

# Woolies bites the dust (again) for underpaying staff

MARQUE

The FWO has commenced proceedings against Woolworths and its South Australian arm for once again failing to meet minimum pay obligations, but this time, in relation to its salaried managers.

Back in 2019, Woolies disclosed that it underpaid thousands of salaried employees in its supermarkets and Metro stores to the tune of \$390 million. Given the large scale of the underpayments, the FWO thought it wise to investigate a sample group of 70 Woolies managers finding, at no real shock, that they too were underpaid. According to the FWO, the sample of 70 managers are owed a total of \$1,172,282 for the period between March 2018 and March 2019. Woolies had about 19,000 salaried managers working during that period (eek).

The FWO is seeking orders from the Federal Court that Woolies rectify the underpayments in relation to the 70 managers, as well as all other affected salaried managers across the business.

Managers aren't typically at the forefront of underpayment scandals due to their seniority and usual higher rates of pay. However, Woolies' oversight should be a cautious reminder that taking an annualised salaried approach for any employees covered by a modern award or enterprise agreement, including more senior staff, isn't a guarantee against underpayment exposure.

Employers should use the end of financial year as an opportunity to review the salaries of all award or agreement covered employees, including managers and other senior employees, to ensure their annual salary is equivalent to, or above, minimum entitlements.

Questions? Give us a call.



Wesley Rogers  
Workplace Relations  
Counsel

+61 2 8216 3035

[Email Wes](#)



Courtney Divani  
Lawyer

+61 2 8216 3072

[Email Courtney](#)

**Marque Lawyers Pty Ltd**  
Level 4, 343 George St  
Sydney NSW 2000

Ph : +61 2 8216 3000

Fax: +61 2 8216 3001

[Visit Website](#)

