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Implementation Guide: C14 Determination Changes for Horticulture Businesses

Effective from **1 April 2025**, the **C14 determination** introduces new definitions and minimum pay rates for entry-level classifications under the **Horticulture Award 2020**. This guide outlines key steps to ensure your business complies with these changes.

1. Understand the Key Changes

- ✓ Employees can only remain at **Level 1** for a **maximum of three months**.
- ✓ Experience gained with **previous employers** in the industry counts toward the three-month period.
- ✓ Duties from Level 1 will now be **incorporated into Level 2**.
- ✓ Once an employee reaches **three months of experience**, they must be **moved to Level 2** and paid accordingly.

2. Update Employment Processes

📌 Review Employment Contracts

- Ensure contracts reflect the updated classification structure.
- Clearly state that employees will transition from Level 1 to Level 2 after three months.
- Employers should check their enterprise agreement and applicable award to ensure that any introductory rates meet at least the minimum base rates in their relevant award.

📌 Update Payroll & HR Systems

- Adjust payroll settings to **automatically update pay rates** when employees reach three months of experience.

📌 Train Management & Supervisors

- Educate HR teams and supervisors on the new rules.

3. Monitor Employee Progression

📌 Create an Experience Tracking System

- Use HR software, spreadsheets, or employee files to track experience.
- Confirm experience with previous employers where needed.
- Track industry experience, even if an employee gained experience elsewhere. (Employee Classification Record available from the BGA website).

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Conduct Regular Reviews

- Schedule **monthly HR checks** to ensure employees are being transitioned appropriately.

Communicate with Employees

- Inform new hires of their expected **progression to Level 2** within three months.
- Provide transparency on pay rates and job expectations.

4. Ensure Compliance & Seek Advice

Review Award Updates

- Stay informed through **Fair Work Ombudsman** and industry bodies.
- Review the Horticulture Award Pay Guide available on the BGGGA website.

Seek Professional Support

- Consult an **HR specialist, industry association, or Fair Work representative** if unsure.

Action Checklist

- Review employment contracts & update pay rates
- Implement a tracking system for employee experience
- Train supervisors & HR staff on the changes
- Set reminders to transition employees at the 3-month mark
- Seek advice if needed

Level 1 (Entry-Level)

Who qualifies?

- New employees with **less than three months of experience** in the horticulture industry.
- Workers performing basic duties that do not require prior knowledge or specialised skills.

Typical Duties:

- Induction training (WHS, Food Safety, Quality Control)
- Performing general labouring duties
- Fruit or vegetable picking, thinning or pruning
- Performing a range of housekeeping tasks
- Performing a range of housekeeping tasks
- Sorting, packing or grading of produce
- Performing basic recording functions
- Undertaking training to enable advancement to Level 2

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Pay Rate:

- **C14 (Level 1) minimum wage applies.**
- Lowest pay classification under the Horticulture Award.

Progression Rule:

- Employees **cannot remain at Level 1 for more than three months.**
- Industry experience with **other employers counts** toward the three-month limit.

Level 2 (After 3+ Months of Experience)

Who qualifies?

- Employees who have gained **at least three months of industry experience**, including from previous jobs.

Typical Duties:

- All Level 1 duties **plus additional tasks require more skill and responsibility.**
- Performing a range of tasks involving the setup and operation of production and/or packaging or picking equipment, labelling and/or consumer picking equipment;
- Repetition work on automatic, semi-automatic or single-purpose machines or equipment;
- Assembling/dismantling components using basic written, spoken and/or diagrammatic instructions in an assembly environment;
- Irrigation, spraying or pruning under general supervision;
- Sorting, packing and grading beyond the scope of Level 1 duties;
- Maintaining simple records;
- Using hand trolleys, pallet trucks or other mechanical or power-driven lifting or handling devices not requiring a licence;
- Operating tractors with engine capacity of up to 70 kW;
- General and routine product testing;
- Providing assistance within the scope of this level to other employees as required;
- Assisting in the provision of on-the-job training in conjunction with supervisors, tradespersons or trainers;
- Undertaking further training so as to enable advancement to Level 3.

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Pay Rate:

- **Higher than Level 1 (C13 minimum wage applies).**
- **Employees must receive Level 2 pay once they meet the experience requirement.**

Key Compliance Actions for Employers

- ✓ Track employee **start dates** and industry experience.
- ✓ Adjust payroll to **move workers from Level 1 to Level 2 after three months.**
- ✓ Update **job descriptions** to reflect the new classification system.
- ✓ Train managers and supervisors on the **new progression rules.**

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