



FURNITURE BARGAINING COUNCIL

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CIRCULAR 05/26

TO ALL EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES *(Employers and Employees in the Free State Province only)*

This Circular must be read together with Circular 04/26 and serves as a concise summary of the two (2) negotiated increases, namely the prescribed minimum hourly rates of pay and the across-the-board increases to the existing hourly rates of pay for all employees. These are reflected as the latest amendments to wages in the Main Collective Agreement, as published in Notice No. 7330 of Government Gazette No. 54436 dated 31 March 2026, and become effective from the first full pay week in May 2026 (as outlined in Circular 04/26).

Please note the distinction between:

1. Prescribed minimum hourly rates of pay for all Occupation Skills Levels; and
2. Prescribed across-the-board increases to existing hourly rates of pay for all employees.

Although these terms may appear similar, they serve distinct purposes in the regulation and calculation of wages under the Main Collective Agreement.

1. Prescribed minimum hourly rates of pay (setting the minimum rate of pay)

This requirement is specified per Occupation Skills Level (e.g. general worker, semi-skilled, skilled, etc.) and applies to all employees employed or re-employed in the Industry, on or after 1 May 2026. These rates represent the newly negotiated fixed minimum wages for each Occupation Skills Level and confirm the minimum hourly rate an employer must pay an employee from or after 1 May 2026. No employee may be remunerated below these prescribed minimum hourly rates of pay, applicable to their individual Occupation Skills Level.

2. Prescribed across-the-board increases to existing (actual) hourly rates of pay

This requirement relates to a percentage-based increase applied to the existing (actual) hourly rate of pay of every individual employee, who is already employed in the Industry.

- This increase is applied to the current hourly rate of every employee already in the Industry.
- It is expressed as a percentage (this year a 5.5% increase in the existing hourly rate of pay), effective from the first full pay week in May 2026.
- It applies to all employees, regardless of whether they already earn above the prescribed minimum hourly rates of pay.

NB: The remaining provisions of the Industry's Main Collective Agreement remain applicable.

Kindly ensure that all provisions of this Circular are complied with. Please contact the Council's Inspectorate Department should you require any additional information or clarity regarding this Circular.

Please do not contact any junior staff members of the Council for any additional information or clarity regarding this Circular.

A COPY OF THIS CIRCULAR MUST BE DISPLAYED ON YOUR ESTABLISHMENT'S NOTICE BOARD