advisory

Expert guidance to interpret exactly how these changes affect your specific business and obligations.

2

Buy The Time™

Purchase a block of HR support minutes to use whenever you need them. They never expire.

3

Embedded HR

An experienced HR Staff n' Stuff team member becomes part of your team, managing it all for you.

Talk to one of our HR consultants today →

GET IN TOUCH! LET'S HAVE A CHAT

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

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