

# Workplace Arrangements

## Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Victoria has the simplest workplace conditions system in Australia. Under the Australian Fair Pay and Conditions Standard, there are now only five minimum conditions that employers must take into account.

*Table 1. Minimum workplace conditions in Victoria, Australia*

<b>Hours of work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Maximum 38 ordinary hours of work per week. Ordinary hours may be averaged over a period of up to twelve months.</li></ul>
<b>Pay</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Minimum wage is A\$14.31 per hour, or A\$543 per standard 38 hour working week. This minimum wage became effective in October 2008, as set by the Australian Fair Pay Commission. The next wage-setting decision is due to take place in October 2009.</li><li>Minimum wage varies across different classifications according to Australian Pay and Classification Scales.</li></ul>
<b>Personal/Carer's leave</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ten days of paid leave per year (eg. for illness, caring for family members).</li><li>Two days of additional unpaid carer's leave per occasion.</li><li>Two days of paid compassionate leave per occasion (for death or serious illness within family).</li></ul>
<b>Parental leave</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>52 weeks of unpaid parental leave at the time of the birth or adoption of a child, to be shared between the mother and the father.</li></ul>
<b>Annual leave</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Four weeks of paid annual leave per year.</li><li>One additional week of paid leave for shift workers.</li></ul>

These standards apply to all full-time workers. Part-time workers are entitled to leave proportional to their hours of work. Casual workers are not entitled to any paid leave, and instead receive a pay loading, usually of 20 per cent.

Employers, employees and unions may negotiate collective or individual agreements on wages and other terms and conditions of employment above these minimum standards according to their specific needs.

For more information, visit [workchoices.gov.au](http://workchoices.gov.au) or [fairpay.gov.au](http://fairpay.gov.au).

### Pensions

Pension funds in Australia are known as 'superannuation'. Under the superannuation guarantee, it is compulsory for all employers to pay their employees an additional 9 per cent of their gross salary into a complying superannuation fund. Employees cannot access these funds until they retire.

For more information, visit [ato.gov.au/super](http://ato.gov.au/super).

### Public Holidays

There are 11 public holidays observed in Victoria each year. Most employees are entitled to leave on these days and receive ordinary pay. However, under many workplace arrangements, an employer can direct employees to work on public holidays. Such work usually (but not necessarily) attracts a higher rate of pay.

For more information, visit [business.vic.gov.au](http://business.vic.gov.au).

### Long Service Leave

Long service leave (LSL) is a long-standing entitlement for Australian employees. Conditions regarding LSL may vary according to workplace arrangements. The Long Service Leave Act 1992 entitles workers to accrue paid leave at a rate of 1 week for every 60 weeks of continuous service. This is in addition to regular paid annual leave. Employees may take LSL after 10 years of continuous service with the one employer.

For more information, visit [irv.vic.gov.au](http://irv.vic.gov.au).

## Health and Safety

The required health and safety standards in Victorian workplaces are set out in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007*.

Employers have an obligation to ensure the safety of their workers. This includes maintaining safe plant and systems of work, providing systems to prevent accidents and injuries, implementing arrangements for safe handling of dangerous goods, providing adequate facilities (toilets, drinking water, eating areas) and making sure workers have adequate information, instruction, training and supervision to work in a safe and healthy manner.

## Workplace Insurance

WorkCover is a compulsory insurance system that provides compensation for employees injured in the workplace in Victoria. Employers pay a premium for insurance under this scheme. The policy covers employers for the costs of wage replacement as well as medical costs and legal costs relating to employees injured at work.

Different rates are set for every employer according to company size, industry and any claims history. WorkCover premiums have been reduced over five consecutive years now, and average 1.39 per cent of a company's total payroll.

For more information, visit [worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://worksafe.vic.gov.au).

## Discrimination

Victoria requires that all workers be treated fairly and equitably.

Employees are legally protected from discrimination on the grounds of various characteristics including race, colour, gender, age, sexual preference, physical or mental disability, marital status, family responsibilities, pregnancy, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin.

For further information, visit the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission at [veohrc.vic.gov.au](http://veohrc.vic.gov.au).

## Industrial organisations

Employers and employees are free to join, or not to join, an industrial organisation or union.

There are many associations and organisations active throughout Victoria and Australia that represent the rights of employers and employees.

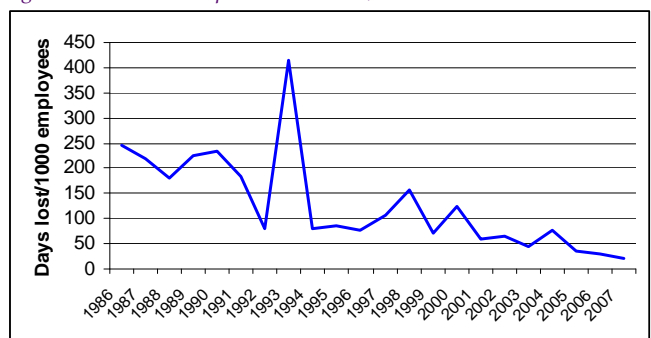
The main employer organisations include Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry ([acci.asn.au](http://acci.asn.au)), The Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry ([vecci.org.au](http://vecci.org.au)) and the Australian Industry Group ([aigroup.asn.au](http://aigroup.asn.au)).

The main employee organisations include the Australian Council of Trade Unions ([actu.asn.au](http://actu.asn.au)) and the Victorian Trades Hall Council ([vthc.org.au](http://vthc.org.au)).

## Industrial Disputes

Industrial action in Victoria is legal under certain circumstances. Workplace relations have improved significantly in recent decades, with disputes and strikes now at an all-time low. Figure 1 below shows the decrease in days lost to industrial disputes in recent years.

Figure 1. Industrial disputes in Victoria, 1986-2007



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Cat. 6321.0.55.001

## Further Information

### Industrial Relations Victoria

1800 287 287 (free call within Australia)

+61 3 9651 9200 (international)

[irv.vic.gov.au](http://irv.vic.gov.au)

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