

MEALS AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY (GENERAL) AWARD 2010 ('HIGA')

There is no obligation to provide an employee a complimentary meal or a subsidised meal during a shift. If you elect to offer an employee a meal each shift as part of their employment arrangements, CI 39 of Hospitality Industry (General) Award 2010 ('HIGA') especially CI. 39.4 spells out the basis and amount you can deduct for a meal provided to an employee in normal working hours.

If the meal's actual cost to the venue is higher e.g. steak, fish etc. you have the following options

1. Absorb the marginal cost (i.e. the difference between the deduction & the meal's actual cost to the venue) or
2. Ask staff if they agree, preferably in writing, to pay a higher amount to recover the cost of dearer dishes if they choose to have them or
3. Restrict the dishes they can order to cheaper ones i.e. ones whose cost is no more than \$6:64. This option may cause resentment if staff have previously been used to ordering anything they want from the menu. Alternately, the venue policy may be that the employee meal each shift is at the discretion of the chef and not an employee selection from the menu.

Ongoing staff may be eligible for a free meal or meal allowance if insufficient notice has been given of overtime. Please see the relevant clause from HIGA below which sets out the basis upon which a free meal or equivalent allowance should be provided. CI 21.1 (a) (i) of HIGA i.e.

i) An employee required to work overtime for more than two hours without being notified on the previous day or earlier that they will be so required to work
Must either be supplied with a meal by the employer or be paid an allowance of \$10.83.

Casuals as per CI 33.1 'HIGA are NOT eligible for overtime and so they have no entitlement to a free meal or meal allowance. It may, however, be 'good PR' with the staff concerned upon occasion to offer a cheap or subsidised meal as a staff benefit; but it is not mandatory.