

What Will I Need to Know?

Induction and probation periods

Induction training (or orientation) is designed to help you get the information you need on how the farm business works. Staff induction often begins with an introduction to the farm's policies such as safety, security, anti-discrimination, etc. Next, you will be shown how things are done on the farm and be given specific information about your role. Don't be afraid to ask questions during the induction process – that's what it is for. It is much better to clarify information at the beginning of your employment rather than to guess what you are expected to do. Use the [Induction checklist](#) to make sure you have received all the appropriate information.



The induction process is also a good time for you and your employer to identify areas where you may need more training or experience.

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TOP

Probation periods must be reasonable. In the farming industry the typical probation period is 3 months. Longer periods may be reasonable depending on the circumstances. The probation period is a time for both you and your employer to see if you are suited to the role and the business. It is also a time when you should receive some ongoing support or training in your new role. The length of the probation period should be set out in your contract or letter of offer and this cannot be extended. You may have reviews during the induction period to check your progress – use these opportunities to ask your employer questions. Expect a review with your employer or manager at the end of the probation period to discuss how you both want to proceed.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

[Induction checklist](#) - Word Doc

☰
TOP

Rosters and timesheets

Rosters

A roster is basically a list or a plan that shows you who is working and when. It is usually used to schedule time off, holidays, and certain tasks. It can also let you know who to report to or contact should you have any questions or concerns at work on that particular day.

Some rosters will be very formal and may be written on spreadsheets or generated using a roster template, while others may simply be written on a calendar or year planner and kept in a common area.

It is important to know where the roster is kept and to check it regularly for any changes that may affect your shifts. From 1 January 2014, all awards include a term that requires employers to consult with their employees about changes to their regular roster and ordinary working hours.

Your employer should:

- Let you know your ordinary hours of work in accordance with a roster in advance
- Display a roster, in an obvious place with starting and finishing shift times

Timesheets

Timesheets can be a great way for you to keep a record of the hours you work, especially if your shifts vary. More than this though, employers are required by law to keep written records of their employee's working hours if they work overtime.

Keeping accurate timesheets helps your employer to get an 'overall picture' of the hours you have been working and enables them to schedule shifts and rosters that don't ask people to work unreasonable hours.

There will always be busy periods in any given workplace but it's important that you can maintain a good work life balance. See the sample timesheet below for more information.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

[Sample work roster](#) – Word Doc

[Sample Timesheet](#) – Word Doc

☰
TOP

Pay slips

Your employer will provide you with a copy of your pay slip that has all the important information on it. Employers must provide written notification of pay within one working day of making payment to you. See the [sample pay slip](#) for information that should be included. File your pay slips somewhere safe as you may need them as proof of employment later on for other things such as bank loans.

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IFAs

For full-time employees, it is sometimes more straightforward for your employer to work out a package that includes a flat rate of pay taking into account overtime and penalty rates.

Most modern awards contain a clause that allows for an Individual Flexibility Agreement (IFA). An IFA enables you and your employer to vary the award to lay a flat rate of pay for all hours worked. An IFA must be written and signed by both parties and must show that you are better off overall when compared with the award.

An employer cannot make it a condition of employment that you sign an IFA. For more information about IFAs see the [Fair Work Ombudsman website](#).

☰
TOP

Ending your employment

If there is an issue at work, try speaking to your employer before deciding to leave your job. It may be difficult to find a new job and the issue may be easily resolved through open and honest communication. It may be that you and/or your employer have over thought the issue or misinterpreted what happened. Talking it through can help to understand the situation from the other person's point of view, and often find a solution.

If you do need to give notice – provide your employer an honest reason why you are leaving. Employers may ask you to take part in an exit interview. This allows the employer to find out why you are leaving and to see what, if anything, they can do better or improve in the role or business to encourage staff to stay.

Awards specify how much notice employees need to give to employers. If employees do not give this amount of notice the employer can deduct the amount you would have been paid for the notice period from your final pay. The table below shows the minimum notice you need to give.

Your employer also needs to give you the same amount of notice as a minimum or pay you an amount equal to the amount you would have earned had you worked the notice period if they have chosen to end your employment. If you think your employment was ended unfairly, you can always refer to the [Fair Work Commission](#) web site for advice. In the first instance, refer to your contract as it may contain terms and conditions for both employers and employees regarding ending employment.

Period of continuous service with the employer at the end of the day notice is given	Notice period
Not more than 1 year	1 week
More than 1 year but not more than 3 years	2 weeks
More than 3 years but not more than 5 years	3 weeks
More than 5 years	4 weeks

If the employee is over 45 years of age and has worked for the employer for at least 2 years the employee is entitled to an extra week's notice. This extra week does not apply to an employee giving notice.

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Also relevant

[Employees](#)